



THE ONE YEAR®

# DEVOTIONS FOR WOMEN

*with Jill Briscoe*





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*with Jill Briscoe*

telling the  
**TRUTH**   
experiencing Life





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Material in this book was previously published in *The One Year Book of Quiet Times with God* © 1997 by Jill Briscoe and *The Daily Study Bible for Women* © 1999 by Tyndale House Publishers.

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ISBN 978-1-4964-3609-2

Printed in the United States of America

24 23 22 21 20 19 18  
7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Introduction

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When David penned Psalm 23, he pictured a good shepherd leading his flock beside peaceful streams and resting them in green meadows. The Lord is our Shepherd, and we are his sheep. The nourishment he provides for us is found in the green meadows of Scripture. As we follow him and “graze” the passages of the Bible, we will discover our strength renewed all the days of our life! There will always be a fresh thought, a truth to be relearned, or an insight we have never had before.

Sometimes, however, it’s hard to know how to follow the Shepherd, or to find the green pastures he longs to lead us to. That is why we have created *The One Year Devotions for Women*. It is designed to help women read the Scriptures regularly and see that what God said years ago to David and all the other biblical writers still speaks to women today.

As you turn to these green pastures for a word of comfort, direction, or instruction, you will find relevant biblical passages and helpful explanations, which will serve to make the truth of the Bible clear, its message understandable, and its points applicable.

May your cup overflow with God’s blessings as you “graze” on the pages of God’s Word, grasp its meaning, and embrace its truth.

*Jill Briscoe*



**JANUARY**



# ELOHIM

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

GENESIS 1:1



Used 2,500 times in the Old Testament, the name *Elohim* reveals the mighty strength of God. *El* is the Hebrew word for “strength,” while *alah* or *oah* means “faithfulness.” God’s faithfulness begins afresh each day (Lamentations 3:23). God is always fresh, never stale. We can depend on it!

The Bible is not a scientific textbook, but a book about faith. It does not tell us how the heavens go, but how to go to heaven. It also tells us who makes the heavens go and who upholds them “by the mighty power of his command” (Hebrews 1:3).

Elohim meets us in Genesis. In the beginning of days and nights, flowers and trees, fish and mammals, he tells us by his name that he is the Creator of all. God is strong enough to make myriad universes and faithful enough to keep them all spinning safely at the right speed.

And what does this name mean to me? It gives me confidence. It tells me that if God made the world, he can make my world spin around with a little more order than I’ve managed to create in it! It gives me something—Someone—on whom I can depend. If God is perfect faithfulness, renewing his pledge to me morning by morning, I can go to sleep in peace evening by evening. Elohim can be known; Elohim can be trusted; Elohim is there!



## DIABOLICAL FOOTSTEPS

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

GENESIS 3:1



Satan is called the "serpent" both in Genesis and in Revelation (Revelation 12:9). In one frightening chapter of Genesis, we catch a glimpse of his powers. He is seen to be cunning, articulate, a liar, a deceiver and destroyer, and an enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eve's mistake was to take him on! She was no match for the serpent; neither are you and I. The second Adam, Jesus Christ, met Satan and withstood his temptations (Matthew 4:1-11). Jesus overcame and destroyed Satan at the Cross. Because of Christ's victory, true Christians have the same power to overcome.

We are promised discernment to match Satan's cunning, truth to counter his lies, and weapons to fight the unseen battles of the spirit (Ephesians 6:12-18). If we take on the old serpent in our own strength as Eve did, there is no contest. But that is more easily said than done! I like the story of the little boy who told his Sunday school teacher that when Satan knocked on the door of his heart, he sent Jesus to answer it! Very wise! The serpent is stronger than all our best intentions, but God is stronger than all the serpent's worst designs!

Do you not believe in Satan? Then you really have been deceived! The Bible plots his diabolical footsteps from Genesis 3 to Revelation 20. Jesus believed in him and showed us how to counter his subtlety with triumphant truth.

## WALKING RIGHT ON HOME

*[Enoch walked] in close fellowship with God.  
Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.*

GENESIS 5:24



**E**noch was a faithful friend of God. He was in constant touch with him (Genesis 5:24). The King James Version renders this verse, “Enoch walked with God.” Another word for that is “fellowship.” His consistency in his fellowship with God gives us something to think about! In the end, after he had lived 365 years, he was favored by being taken to heaven in a supernatural way.

“He disappeared, because God took him” (Genesis 5:24). The King James Version says, “He was not.” One moment he “was”—the next he “was not.” It was as if these two—God and Enoch—had taken so many walks together through life, talking and delighting in each other, that one day as they walked along, God said to Enoch, “It’s late; why don’t you come home to my house tonight?” And they walked right on home! To be fruitful, faithful, and favored in such a way shows us what true friendship with God is all about.

Do we enjoy such closeness with God? Walking with God speaks of a commonality, a communion, an easy, conversational “walk” with our Creator on the road of life. It involves being honest with our heavenly Companion. Hurt feelings must be discussed, misunderstandings laid on the table. Fellowship means warmth of understanding and an interest in the thoughts and feelings of another. When we walk together with God all our days, we’ll find ourselves walking right on home.

## STRIVING WITH THE SPIRIT

*The LORD said, "My Spirit will not put up with humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years."*

GENESIS 6:3



God gets upset with us. He wrestles with us, showing us how to live, move, be, and worship him. He does this as he does anything big—by his Spirit.

In Genesis days, "the Spirit of God was hovering over" the surface of the earth (Genesis 1:2). The angel who announced the Incarnation told Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you" (Luke 1:35). The adult Jesus, "full of the Holy Spirit . . . was led by the Spirit" into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil for forty days (Luke 4:1). In his temptation, Jesus resisted Satan in the power of the Spirit. Jesus, "by the power of the eternal Spirit . . . offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins" (Hebrews 9:14). He was raised from the dead by the Spirit (Romans 8:11). He works with the Spirit in regeneration, bringing eternal life to men and women.

But men and women do not always allow God's Spirit to have his way in their lives. Whenever God does anything big, he does it by his Spirit. One of the biggest things he does is change self-seeking people into servants! In fact, that is just what the Bible says: "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

It is the Holy Spirit's work to strive with us to bring about that creative regeneration in our lives.

## A PLEASURE OR A PAIN

*Noah found favor with the LORD.*

GENESIS 6:8



Noah was a pleasure to the Lord. We are either a pleasure to the Lord, or a pain! What are the conditions of being a pleasure, of having such favored friendship with God?

First, we need to find out how we can bring pleasure to the Lord. Sometimes we really want to please the Lord, but we don't bother to find out *how* to do that. We're a lot more interested in how *he* can please *us*. The first thing that pleases God is our right behavior—our holy living even when no one around us is behaving properly.

Noah was the only truly righteous man living on the earth at that time (Genesis 6:9), for Noah knew and understood God. It wasn't easy. It's hard to be the only one pleasing God when no one else is bothering. What was the state of Noah's society? The crime rate was rising—"God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt" (Genesis 6:12). God saw that the world was rotten to the core. Noah was God's friend when others chose the friendship of the devil. But Noah tried always to conduct his affairs according to God's will and commands (Genesis 6:9, 22).

Do we care more about pleasing God than pleasing others or ourselves? Do we see our world as "rotten to the core" as God sees it, and do we side with him? Then we can call ourselves God's friends! When God looks at us, are we a pleasure to him, or a pain?

## NEVER AGAIN

*I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures.  
Never again will the floodwaters destroy all life.*

GENESIS 9:15



When God says, “Never again,” he means never again! No doubt Noah believed God’s word. One experience of the faithfulness of God leads us to trust in him more. Life’s experiences help us to look back and see God’s promises and judgments that have come true.

Noah began his new life in a brand-new world very wisely. He had a worship and devotional time! It was a time to praise and thank God for his faithfulness. And perhaps he needed God to assure him that things would be better in the future. Noah and his family had just “ridden out” the storm, and now it was time to move on with their lives.

After a cataclysmic event in your life, it helps to reestablish your devotional life. It’s more important than ever to listen for God’s “never again” and start looking for rainbows. Spend time reading the promises of God in the Bible. Underline them if it helps.

But what exactly can we be sure about? God promises that sin need never again control us (Romans 8:9-11). He promises that we need not be afraid ever again (John 14:27). He promises that his peace will guard our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7). He promises that we need never be ignorant of his will, for his word will be a “lamp” and “light” to our path (Psalm 119:105). He promises that we need never again be defeated Christians (Romans 8:37). As we read our Bibles, God’s rainbows color our perspective. Be encouraged! God’s promises never fail.

## WHAT'S A CHRISTIAN FAMILY FOR?

*I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.*

GENESIS 12:2



Have you ever wondered why God blessed you by calling you to himself? Did you realize that when he gave this promise to Abraham he had all the families of the earth in mind—even those yet to come? God called Abraham and blessed him in order that he might become a blessing to others. God promised him, “All the families on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:3). This is one of the most important verses in the whole of Scripture. Our families—whether Jew or Gentile—can be part of this blessing promised to Abraham. The blessing has to do with a spiritual inheritance—a promised Savior, forgiveness for our sins, and a home in heaven for people of all races, colors, and creeds.

If we belong to the Lord, we have not been blessed just to be blessed. We have been blessed to be a blessing to others. The same applies to our families. God wants us to have not only our families in mind but all the families of the world. This is what Christian families are for.

Everything that God gave Abraham—children, fame, honor, and status (Genesis 12:2-3)—was given to him in order that his descendants would continue what God had begun in his promise to Abraham. They were to pass on the blessing to future generations. We ordinary people in a family are saved to serve the extraordinary purposes of God. We must use whatever material, substance, social standing, influence, and honor that God has given us for the good of others.