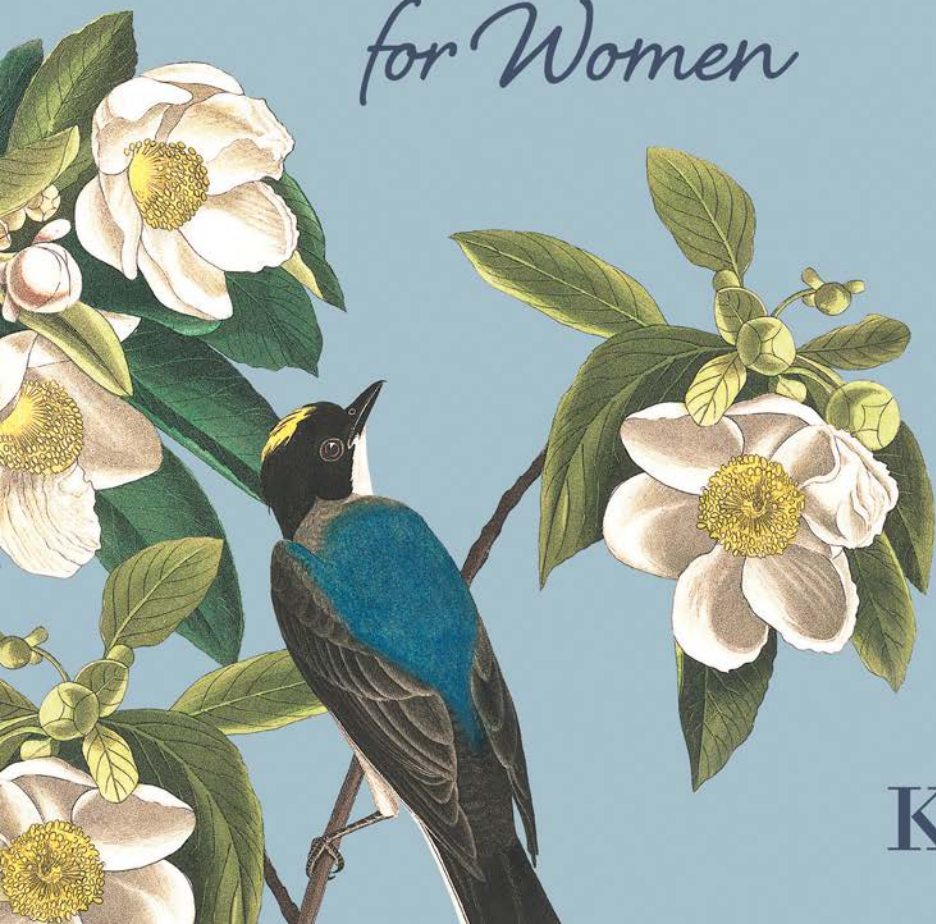


THE
**one
year**[®]
BIBLE
for Women



KJV

THE
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BIBLE
for Women

KJV

KING JAMES VERSION

TYNDALE HOUSE PUBLISHERS
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Designed by Libby Dykstra

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With deep affection and high regard, I am thrilled to finally greet you as I would an esteemed friend in warmest hug: *Hi, lady. I'm so glad to see you.* And welcome to *The One Year Bible for Women*.

Though perhaps we've never met, you have been on my mind and in my heart for a very long time. It is no small feat this particular Bible has made its way into your hands and you've opened it for a look. Many prayers have been offered, and much love, toward this long-awaited moment. I'll tell you the whole story, but ultimately it boils down to this: I have an invitation for you.

Hold that thought—

It was early January 2020 while yet optimistically welcoming in the new year that I received a little invitation of my own. It came unexpectedly and landed heavy in my heart. I froze in my tracks like the snowman outside my window, silent and motionless. I would be making an important decision, just like you, whether to accept the invitation.

I resisted. It was an enormous privilege to be invited and would be an equally enormous mission should I choose to accept it, however simple it sounded: Read through *The One Year Bible* and write a daily meditation specifically for women.

Have you read the Bible much? Its pages hold the profound message of *hope* and *life* for all humanity, a gift far beyond comprehension. Its pages also present a profound challenge for all—to understand God's inspired Word and apply it wisely in our lives today.

What has been your journey with Scripture? If you are like me, then you have found incredible beauty, deep healing, and the love of God through his Word, and you have been saved and strengthened as a result. But there have also been setbacks. You have wrestled with painful, confusing passages about our ancient sisters and then reached for truth with even more fervor. Other times, you've simply stepped away, dejected. You've noted triumphant heroines hailed alongside even the meekest of women in both Old and New Testaments, and conversely you have noted shocking imagery and oppressions.

I made my decision. In reverence and reluctance-mixed-with-compulsion, I accepted the invitation to write. And since I am not one to gloss over hard stuff in favor of fluff, one thing was certain: I would go where the Scriptures led, and likely straight toward the hard stuff. So it began, right as the rest of 2020 unleashed its many challenges. There were tears and struggles—and gifts at every turn. I'll get to those, but first, my invitation for you:

What are you doing for . . . say . . . the next 365 days of your life?

If you're holding this Bible, chances are you're already considering giving it a go, but I would love to invite you more formally: Would you consider joining me for a journey through Scripture this year? It would be my honor and, I trust, our mutual enrichment. We could read this Bible together, a day at a time, and see what we find in epic adventure and camaraderie.

Whether it's your first time through or you've followed this method of Scripture reading for years, I also trust that within these pages you will experience a fresh move of God in your life.

Together, we will encounter the leadership of Deborah, the sorrow of Job's wife, the bravery of Jehosheba, and critical contributions from female disciples of Jesus. We will lean into the hard spaces and dare to keep seeking and growing. We will practice new skills, because practice makes progress. And I love to make progress.

What might God have in store for you as you pursue him this year? I received three special gifts while writing for this project, and it makes me wonder: What surprises await you?

I first received the gift of *obligation*, which did not seem like a gift at the time. I'd committed to read and press for answers, so no longer would I put off troublesome passages until a more convenient time. Now was the time. I would dig for answers until answers came. And far better than that, spiritual awakening came.

This resulted in the second gift: strengthened assurance that *answers are there if we want them*. God wants to be known and will faithfully reveal himself to the seeker. May we ever move *toward* him in reaching for truth.

The third gift was born of my own moving toward him. Through reaching and seeking, protest and wrestling, striving and struggling for yet another year—as with every new season, time and again—I unfailingly landed on one persistent conclusion: *God is good*.

He is good. And he is *for* us.

He is *for* humanity, for women and for men, for everyone.

He is for me, and he is for *you*.

He is for children. And *he* has invited *us* to come to him as such—eager to learn and openhearted.

Will you join me in responding to him? Please find me on Facebook, and let me know if you accept my invitation and how it is going along the way. I would love to hear from you!

I pray for you now and always, that you keep seeking, keep growing, and *keep the faith!*

May God richly bless you through his Word this year.

With all my love as your sister in Christ,

Misty



Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

PSALM 119:105

The One Year Bible is divided into daily readings designed to guide you through the entire Bible in a year. But the arrangement doesn't take you straight through from Genesis to Revelation. Instead, each day you will find a portion of the Old Testament and the New Testament, plus short readings from Psalms and Proverbs. These four daily readings are grouped on consecutive pages, giving freshness and diversity to each day's reading experience. Many people have tried to read through the entire Bible in a year, but they quickly become frustrated when they get stuck in harder passages. This reading plan has helped millions of readers, including those who tried before but became frustrated, to successfully complete their reading of the entire Bible. And reading through the Bible will ensure that you will spend significant time engaged with God's Word.

Time spent genuinely engaged with God's Word has the potential to change your life. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). The Bible isn't just a book of human wisdom. It comes from God himself, and in it he gives us the wisdom and knowledge needed to live a life of faith. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Time spent in the Scriptures, in a very real sense, is time spent with God. There is no better place in this world for us to hear from God. The Bible is a special gift, but a gift we often leave on the shelf—unopened and unread. And as we open it and read its pages, we are opening a door to a relationship with the Author. He's waiting there to speak to us, with the help of his ever-present Spirit. He gave us the Scriptures because he wants us to hear from and know him. Approach your reading each day with this knowledge and expectation.

Engaging More Deeply with Scripture

In *The One Year Bible*, you are encouraged to read through the entire Bible in a year, and its structure provides a systematic daily plan for this. Most readers do their daily reading silently, often in a single sitting. However, since many of the readings are fairly long, it is easy to get distracted and to start "reading just to finish." If this is the case for you, you may find it helpful to slow down to engage more fully in the listening process.

Following is a list of concrete practices or tools that should help you engage more deeply

with Scripture. (Since everyone is different, not all of these practices may work for you. And some of the practices work better for longer passages, as opposed to single verses, and vice versa.) Use these tools to help you engage with God's Word more deeply.

Practice 1—Read It Aloud: This practice will slow you down and allow you to focus. Reading aloud takes about twice as long as silent reading. It also allows you to encounter God's Word twice—through both your eyes and ears—leading you to a more nuanced interaction with the text. (This is especially useful as you approach a longer passage.) As you read aloud, you could try to read the text interpretively—add color to your expression to help you more completely take in and express the message. You could even dramatize a scene. And if others are around, don't be afraid to share the experience with them!

Practice 2—Copy It: Take out a pen and paper and copy a verse or passage of particular interest. If you are a visual learner, this should help you focus on the text more intensely. It will also force you to slow down even more and approach it phrase by phrase, helping you savor the text as you would a meal of many courses. If you have some talent with your pen, express the meaning of the text with different kinds of scripts and ink colors. This will help you focus on the meaning in greater detail. Typing the text into your computer and formatting the text creatively could accomplish the same sort of thing. If your rendering turns out really well, frame it or send it to friends to encourage their reflection.

Practice 3—Summarize It: Take a journal or computer and write a summary for each reading in this Bible with just a single sentence. This could be a simple content summary, or perhaps a summary of what God said to you through the passage. Reading with this practice can help you stay focused and also help you create a personal tool for Bible review. As you finish reading a Bible book, summarize the entire book's core message in a sentence or paragraph. Then at the end of the year, try to summarize the message of the whole Bible. From your perspective, what is the Bible's unified message?

Practice 4—Paraphrase It: Take out a pen and paper, or start up your computer, and put some verses into your own words. Try to capture all the important parts of the passage without leaving anything out. This will help you pay attention to the details and to the rich meanings of the words. Drink in the text, digest its meaning, and write it again from the unique perspective God has given you. Don't worry about the word order; focus on the message. You will likely find that this leaves you with nuggets of wisdom to take away and to continue to think about.

Practice 5—Divide It: This practice is somewhat the opposite of summarizing the broad strokes of a passage. To divide a text, choose a particular sentence that is especially meaningful to you, like "The LORD is my shepherd" (Psalm 23:1). Highlight each word of the sentence successively, and read it over and over again. This will allow you to see the verse from varied angles.

THE LORD is my shepherd.

The LORD is my shepherd.

The LORD IS my shepherd.

The LORD is MY shepherd.

The LORD is my SHEPHERD.

As you do this, you will likely see truths in the text that you were blind to before.

Practice 6—Personalize It: Embrace or claim Scripture personally by taking a verse or passage that clearly applies to you and replacing the nouns or pronouns with your own name. This will

drive home the truth that God is speaking about you and to you. The verse that includes the text we just divided in Practice 5 might read, "The LORD is Susan's shepherd. Susan shall not want." You might also personalize it this way for a friend, your spouse, or your children.

Practice 7—Pray It: Many passages are helpful for guiding our prayers. They remind us of what is true and what is important to God. We can use these reminders as prayer prompts. Again, take the verse we looked at from Psalm 23. It might inspire a prayer like this: "Lord, you have reminded me that you are my Shepherd and that you can provide all that I need. As one of your sheep, I confess that I often don't follow you very closely. I'm often one of the lost sheep—one of those you need to search for in stormy weather and carry home. I can see that if I followed you more closely, I'd also be much closer to all that you have to offer me. The unmet needs I'm always complaining about would be better met if I just stayed near to my Shepherd. And I suppose sometimes I wander away looking to satisfy my wants rather than my real needs. Dear Shepherd, help me to stay close to your loving care and protection. Forgive my tendency to wander. Amen."

Practice 8—Memorize It: Putting Scripture to memory is the likely result of many of these other practices. For many of us, if we copy or read a verse again and again, we will soon know it by heart. To begin memorizing a text, repeating it is the best place to start. Read or copy a text three times a day for an entire month and then begin to recite it aloud for yourself on a regular basis. Then, if the appropriate opportunity arises, recite it for others. (Remember to learn the reference, too, so you can more easily locate it.) The psalm writer reminds us of why Scripture memorization is so important: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11).

Practice 9—Share It: God's Word is good news, whether it comes in a story or parable, an account of one of Jesus' miracles, a psalm of praise, a promise of hope, or a wise proverb. When you've read something helpful, thought provoking, or inspiring, share it. As you do, you'll find that the message becomes more real for you too. If it's a story, retell it to someone in your own words. Try to capture all the details. If it's a short promise or proverb, email it to a friend, post it on an announcement board or refrigerator, carve it into a piece of wood to hang on a wall, bring it up for discussion with friends over coffee, or tweet it for anyone who might be watching. If you've heard from God and it means something to you, take the time to share it.

Practice 10—Live It: It's not just important to read and listen to God's Word. We also need to find ways to put it into practice. (Keeping this in mind as you read will also help you to focus.) We are reminded of this in the book of James: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22). As you reflect on God's Word, conclude your time by thinking up ways to live it out. What can you put into action today?

Other Ways to Use the One-Year Reading Plan

Though *The One Year Bible* has led millions of readers through the Bible in one year, its arrangement is equally useful for guiding you through the Bible in two years, or even longer. If you feel too rushed or want to spend more time on each day's selections, here are a few other suggestions:

The Split One-Year Plan. Schedule time in both the morning and evening. Read the New Testament and Psalms selections in the morning and the Old Testament and Proverbs selections in the evening.

The Two-Year Plan. During the first year, read the Old Testament and Proverbs selections. Then during the second year, read the selections from the New Testament and Psalms.

The Three-Year Plan. Read the Old Testament selection the first year, the New Testament selection the second year, and the Psalms and Proverbs selections during the third year.

The Words of Praise and Wisdom Plan. Read the Psalms and Proverbs selections for each day. This will take you through the Psalms twice and Proverbs once during the year, giving you words of praise and wisdom to live by each day.

You need not limit yourself to these suggested plans. The arrangement of *The One Year Bible* makes it easy to devise any number of Bible reading plans to meet your particular needs.



PUBLISHER'S NOTE



The One Year Bible for Women has been prepared especially for women who wish to read through the entire Bible in one year and to reflect daily on the women whose lives and stories unfold in the pages of Scripture. Millions of readers have enjoyed the convenient daily reading format featuring a passage from the Old Testament, the New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs. In 365 daily readings, you will journey through the entire Bible and read through Psalms twice!

This special edition of *The One Year Bible* includes devotional reflections from Misty Arterburn, an author and speaker with rich life experience as a Life Recovery group facilitator and mother of five. We have prepared a user's guide, which appears on page A7, to help you explore a variety of ways to engage with God's Word using *The One Year Bible for Women*.

May this year and every year be enriched as you enjoy daily portions from God's Word.

This edition of *The One Year Bible* contains the entire text of the *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

To the Most High and Mighty Prince

JAMES

By the Grace of God

King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland,

Defender of the Faith, &c.

The Translators of the Bible wish Grace, Mercy, and Peace
through JESUS CHRIST our Lord

Great and manifold were the blessings, most dread Sovereign, which Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, bestowed upon us the people of *England*, when first he sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule and reign over us. For whereas it was the expectation of many, who wished not well unto our *Sion*, that upon the setting of that bright *Occidental Star*, Queen *Elizabeth* of most happy memory, some thick and palpable clouds of darkness would so have overshadowed this Land, that men should have been in doubt which way they were to walk; and that it should hardly be known, who was to direct the unsettled State; the appearance of Your Majesty, as of the *Sun* in his strength, instantly dispelled those supposed and surmised mists, and gave unto all that were well affected exceeding cause of comfort; especially when we beheld the Government established in Your Highness, and Your hopeful Seed, by an undoubted Title, and this also accompanied with peace and tranquility at home and abroad.

But among all our joys, there was no one that more filled our hearts, than the blessed continuance of the preaching of God's sacred Word among us; which is that inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above in heaven.

Then not to suffer this to fall to the ground, but rather to take it up, and to continue it in that state, wherein the famous Predecessor of Your Highness did leave it: nay, to go forward with the confidence and resolution of a Man in maintaining the truth of Christ, and propagating it far and near, is that which hath so bound and firmly knit the hearts of all Your Majesty's loyal and religious people unto You, that Your very name is precious among them: their eye doth behold You with comfort, and they bless You in their hearts, as that sanctified Person who, under God, is the immediate Author of their true happiness. And this their contentment doth not diminish or decay, but every day increaseth and taketh strength, when they observe, that the zeal of Your Majesty toward the house of God doth not slack or go backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting itself abroad in the farthest parts of *Christendom*, by writing in defence of the Truth, (which hath given such a blow unto that man of sin, as will not be healed,) and every day at home, by religious and learned discourse, by frequenting the house of God, by hearing the

Word preached, by cherishing the Teachers thereof, by caring for the Church, as a most tender and loving nursing Father.

There are infinite arguments of this right Christian and religious affection in Your Majesty; but none is more forcible to declare it to others than the vehement and perpetuated desire of accomplishing and publishing of this work, which now with all humility we present unto Your Majesty. For when Your Highness had once out of deep judgment apprehended how convenient it was, that out of the Original Sacred Tongues, together with comparing of the labours, both in our own, and other foreign Languages, of many worthy men who went before us, there should be one more exact Translation of the holy Scriptures into the *English Tongue*; Your Majesty did never desist to urge and to excite those to whom it was commended, that the work might be hastened, and that the business might be expedited in so decent a manner, as a matter of such importance might justly require.

And now at last, by the mercy of God, and the continuance of our labours, it being brought unto such a conclusion, as that we have great hopes that the Church of *England* shall reap good fruit thereby; we hold it our duty to offer it to Your Majesty, not only as to our King and Sovereign, but as to the principal Mover and Author of the work: humbly craving of Your most Sacred Majesty, that since things of this quality have ever been subject to the censures of ill-meaning and discontented persons, it may receive approbation and patronage from so learned and judicious a Prince as Your Highness is, whose allowance and acceptance of our labours shall more honour and encourage us, than all the calumniations and hard interpretations of other men shall dismay us. So that if, on the one side, we shall be traduced by Popish Persons at home or abroad, who therefore will malign us, because we are poor instruments to make God's holy Truth to be yet more and more known unto the people, whom they desire still to keep in ignorance and darkness; or if, on the other side, we shall be maligned by self-conceited Brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing, but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil; we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocency of a good conscience, having walked the ways of simplicity and integrity, as before the Lord; and sustained without by the powerful protection of Your Majesty's grace and favour, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavours against bitter censures and uncharitable imputations.

The Lord of heaven and earth bless Your Majesty with many and happy days, that, as his heavenly hand hath enriched Your Highness with many singular and extraordinary graces, so You may be the wonder of the world in this latter age for happiness and true felicity, to the honour of that great God, and the good of his Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour.



WOMAN ENTERED AT PRECISELY THE RIGHT TIME. *All creation had preceded her, and in all creation there was yet a void. Her absence was observable and felt, mysteriously unsettling before she had even appeared. Creation was incomplete. From a garden filled with every provision and goodness, paradoxically man would experience lack. With all other creatures blessed to fill the earth and multiply, he was notably alone. Had there been a mistake or some oversight? Would the creation of Eve occur in mere afterthought, a problem solved for Adam? Far from it. Rather, God had been setting his stage, methodically unfolding his masterful plan. Granted a sacred season of aloneness, man would discover his God-given design for relationship. Despite his capacity for outreach, laughter, and all forms of reciprocal love, as of yet there were no means for such. We envision God's thrill in unveiling what he had known all along: that woman would meet man in exhilarating match, a helper both stronger and weaker than he. God thus blessed the two in equal commission that each would contribute uniquely, reflecting in great splendor the image of a holy God. All this, his gift in bringing forth his epic masterpiece in creation: woman.*

GENESIS 1:1–2:25

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

²And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

⁴And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

⁵And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

⁶And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

⁷And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so.

⁸And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

⁹And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so.

¹⁰And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was* good.

¹¹And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree

yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

¹²And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

¹³And the evening and the morning were the third day.

¹⁴And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

¹⁵And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

¹⁶And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also.

¹⁷And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

¹⁸And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good.

¹⁹And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

²¹And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and

every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*.

²²And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

²³And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

²⁵And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*.

²⁶And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

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

²⁸And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

²⁹And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is life*, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

³¹And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was very good*. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

²¹Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

²And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

³And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

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

⁵And every plant of the field before it was

in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground.

⁶But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

⁷And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

⁸And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

⁹And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

¹¹The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold;

¹²And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone.

¹³And the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

¹⁴And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel: that *is* it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates.

¹⁵And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

¹⁷But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

¹⁸And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

¹⁹And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof.

²⁰And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

²¹And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

²²And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

²³And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

²⁴Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

²⁵And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

MATTHEW 1:1–2:12

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

²Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;

³And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;

⁴And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;

⁵And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

⁶And Jesse begat David the king. And David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

⁷And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

⁸And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

⁹And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

¹⁰And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

¹¹And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

¹²And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

¹³And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;

¹⁴And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

¹⁵And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

¹⁶And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

¹⁷So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

¹⁹Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

²⁰But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

²¹And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

²²Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

²³Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

²⁴Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

²⁵And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

^{2:1}Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

²Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

³When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

⁵And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

⁶And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

⁷Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

⁹When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

¹¹And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

¹²And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

PSALM 1:1-6

¹Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

²But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in

his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

⁴The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

⁵Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

⁶For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

PROVERBS 1:1-6

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel.

²To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

³To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

⁴To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

⁵A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

⁶To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

LIFE BEFORE SHAME. Was it ever a thing? Just the pause to consider it will send most of us shaking our heads and blinking our eyes in sheer bafflement. We are told Adam and Eve were both naked yet unashamed. We are awestruck and mesmerized by the notion. As women, many of us were conditioned from a very early age to accept opinions about our bodies and our behaviors. Soon came judgments and rejections that sent us questioning our worth. But let us stay here with Eve, in her unmarried, fresh state. Let us share in this space for a moment. And linger.

GENESIS 3:1-4:26

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

²And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

³But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

⁴And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

⁵For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

⁶And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one

wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

⁷And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

⁸And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

⁹And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

¹⁰And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

¹¹And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof

I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

¹²And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to *be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

¹³And the LORD God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

¹⁴And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

¹⁵And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

¹⁶Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

¹⁷And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

¹⁸Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

¹⁹In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

²⁰And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

²¹Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

²²And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

²³Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

²⁴So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

^{4:1}And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

²And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

³And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

⁴And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

⁵But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

⁶And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

⁷If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

⁸And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

⁹And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?

¹⁰And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

¹¹And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

¹²When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

¹³And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment *is* greater than I can bear.

¹⁴Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me.

¹⁵And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

¹⁶And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

¹⁷And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

¹⁸And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

¹⁹And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

²⁰And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father

of such as dwell in tents, and *of such as have* cattle.

²¹And his brother's name *was* Jubal: he *was* the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

²²And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain *was* Naamah.

²³And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.

²⁴If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

²⁵And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said she*, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

²⁶And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.

MATTHEW 2:13-3:6

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

¹⁴When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

¹⁵And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

¹⁷Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

¹⁸In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

¹⁹But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

²⁰Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

²¹And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

²²But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

²³And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

^{3:1}In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

²And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

³For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

⁴And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

⁵Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,

⁶And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

PSALM 2:1-12

¹Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

²The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*,

³Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

⁴He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

⁵Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

⁶Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

⁷I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

⁸Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

⁹Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

¹⁰Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

¹¹Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

¹²Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

PROVERBS 1:7-9

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

⁸My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

⁹For they *shall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

SOMETIMES GOD ASKS QUESTIONS. *The all-knowing, all-powerful, ever-present God asks Adam and Cain, "Where art thou?" "Why art thou wroth?" "What hast thou done?" Does God not know what is happening? Does he need to be informed? When we were children, our parents may have called us to account in similar fashion. As a mother or caregiver, we may have done likewise, inviting confession on information we already have. This solely benefits the child. An opportunity to come forward, to bring what is secret into light, to enter back into truth, to reconnect with the one who loves us. A chance to come clean.*

GENESIS 5:1-7:24

This *is* the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;

²Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

³And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

⁴And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters:

⁵And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

⁶And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos:

⁷And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters:

⁸And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

⁹And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan:

¹⁰And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters:

¹¹And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.

¹²And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel:

¹³And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters:

¹⁴And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.

¹⁵And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared:

¹⁶And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared

eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters:

¹⁷And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died.

¹⁸And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch:

¹⁹And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

²⁰And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

²¹And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

²²And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

²³And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

²⁴And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him.

²⁵And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech:

²⁶And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters:

²⁷And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

²⁸And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son:

²⁹And he called his name Noah, saying, *This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.*

³⁰And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters:

³¹And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died.

³²And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6:1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.

5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

9 These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God.

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

15 And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it.

17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh,

wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven; *and* every thing that *is* in the earth shall die.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep *them* alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

7:1 And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

2 Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that *are* not clean by two, the male and his female.

3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

5 And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.

6 And Noah *was* six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

7 And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that *are* not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

9 There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

10 And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

¹³In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark;

¹⁴They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

¹⁵And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life.

¹⁶And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.

¹⁷And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

¹⁸And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

¹⁹And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered.

²⁰Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

²¹And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

²²All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry *land*, died.

²³And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark.

²⁴And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

MATTHEW 3:7–4:11

But when he [John the Baptist] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

⁸Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

⁹And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

¹⁰And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

¹¹I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

¹²Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

¹³Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

¹⁴But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

¹⁵And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

¹⁶And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

^{4:1}Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

²And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

³And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

⁴But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

⁵Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

⁶And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

⁷Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

⁸Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

⁹And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

¹⁰Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

¹¹Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

PSALM 3:1-8

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

¹LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many *are* they that rise up against me.

²Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is no help for him in God.* Selah.

³But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

⁴I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

⁵I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

⁶I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.

⁷Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

⁸Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

PROVERBS 1:10-19

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

¹¹If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

¹²Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

¹³We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

¹⁴Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

¹⁵My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

¹⁶For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

¹⁷Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

¹⁸And they lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

¹⁹So *are* the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

WE HAVE AN ENEMY, cunning and sly, skilled in the art of deception. Oddly, this same enemy is well versed in truth. Satan knows the Scriptures. In an epic battle of wits while Jesus was depleted from fasting, Satan used God's words in an attempt to con Jesus. We are reminded of the garden of Eden when Satan slithered to twist and cast doubt on God's words with Eve. If ever we've been wounded by the twisting of Scripture, we can surely know who is behind such schemes. We can follow the example of Jesus, who rested on true-truth and applied it rightly.

GENESIS 8:1-10:32

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged;

²The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained;

³And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

⁴And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

⁵And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

⁶And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

⁷And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

⁸Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

⁹But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

¹⁰And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

¹¹And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth *was* an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

¹²And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

¹³And it came to pass in the six hundredth

and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

¹⁴And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

¹⁵And God spake unto Noah, saying,

¹⁶Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

¹⁷Bring forth with thee every living thing that *is* with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

¹⁸And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

¹⁹Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

²⁰And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

²¹And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

²²While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

^{9:1}And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

²And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

³Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

⁴But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

⁵And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

⁶Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

⁷And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring

forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

⁸And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

⁹And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

¹⁰And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

¹¹And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

¹²And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations:

¹³I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

¹⁴And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

¹⁵And I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

¹⁶And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

¹⁷And God said unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

¹⁸And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham *is* the father of Canaan.

¹⁹These *are* the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

²⁰And Noah began *to be* an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:

²¹And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

²²And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

²³And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.

²⁴And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

²⁵And he said, Cursed *be* Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

²⁶And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

²⁷God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

²⁸And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

²⁹And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

^{10:1}Now these *are* the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

²The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Me-shech, and Tiras.

³And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

⁴And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

⁵By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

⁶And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.

⁷And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

⁸And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth.

⁹He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.

¹⁰And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

¹¹Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,

¹²And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same *is* a great city.

¹³And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,

¹⁴And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.

¹⁵And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth,

¹⁶And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Gargasite,

¹⁷And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

¹⁸And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.

¹⁹And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.

²⁰These *are* the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

²¹Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were *children* born.

²²The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

²³And the children of Aram; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

²⁴And Arphaxad begat Salah; and Salah begat Eber.

²⁵And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one *was* Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan.

²⁶And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

²⁷And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah,

²⁸And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

²⁹And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these *were* the sons of Joktan.

³⁰And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar a mount of the east.

³¹These *are* the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

³²These *are* the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

MATTHEW 4:12-25

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;

¹³And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

¹⁴That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

¹⁵The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

¹⁶The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

¹⁷From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

¹⁸And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

¹⁹And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

²⁰And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him.

²¹And going on from thence, he saw other

two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

²²And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

²³And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

²⁴And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

²⁵And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.

PSALM 4:1-8

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David.

¹Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

²O ye sons of men, how long *will ye turn* my glory into shame? *how long* will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.

³But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

⁴Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

⁵Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

⁶*There be* many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

⁷Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

⁸I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

PROVERBS 1:20-23

Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:

²¹She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, *saying*,

²²How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

²³Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR NOAH'S WIFE, *this mission of the ark? Was it easy for her to support such an outlandish task? Did God helpfully speak directly to her so she could partner in fervor and shared urgency? Or was she faced with more common battles we may recognize, like warring disbelief, resistance to the call, and dissension with her husband? We know that ultimately this woman and her family made it on board that ship. Any prior resistance was soon answered in the raging flood, and her efforts were rewarded in that most beautiful rainbow and promise. We can tackle our hard things today.*

GENESIS 11:1-13:4

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

²And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

³And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

⁴And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

⁵And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

⁶And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

⁷Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

⁸So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

⁹Therefore is the name of it called Babel;

because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

¹⁰These *are* the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood:

¹¹And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹²And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah:

¹³And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹⁴And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber:

¹⁵And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹⁶And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg:

¹⁷And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹⁸And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu:

¹⁹And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

²⁰And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug:

²¹And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

²²And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor:

²³And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

²⁴And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah:

²⁵And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

²⁶And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

²⁷Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

²⁸And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

²⁹And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

³⁰But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child.

³¹And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot

the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

³²And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

^{12:1}Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

²And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

³And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

⁴So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

⁵And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

⁶And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land.

⁷And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

⁸And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, *having* Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

⁹And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

¹⁰And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine *was* grievous in the land.

¹¹And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou *art* a fair woman to look upon:

¹²Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This *is* his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

¹³Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

¹⁴And it came to pass, that, when Abram

was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she *was* very fair.

¹⁵The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

¹⁶And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

¹⁷And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife.

¹⁸And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she *was* thy wife?

¹⁹Why saidst thou, She *is* my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take *her*, and go thy way.

²⁰And Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

^{13:1} And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

²And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

³And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai;

⁴Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

MATTHEW 5:1-26

And seeing the multitudes, he [Jesus] went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

²And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

³Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

⁵Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

⁷Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

⁸Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

⁹Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

¹⁰Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for

righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

¹²Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

¹³Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

¹⁴Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

¹⁷Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

¹⁸For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

¹⁹Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

²⁰For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

²¹Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

²²But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

²³Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

²⁴Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

²⁵Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

²⁶Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no

means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

PSALM 5:1-12

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.

¹Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

²Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

³My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.

⁴For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

⁵The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

⁶Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

⁷But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: *and* in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

⁸Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

⁹For *there is* no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part *is* very wickedness; their

throat *is* an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

¹⁰Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

¹¹But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

¹²For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield.

PROVERBS 1:24-28

Because I [Wisdom] have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

²⁵But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

²⁶I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

²⁷When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

²⁸Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN *has its roots in early history. Sarai, Abram's wife, was treated like a possession, taken into Pharaoh's harem and eventually tossed back to Abram in disposable fashion. Equally rooted in early history is the sheer strength of women not only to survive hardship but also to rise up through adversity. We will watch it happen time and again as we read through Scripture this year. And once Jesus arrives on earth, born of a strong and outrageously courageous woman, he teaches us all, time and again, the true place we hold in creation and in his heart.*

GENESIS 13:5–15:21

And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

⁶And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

⁷And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizite dwelled then in the land.

⁸And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we *be* brethren.

⁹*Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: *if thou wilt take*

the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

¹⁰And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even* as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

¹¹Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

¹²Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched *his* tent toward Sodom.

¹³But the men of Sodom *were* wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

¹⁴And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

¹⁵For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

¹⁶And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered.

¹⁷Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

¹⁸Then Abram removed *his* tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which *is* in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

^{14:1}And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations;

²*That these* made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which *is* Zoar.

³All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which *is* the Salt Sea.

⁴Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

⁵And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that *were* with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim,

⁶And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which *is* by the wilderness.

⁷And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which *is* Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar.

⁸And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same *is* Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim;

⁹With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five.

¹⁰And the vale of Siddim *was full of* slime-pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain.

¹¹And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

¹²And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

¹³And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these *were* confederate with Abram.

¹⁴And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained *servants*, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued *them* unto Dan.

¹⁵And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which *is* on the left hand of Damascus.

¹⁶And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

¹⁷And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that *were* with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which *is* the king's dale.

¹⁸And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he *was* the priest of the most high God.

¹⁹And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

²⁰And blessed *be* the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

²¹And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

²²And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth,

²³That I will not *take* from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that *is* thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

²⁴Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

^{15:1}After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

²And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus?

³And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house *is* mine heir.

⁴And, behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir;

but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

⁵And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

⁶And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

⁷And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

⁸And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

⁹And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.

¹⁰And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

¹¹And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away.

¹²And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

¹³And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is not theirs*, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

¹⁴And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

¹⁵And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

¹⁶But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is not yet full*.

¹⁷And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

¹⁸In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

¹⁹The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

²⁰And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

²¹And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

MATTHEW 5:27-48

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

²⁸But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

²⁹And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

³⁰And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

³¹It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

³²But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

³³Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

³⁴But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

³⁵Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

³⁶Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

³⁷But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

³⁸Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

³⁹But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also.

⁴¹And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

⁴²Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

⁴³Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

⁴⁴But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

⁴⁵That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

⁴⁶For if ye love them which love you, what

reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

⁴⁷And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

⁴⁸Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

PSALM 6:1-10

To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

¹O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

²Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I *am* weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

³My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

⁴Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

⁵For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

⁶I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

⁷Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

⁸Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

⁹The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.

¹⁰Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly.

PROVERBS 1:29-33

For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

³⁰They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

³¹Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

³²For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

³³But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

SOMETIMES WE BECOME OVERLY FOCUSED on our rights and demands. If someone has wronged us, it is natural to want justice, and we may be eager to settle the score. We may even do battle, whether on military battlegrounds or in the centers of our kitchens. In his Sermon on the Mount, however, Jesus cut straight to the heart of the matter, blowing past any perceived entitlements: "Ye have heard" that under the law you have these rights and those rights and are justified in revenge. "But I say unto you" that there is another path. A different type of strength. One that requires uprightness and humility. Yes, even love.

GENESIS 16:1–18:15

Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

²And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

³And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

⁴And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

⁵And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had

conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.

⁶But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

⁷And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

⁸And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

⁹And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

¹⁰And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

¹¹And the angel of the LORD said unto her,

Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

¹²And he will be a wild man; his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

¹³And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

¹⁴Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

¹⁶And Abram *was* fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

^{17:1}And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, *I am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

²And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

³And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

⁴As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

⁵Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

⁶And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

⁷And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

⁸And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

⁹And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

¹⁰This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

¹¹And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

¹²And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed.

¹³He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

¹⁴And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

¹⁵And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name *be*.

¹⁶And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

¹⁷Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

¹⁸And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

¹⁹And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him.

²⁰And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

²¹But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

²²And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

²³And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him.

²⁴And Abraham *was* ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

²⁵And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

²⁶In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

²⁷And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

^{18:1}And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

²And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo,

three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

³And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

⁴Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

⁵And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

⁶And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth.

⁷And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

⁸And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

⁹And they said unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

¹⁰And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent door, which *was* behind him.

¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old *and* well stricken in age; *and* it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

¹²Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

¹³And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

¹⁴Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

¹⁵Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

MATTHEW 6:1-24

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

²Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

³But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

⁴That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

⁵And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

⁶But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

⁷But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

⁸Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

⁹After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

¹⁰Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

¹¹Give us this day our daily bread.

¹²And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

¹⁴For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

¹⁵But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

¹⁶Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

¹⁷But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

¹⁸That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

¹⁹Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

²⁰But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

²²The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

²³But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

²⁴No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

PSALM 7:1-17

Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.

¹O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

²Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while *there is* none to deliver.

³O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

⁴If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)

⁵Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.

⁶Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me *to* the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.

⁷So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

⁸The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity *that is* in me.

⁹Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

¹⁰My defence *is* of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

¹¹God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

¹²If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

¹³He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

¹⁴Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

¹⁵He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

¹⁶His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

¹⁷I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

PROVERBS 2:1-5

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;

²So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

³Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding;

⁴If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures;

⁵Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

THE LORD SEES AND KNOWS ALL. *Whatever we think we are hiding, we are not. When Sarah discovered that God planned to bless her with a son in her old age, her secret laughter, sarcasm, and disbelief were not unheard or unnoticed by him. And he called her on it. Whether or not we recognize it, the transparency of our hearts with God is one of our greatest gifts. There is never a reason for us to hide from God. He sees and loves us still. Jesus then encouraged praying and doing good deeds for others in secret, which the Father sees and rewards.*

GENESIS 18:16-19:38

And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

¹⁷And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

¹⁸Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

¹⁹For I know him, that he will command

his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

²⁰And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

²¹I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of

it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

²²And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

²³And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

²⁴Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein?

²⁵That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

²⁶And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

²⁷And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am* but dust and ashes:

²⁸Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack* of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*.

²⁹And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake.

³⁰And he said *unto him*, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there.

³¹And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.

³²And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.

³³And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

^{19:1}And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

²And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

³And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

⁴But before they lay down, the men of the city, *even* the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

⁵And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where *are* the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

⁶And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

⁷And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

⁸Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

⁹And they said, Stand back. And they said *again*, This one *fellow* came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, *even* Lot, and came near to break the door.

¹⁰But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

¹¹And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

¹²And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place:

¹³For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy *it*.

¹⁴And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

¹⁵And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

¹⁶And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

¹⁷And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

¹⁸And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord:

¹⁹Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

²⁰Behold now, this city *is* near to flee unto, and it *is* a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (*is* it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

²¹And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

²²Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

²³The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

²⁴Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

²⁵And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

²⁶But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

²⁷And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

²⁸And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

²⁹And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

³⁰And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

³¹And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father *is* old, and *there is* not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:

³²Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

³³And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

³⁴And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

³⁵And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

³⁶Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

³⁷And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same *is* the father of the Moabites unto this day.

³⁸And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same *is* the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

MATTHEW 6:25-7:14

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

²⁶Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

²⁷Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

²⁸And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

²⁹And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

³¹Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

³²(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

³³But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

³⁴Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

^{7:1}Judge not, that ye be not judged.

²For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall

be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

³And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

⁴Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye?

⁵Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

⁶Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

⁷Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

⁸For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

⁹Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

¹⁰Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

¹¹If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

¹²Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

¹³Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

¹⁴Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

PSALM 8:1-9

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.

¹O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

²Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

³When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

⁴What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

⁵For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

⁶Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

⁷All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

⁸The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and *whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

⁹O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

PROVERBS 2:6-15

For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding.

⁷He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

⁸He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

⁹Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

¹⁰When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

¹¹Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

¹²To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that speaketh froward things;

¹³Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

¹⁴Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

¹⁵Whose ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths:

LOT HAD CHOSEN TO SETTLE HIS FAMILY NEAR SODOM, a city known for sexual unrestraint and especially wicked behavior. When Sodom was destroyed, Lot and his two daughters were spared from the wreckage but created a new wreckage of their own by incestuous behavior. Were they desperate, trying to perpetuate their family line and believing they were the last on earth? Or perhaps they were simply sick with sexual perversion, culturally influenced. Our own families and histories have surely been influenced by surrounding culture and wayward relatives. Jesus himself arrived generations later from this line of Lot and will lovingly, heroically redeem our histories as well.