The Everyday Life Bible

Containing the
Amplified Old Testament
and the
Amplified New Testament

FEATURING NOTES and COMMENTARY
BY
JOYCE MEYER

Faith Words
New York • Nashville
FOREWORD

Scriptural Promise

“The grass withers, the flower fades, 
But the word of our God stands forever.”

Isaiah 40:8

The Amplified Bible has been produced with the conviction that the words of Scripture as originally penned in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek were inspired by God. Since they are the eternal Word of God, the Holy Scriptures speak with fresh power to each generation, to give wisdom that leads to salvation, that people may serve Christ to the glory of God.

The Fourfold Aim of The Lockman Foundation

1. The publications shall be true to the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.
2. They shall be grammatically correct.
3. They shall be understandable to the people.
4. They shall give the Lord Jesus Christ His proper place, the place which the Word gives Him; therefore, no translation work will ever be personalized.
PREFACE

In 1958 The Lockman Foundation and Zondervan Publishing House issued the first edition of the Amplified New Testament. In 1962 and 1964 the two-volume Amplified Old Testament was released. In 1965 the complete Amplified Bible was published, and in 1987 the Amplified Bible, Expanded Edition was completed. Over fifty years have passed since the Amplified New Testament was translated and during that time there have been changes in both the style and usage of the English language; therefore, it seemed appropriate for The Lockman Foundation to revisit this well-loved translation of God’s Word. Accordingly, Dr. Robert G. Lambeth, President of The Lockman Foundation, established a translation team and under his leadership the project was developed and completed.

The Lockman Foundation is now pleased to present the Amplified Bible of 2015. The English has been updated based on contemporary usage, a substantial number of new amplifications have been added to the Old Testament, and original amplifications have been updated, expanded, refined, or clarified where needed. The translation team has also added a significant number of new footnotes and references.

The result is a translation that is contemporary and firmly based on the foundation established by the Amplified Bible of 1965. That original translation project was envisioned and led by Frances Siewert (1881-1967), an amazing and gifted woman who devoted her life to serving the Lord and to making His Word available in an entirely new format. Her contribution to the spread of the Gospel through the Amplified Bible is impossible to quantify and her vision continues to speak to the hearts of people today.

The Amplified Bible of 2015 has been editorially recast so that a verse may be read either with or without amplification. The basic verse is the literal equivalent translation of the Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek text. The basic verse is then amplified in a way that permits the reader to have a greater understanding of the relationship between the crispness of contemporary English and the depth of meaning in the biblical languages.
EXPLANATION OF GENERAL FORMAT

Amplification is indicated within the English text by parentheticals, brackets, and italicized conjunctions.

Parentheses in Roman type ( ) supply the definition in context of the preceding name, place, or word. When the Amplified Bible is read aloud the definition in context may be skipped over.

Parentheses in bold type ( ) indicate a parenthetical phrase that is part of the original language and should be included when Scripture is read aloud.

Brackets in Roman type [ ] contain justified words, phrases, or brief commentary not fully expressed in the preceding English text, but which are validated by the meaning of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek, or are validated elsewhere by Scripture. The amplifications within brackets serve many purposes. They may expand the depth of meaning in the underlying Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek word; they may clarify a theological word or concept; they may expand a teaching or principle; they may supply information that helps the reader grasp the context of the passage.

Brackets in bold type [ ] are footnoted and indicate text not found in early mss or found only in some early mss.

Italicized conjunctions: and, or, nor are not in the original text, but are used to connect additional English words indicated by the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek.

Italicized words are not found in the original language, but implied by it.

Proper names of persons, places, or things are often used to replace pronouns. When pronouns are retained in the text they may be followed by a name placed in parentheses.

Pronouns referring to God, the Father; Jesus, the Son; and the Holy Spirit are always capitalized, so that the reader immediately recognizes Deity in the text.
Paragraphs are identified by **bold** verse numbers or **bold** letters. This allows paragraphs to be clearly identified without displaying the verses in paragraph format. The text can still be read or studied by paragraphs, but individual verses are much easier to find when each verse begins on a new line.

**Small capital letters** are used in the New Testament to indicate Old Testament quotations or obvious references to Old Testament texts. Variations of Old Testament wording are found in New Testament citations depending on whether the New Testament writer translated from a Hebrew text, used existing Greek or Aramaic translations, or restated the material. It should be noted that modern rules for the indication of direct quotations were not used in biblical times; therefore, the ancient writer would use exact quotations or references to quotations without specific indication of such.

**The proper name of God** in the Old Testament is most significant and understandably so. The most common name for the Deity is God, a translation of the Hebrew word, *Elohim*. One of the titles for God is Lord, a translation of *Adonai*. There is yet another name which is particularly assigned to God as His special or proper name, that is, the four letters YHWH (Exodus 3:14 and Isaiah 42:8). This name has not been pronounced by the Jews because of reverence for the great sacredness of the divine name. Therefore, it has been consistently translated *Lord*. The only exception to this translation of YHWH is when it occurs in immediate proximity to the word Lord, that is, Adonai. In that case it is regularly translated God in order to avoid confusion. When the name of God appears within parentheses or brackets, the context of the verse determines which name and type style is used.

**Verse references** are placed in brackets at the end of some verses. If a verse contains more than one Scripture reference, the references are listed in biblical order.

**Section headings** are included in the text, but are not part of the original language.
# ABBREVIATIONS AND SPECIAL MARKINGS

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The Lockman Foundation wishes to express deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of the 2015 edition of the Amplified Bible. Throughout these years of translation many people have shared their time, talent, prayers and very best effort to bring this Bible translation to completion.

It is our prayer that each participant—whether scholar or staff, professor or proofreader, consultant or critical reader—will look at these pages of Scripture and know that each one’s contribution is treasured . . . nothing is insignificant when dealing with God’s Word.

To quote F. Dewey “Granddad” Lockman (1898–1974), “This work is a symphony, not a solo!” May each of you be specially blessed and always hold a special joy in your heart whenever you read the new Amplified Bible 2015. Thank you beloved.

Phoebe McAuley Lambeth
Coordinating Editor
A Personal Word from Joyce Meyer

For more than forty years, I have enjoyed and greatly benefitted from the Amplified Bible. It gives insights I have not found in other translations I have used. Because God has used the Amplified Bible in my life to open up many truths from His Word to me, I wanted to share the insight He has given me to help others. I prayed for many years to get permission from the publisher to produce a specialty Bible using this version and was thrilled when permission was finally granted.

God's Word is very precious to me. I can truly say that I love God's Word. It has changed me, and it has changed my life. I have also witnessed transformation in the lives of multitudes of people over the years through studying and believing God's Word. God's words are not ordinary words, as the words of people are. His words are filled with power. The power of God is actually inherent in His Word and it heals, delivers, comforts, saves, corrects, and encourages us.

When people are very discouraged, they can actually take God's Word as medicine for their souls. It encourages the discouraged, lifts up the lowly and downtrodden, heals the sick, saves the lost, fills the empty, and counsels those who need to make a decision.

Jesus is the Word of God Who took on human flesh and dwelt for a while among people (see John 1:14). When we read, study, meditate on, or confess the Word of God, we are fellowshipping with Jesus. We are actually taking Him as our nourishment and we find that only He can satisfy our souls. God's Word is our spiritual food and we need it regularly, just as we need natural food. The prophet Jeremiah said, “Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became a joy to me and the delight of my heart” (Jeremiah 15:16).

God's Word is very important to Him. The Bible says in Psalm 138:2 that He has magnified together His name and His word. We should always respect and honor God's Word and give it a place of priority in our everyday lives. I truly believe that God’s Word contains an answer to every problem and situation we encounter in life. It is certainly spiritual, but it is also very practical and has been given for our everyday lives. This is why when we first produced this Bible, using the Amplified Classic Bible, we called it The Everyday Life Bible. This new edition uses the most current Amplified Bible translation (2015). I believe that many people have connected the Bible only with church or some other spiritual activity when it really is a life-giving Book we can apply to our lives daily.

I also believe the Bible is largely a book about relationships. It offers in-depth information about our relationships with God, ourselves, and our fellow human beings. Much of the difficulty we face in life is the result of poor relationships. I have learned through God's Word how to receive His love, love myself in a balanced way, and let His love flow through me to others. I pray that this would be your goal because Jesus said that the thing we should concentrate on is loving God and loving others as we love ourselves (see Matthew 27:37–39).

Let me encourage you to be a "lifetime learner." Apply God's Word to situations in your life as you would apply medicine to an injury. If you are having
a particular struggle such as anger, depression, or fear, go to God’s Word and select passages that deal with these subjects (I have provided in the back of this Bible a topical index called “The Word for Your Everyday Life,” which makes finding these passages easy for you). As you read these verses, slowly take them in, and roll them over and over in your mind. You will find a change taking place in your heart and life. I encourage you to love God’s Word, for in it you will find resurrection power and contentment far greater than anything the world has to offer.

Now, I want to make sure you are aware of the special features The Everyday Life Bible has to offer because I believe they will help tremendously as you live your life by the Word of God.

**Book Introductions:** At the beginning of every book of the Bible, you will find basic historical background information on that particular book, along with my thoughts on why each book is important and how it relates to practical living. You will also find “Everyday Life Principles,” which summarize the key points and general themes of each book.

**Everyday Life Articles:** These articles are the longest, most thorough entries in the Bible. They correspond to specific verses or passages, and provide great insight and advice on a variety of topics. I wrote many of them especially for The Everyday Life Bible, and I believe they will help you tremendously in your everyday life.

**Life Points:** If you have followed my teaching ministry for long, you may realize that I often use short, catchy, to-the-point phrases or “one-liners” to emphasize certain principles or truths. Life Points include many of these well-known phrases, as well and other nuggets of encouragement and exhortation.

**Speak the Word:** I believe that confessing God’s Word is vital to a successful Christian life. Anywhere you see an entry entitled, “Speak the Word,” you will find a Scripture verse or passage adapted as a first-person confession or prayer. I encourage you to speak and pray these words as you come across them in this Bible and use them to teach you how to pray and confess other verses throughout God’s Word.

**Putting the Word to Work:** We all need to apply the truths of God’s Word to our lives. The “Putting the Word to Work” feature takes biblical principles and gives you opportunities to meditate on them, answer questions about them, and think about how you can specifically apply them to the situations in your life.

**The Word for Your Everyday Life:** Located in the back of this Bible, “The Word for Your Everyday Life” is a list of topics you are likely to face over the course of your life—perhaps many times. Under each topic heading, you will find Scripture references pertaining to that topic. Read those verses and passages, and you will discover biblical answers and guidance to help you overcome every challenge and live your life victoriously.

**How To Receive Jesus as Your Personal Lord and Savior:** The most important relationship of your life is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. If you would like to receive Him as your Lord and Savior, and enter into the greatest relationship you have ever known, please pray the prayer at the back of the Bible on the page entitled, “How To Receive Jesus as Your Personal Lord and Savior.”
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Old Testament
We often hear the book of Genesis described as a “book of beginnings,” but I also like to think of it as a book of opportunities. From its start to its finish, we read stories of people who were presented with opportunities.

First, we see Eve with the opportunity to choose between good and evil—between God’s instruction and the serpent’s deception. We read about Noah and his opportunity to demonstrate his faith when everyone around him thought he was crazy. We see Abraham with an opportunity to believe God’s promise when it was naturally impossible and then to obey God when obedience required a willingness to sacrifice the promised son for whom he waited so long. We learn about Jacob’s opportunity to deceive, which resulted in all kinds of trouble—and later with an opportunity to surrender completely to God, which resulted in great blessing. We see Joseph with opportunities to forgive and to trust God.

Throughout Genesis, people were blessed when they took advantage of opportunities to choose well—to choose truth over deception, faith over fear, peace over strife, forgiveness over bitterness, patience and waiting on God over trying to force something to happen. I hope the stories and principles in this book will help you recognize the opportunities God gives you and help you make wise choices that will lead to greater blessings than you have ever known.
IN THE beginning God (Elohim) created [by forming from nothing] the heavens and the earth. [Heb 11:3]

2 The earth was formless and void or a waste and emptiness, and darkness was upon the face of the deep [primeval ocean that covered the unformed earth]. The Spirit of God was moving (hovering, brooding) over the face of the waters.

3 And God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

4 God saw that the light was good (pleasing, useful) and He affirmed and sustained it; and God separated the light [distinguishing it] from the darkness. [2 Cor 4:6]

5 And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

6 And God said, “Let there be an expanse [of sky] in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters [below the expanse] from the waters [above the expanse].”

7 And God made the expanse [of sky] and separated the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so [just as He commanded].

8 God called the expanse [of sky] heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

9 Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place [of standing, pooling together], and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.

10 God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that this was good (pleasing, useful) and He affirmed and sustained it.

11 So God said, “Let the earth sprout [tender] vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit according to (limited to, consistent with) their kind, whose seed is in them upon the earth”; and it was so.

12 The earth sprouted and abundantly produced vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, according to their kind, and God saw that it was good and He affirmed and sustained it.

13 And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

14 Then God said, “Let there be light-bearers (sun, moon, stars) in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be useful for signs (tokens) [of God’s provident care], and for marking seasons, days, and years; [Gen 8:22]

15 and let them be useful as lights in the expanse of the heavens to provide light on the earth”; and it was so, [just as He commanded].

16 God made the two great lights—the greater light (the sun) to rule the day, and the lesser light (the moon) to rule the night; He made the [galaxies of] stars also [that is, all the amazing wonders in the heavens].

17 God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to provide light upon the earth,

18 to rule over the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good and He affirmed and sustained it.

Lord, I thank You that You have blessed me and called me to be fruitful in my life. I pray that I will use the resources You have created to serve You and to serve others.

—ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 1:28
And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

Then God said, “Let the waters swarm and abundantly produce living creatures, and let birds soar above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.”

God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind; and God saw that it was good and He affirmed and sustained it.

And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”

And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to (limited to, consistent with) their kind: livestock, crawling things, and wild animals of the earth according to their kinds”; and it was so [because He had spoken them into creation].

So God made the wild animals of the earth according to their kind, and the cattle according to their kind, and

**enjoy your life**

When God had completed His six days of creation, He took time to look over everything and He saw that “it was very good and He validated it completely” (Genesis 1:31). God took time to enjoy the work of His hands, and we should do the same. In our passion to possess more and more, we often fall into the trap of working, working, working—and we never enjoy the fruit of our labor. Sometimes we should simply take time to relax and enjoy what we have accomplished.

The writer of Ecclesiastes said there is nothing better for a person than to see “good in his labor” (Ecclesiastes 2:24). I have always been a hard worker. A few years ago, I realized I was working hard but not taking time to enjoy what I was doing. I made a decision to include enjoyment in my life. I no longer just “do” conferences; I enjoy them. When my house is clean and pretty, I take time to look at it and enjoy it. At the end of a year I go over my calendar and remember the various things I have done, and I enjoy the sense of accomplishment it brings. I look at what God has enabled me to do, and I say, “It is good.”

Many people feel worthless, insecure, and unacceptable, but God looked at everything He had created, including man, and said, “It is very good.” He validated it completely. God knows everything about each of us, and He loves us unconditionally. God approves of us; He may not approve of everything we do, but He does approve of us as His beloved children. I encourage you to make a decision to not only enjoy the labor of your hands, but to approve of and enjoy yourself as well.

Choosing to enjoy and accept myself is one of the best decisions I have ever made. God does not create anything worthless. He is good, and everything He does is good. We cannot believe that God created us and also believe we are worthless. Begin to accept and enjoy yourself where you are, and God will help you get to where you need to be.
everything that creeps and crawls on the earth according to its kind; and God saw that it was good (pleasing, useful) and He affirmed and sustained it.

26Then God said, “Let Us (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) make man in Our image, according to Our likeness [not physical, but a spiritual personality and moral likeness]; and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, and over the entire earth, and over everything that creeps and crawls on the earth.” [Ps 104:30; Heb 1:2; 11:3]

27So God created man in His own image, in the image and likeness of God He created him; male and female He created them. [Col 3:9, 10; James 3:8, 9]

28And God blessed them [granting them certain authority] and said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, and subjugate it [putting it under your power]; and rule over (dominate) the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

29So God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of the entire earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you;

30and to all the animals on the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that moves on the ground—to everything in which there is the breath of life—I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so [because He commanded it].

31God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good and He validated it completely. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

life point

Here in the very first chapter of the Bible, God clearly communicates His desire for our lives to be fruitful. Two of the things necessary to live fruitful lives are balance and pruning. To stay balanced we need to make sure we get the right amounts of healthy nourishment, rest, work, play, time alone with God, and time to enjoy godly relationships.

Pruning is not always pleasant, but it does ensure that the situations, activities, or relationships that are depleting us will not continue to do so. It means something must be cut off or removed from our lives, but God promises great reward as a result—more fruitfulness than ever!

Stay balanced by letting God, the wise Master Gardener, prune your life as He sees fit, and you will enjoy years of fruitfulness and fulfillment.
And the LORD God planted a garden (oasis) in the east, in Eden (delight, land of happiness); and He put the man whom He had formed (created) there. And [in that garden] the LORD God complete in body and spirit. [1 Cor 15:45–49]

I cannot imagine what a job it must have been for Adam to name all the birds and animals. He certainly had to be creative to do that!

I could go on and on about how diverse and imaginative God was in creation, but I am sure, if you think about it, you will agree that our God is awesome not only in His power and His love, but also in His creativity.

Simply take a walk and look around. Watch something about nature on a video or on television. Find out what is in the ocean, or learn about how bees and flowers work together. Then realize that the same Holy Spirit present at Creation is living inside you if you have truly accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

So much creativity lies within each one of us, and we need to learn to tap into it and express it without fear. Often, instead of exercising creativity, we keep repeating the same things, even when we are bored with them, simply because we are afraid to step out and do something different. Even if we like the familiar, we all need variety in our lives.

Some people keep the same job or live in the same geographic area all of their lives because they feel those activities or environments are safe. Even if they feel unfulfilled and unhappy at work, at least they know how to do their jobs (they’re familiar) and are comfortable with them—and the thought of getting other jobs is frightening to them! In other cases, people do want to make changes in their lives, but they do not want to fail at something new, so they refuse to try and they stick with the familiar.

I do not encourage people to pursue every whim that crosses their minds or to latch onto every fad that comes their way. But there is a definite time to step out of the ordinary—out of the comfort zone—and into new things.

God has created us to need diversity and variety. We are designed to require freshness and newness in our lives, and there is nothing wrong with feeling that you “just need a change.” On the other hand, never being satisfied and always trying the next new thing is another type of problem. Stay within reason, but do not be afraid of something new. Embrace the fresh and different opportunities, experiences, and environments God brings your way. He is a creative God; His creativity did not stop in the Garden of Eden, but is still active today as He continues to shape and refine the wonderful creation He is making in you!
caused to grow from the ground every tree that is desirable and pleasing to the sight and good (suitable, pleasant) for food; the tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the [experiential] knowledge (recognition) of [the difference between] good and evil. [Rev 2:7; 22:14, 19]

10Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four [branching] rivers.

11The first [river] is named Pishon; it flows around the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold.

12The gold of that land is good; bdellium (a fragrant, valuable resin) and the onyx stone are found there.

13The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the entire land of Cush [in Mesopotamia].

14The third river is named Hiddekel (Tigris); it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15So the LORD God took the man [He had made] and settled him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate and keep it.

16And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may freely (unconditionally) eat [the fruit] from every tree of the garden;

17but [only] from the tree of the knowledge (recognition) of good and evil you shall not eat, otherwise on

life point

God created Adam as a living being, in His image (see Genesis 1:26–27), and gave him authority over everything else He had created (see Genesis 1:28). Man was created to rule under God and to be the physical carrier of God’s Spirit in the earth. Part of human nature is that we, as living beings like Adam, have a free will. Why? Because God is too loving to force submission from anyone. He wants us to freely choose to love and serve Him. I hope that today you will make a fresh and willful commitment to love and serve Him with all your heart.

Adam did what God told him not to do (see Genesis 3:1–6). As a result, Adam became a captive of Satan, who had lured him into going against what God had said. By listening to Satan instead of to God, Adam surrendered to Satan the authority to rule the earth that God had originally given to man. Always listen to God and obey His Word.

18Now the LORD God said, “It is not good (beneficial) for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper [one who balances him—a counterpart who is] suitable and complementary for him.”

19So the LORD God formed out of the ground every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.

20And the man gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper [that was] suitable and complementary for him.

21So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.

22And the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man He made (fashioned, formed) into a woman, and He brought her and presented her to the man.
23 Then 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.”

24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. [Matt 19:5; 1 Cor 6:16; Eph 5:31–33]

25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed or embarrassed.

NOW THE serpent was more crafty (subtle, skilled in deceit) than any living creature of the field which the LORD God had made. And the serpent (Satan) said to the woman, “Can it really be that God has said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” [Rev 12:9–11]

2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees of the garden,
3 except the fruit from the tree which is in the middle of the garden. God

becoming one

The minute two people marry, they are legally joined together. Experientially, though, they do not immediately “become one” when they say, “I do”; they simply begin the process of becoming one (see Genesis 2:24). As the process works itself out, each partner should hold marriage in honor and esteem the relationship as worthy and precious. They should treat each other as being very valuable.

Note in this passage a three-step progression that demonstrates how to become one: (1) Leave. Sometimes a wife clings excessively to her mother and her mother’s opinions about what she ought to do, or a husband runs to his father for advice, when the couple should be trusting and leaning on each other. If two people are married but have not left home (both physically and mentally), they need to do so. (2) Be joined. In practical terms, this means to stick to each other like glue. (3) Become one. Becoming one means the complete union of body, soul, and spirit—and again, this takes time.

If both people in a marriage relationship are born again, then the spiritual union is in place. The most difficult part of the “becoming one” process is usually the uniting of two souls—the joining of two minds, wills, and sets of emotions. Most marital problems in the arena of the soul result from strife over lack of communication, sexual misunderstanding, money, goals, and the disciplining of children. All of these things need to be worked out in the soulish realm of the marriage union, and in order to become one in that area, a husband and a wife need to give their issues to God and say, “Father, change my mind, my will, or my feelings if I’m wrong.” God is the One Who will bring them into agreement with His will and purpose. If each marriage partner is willing to be brought into agreement with the other, they no longer try to force each other to be someone they are not, but realize they need each other to be exactly who God created them to be. They no longer pick on each other’s weaknesses. Instead, they partake of their strengths, they enjoy one another, and they enjoy the process of becoming one.
said, ‘You shall not eat from it nor touch it, otherwise you will die.’”

4 But the serpent said to the woman, “You certainly will not die! [2 Cor 11:3]

5 “For God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened [that is, you will have greater awareness], and you will be like God, knowing [the difference between] good and evil.”

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was delightful to look at, and a tree to be desired in order to make one wise and insightful, she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband with her, and he ate.

7 Then the eyes of the two of them were opened [that is, their awareness increased], and they knew that they were naked; and they fastened fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool [afternoon breeze] of the day, so the man and his wife hid and kept themselves hidden from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9 But the LORD God called to Adam, and said to him, “Where are you?”

10 He said, “I heard the sound of You [walking] in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”

11 God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten [fruit] from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

12 And the man said, “The woman

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**the devil’s doom**

I believe that Adam was clothed with God’s glory before he sinned. As soon as Adam and Eve sinned, they realized they were naked. We might say that they lost their “covering.” As long as they obeyed God, they were protected from everything the devil wanted to do to them—and, ultimately, through them. Upon seeing what the devil had done, God immediately announced his doom and told him how it would take place.

Satan did not really understand what God was saying; nevertheless, God said it, and it had to come to pass: “And I will put enmity (open hostility) between you and the woman, and between your seed (offspring) and her Seed; He shall [fatally] bruise your head, and you shall [only] bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15).

To “bruise the head” symbolizes a weakening of authority. God has said that the woman’s offspring (Jesus) will take away Satan’s authority. Satan will bruise Jesus’ heel (afflict His body—both on the cross and by afflicting mankind).

Through Jesus’ death on the cross, God took Satan’s authority (which Adam had given him) and gave it first to Jesus and then to every person who will believe—not only that Jesus died for them, but also that Satan has lost authority over them. We need to understand not only that Jesus died for us, but also that He has redeemed us!

No matter what the devil tries to do to you, he is doomed to defeat, and you are redeemed and victorious over him through Jesus Christ.
whom You gave to be with me—she gave me [fruit] from the tree, and I ate it.”

19 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent beguiled and deceived me, and I ate [from the forbidden tree].” [2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:14]

14 The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all the cattle, And more than any animal of the field; On your belly you shall go, And dust you shall eat All the days of your life.

15 “And I will put enmity (open hostility) Between you and the woman, And between your seed (offspring) and her Seed; He shall [fatally] bruise your head, And you shall [only] bruise His heel.” [Gal 4:4]

16 To the woman He said,

“I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth; In pain you will give birth to children; Yet your desire and longing will be for your husband, And he will rule [with authority] over you and be responsible for you.”

17 Then to Adam the LORD God said, “Because you have listened [attentively] to the voice of your wife, and have eaten [fruit] from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ’You shall not eat of it’;

The ground is [now] under a curse because of you; In sorrow and toil you shall eat [the fruit] of it All the days of your life.

18 “Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you shall eat the plants of the field.

19 “By the sweat of your face You will eat bread Until you return to the ground, For from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”

20 The man named his wife Eve (life spring, life giver), because she was the mother of all the living.

21 The LORD God made tunics of [animal] skins for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

22 And the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), knowing [how to distinguish between] good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take from the tree of life as well, and eat [its fruit], and live [in this fallen, sinful condition] forever”—

23 therefore the LORD God sent Adam away from the Garden of Eden, to till and cultivate the ground from which he was taken.

24 So God drove the man out; and at the east of the Garden of Eden He [permanently] stationed the cherubim and the sword with the flashing blade which turned round and round [in every direction] to protect and guard the way (entrance, access) to the tree of life. [Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19]

NOW THE man Adam knew Eve as his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have obtained a man (baby boy, son) with the help of the LORD.”

2 And [later] she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept the flocks [of sheep and goats], but Cain cultivated the ground.

3 And in the course of time Cain
brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground.

4But Abel brought [an offering of] the [finest] firstborn of his flock and the fat portions. And the LORD had respect (regard) for Abel and for his offering; [Heb 11:4]

5but for Cain and his offering He had no respect. So Cain became extremely angry (indignant), and he looked annoyed and hostile.

6And the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you so angry? And why do you look annoyed?

7If you do well [believing Me and doing what is acceptable and pleasing to Me], will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well [but ignore My instruction], sin crouches at your door; its desire is for you [to overpower you], but you must master it.”

8Cain talked with Abel his brother [about what God had said]. And when they were [alone, working] in the field, Cain attacked Abel his brother and killed him. [1 John 3:12]

9Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” And he [lied and] said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

10The LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s [innocent] blood is crying out to Me from the ground [for justice]. [Num 35:33; Deut 21:1–9]

11“And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s [shed] blood from your hand. [Deut 28:15–20]

12“When you cultivate the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength [it will resist producing good crops] for you; you shall be a fugitive and a vagabond [roaming aimlessly] on the earth [in perpetual exile without a home, a degraded outcast].”

13Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear.

14“Behold, You have driven me out this day from the face of the land; and from Your face (presence) I will be hidden, and I will be a fugitive and an [aimless] vagabond on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.”

15And the LORD said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, a sevenfold vengeance [that is, punishment seven times worse] shall be taken on him [by Me].” And the LORD set a [protective] mark (sign) on Cain, so that no one who found (met) him would kill him. [Gen 4:24]

16So Cain went away from the [manifested] presence of the LORD, and lived in the land of Nod [wandering in exile], east of Eden.

17Cain knew his wife [one of Adam’s descendants] and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch; and Cain built a city and named it Enoch, after the name of his son.

18Now to Enoch was born Irad, and Irad became the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael became the father of Methushael, and Methushael became the father of Lamech.

19And Lamech took for himself two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah.

20Adah gave birth to Jabal; he became the father of those [nomadic
herdsmen] who live in tents and have cattle and raise livestock.
21His brother’s name was Jubal; he became the father of all those [musicians] who play the lyre and flute.
22Zillah gave birth to Tubal-cain, the smith (craftsman) and teacher of every artisan in instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.
23Lamech said to his wives,
“Adah and Zillah,
Hear my voice;
You wives of Lamech,
Listen to what I say:
For I have killed a man [merely] for wounding me,
And a boy [only] for striking (bruising) me.
24“If Cain is avenged sevenfold [as the Lord said he would be],
Then Lamech [will be avenged] seventy-sevenfold.”
25Adam knew [Eve as] his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for [she said], “God has granted another child for me in place of Abel, because Cain killed him.”
26To Seth, also, a son was born, whom he named Enosh (mortal man, mankind). At that [same] time men began to call on the name of the Lord [in worship through prayer, praise, and thanksgiving]. [Joel 2:32; Luke 3:38; Acts 2:21]
after the birth of Methuselah and had other sons and daughters.

23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.

24 And [in reverent fear and obedience] Enoch walked with God; and he was not [found among men], because God took him [away to be home with Him]. [Heb 11:5]

25 When Methuselah was a hundred and eighty-seven years old, he became the father of Lamech.

26 Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years after the birth of Lamech and had other sons and daughters.

27 So Methuselah lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died.

28 When Lamech was a hundred and eighty-two years old, he became the father of a son.

29 He named him Noah, saying, “This one shall bring us rest and comfort from our work and from the [dreadful] toil of our hands because of the ground which the LORD cursed.”

30 Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years after the birth of Noah and had other sons and daughters.

31 So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.

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

NOW IT happened, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,

2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful and desirable; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose and desired.

3 Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive and remain with man for ever, because he is indeed flesh [sinful, corrupt—given over to sensual appetites]; nevertheless his days shall yet be a hundred and twenty years.”

4 There were Nephilim (men of stature, notorious men) on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God lived with the daughters of men, and they gave birth to their children. These were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown (great reputation, fame). [Num 13:33]

5 The LORD saw that the wickedness (depravity) of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination or intent of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually.

6 The LORD regretted that He had made mankind on the earth, and He was [deeply] grieved in His heart.

7 So the LORD said, “I will destroy (annihilate) mankind whom I have created from the surface of the earth—not only man, but the animals and the crawling things and the birds of the air—because it [deeply] grieves Me [to see mankind’s sin] and I regret that I have made them."

putting the Word to work

According to Genesis 6:12, the world around Noah was “debased and degenerate.” People had “corrupted their way on the earth and lost their true direction.” In the midst of corruption and evil around you today, how can you be like Noah and be righteous before God in your generation?

speak the Word

Father, I thank You that I have found grace and favor in Your sight.
–ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 6:8
8But Noah found favor and grace in the eyes of the Lord. 
9These are the records of the generations (family history) of Noah. Noah was a righteous man [one who was just and had right standing with God], blameless in his [evil] generation; Noah walked (lived) [in habitual fellowship] with God.
10Now Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
11The [population of the] earth was corrupt [absolutely depraved—spiritually and morally putrid] in the importance of a right heart

Genesis 6:5–8 reveals two things that displease God: wickedness, and evil imaginations and intentions of the heart. Because those things described the condition of people’s hearts during Noah’s day, God decided to destroy all mankind—everyone, that is, except Noah and his family. God spared Noah’s life because Noah had found grace and favor in His eyes.

I can only surmise that Noah must have had a right heart; otherwise, he would have been destroyed with all the other people who practiced wickedness, evil imaginations, and evil intentions in their hearts.

One of the lessons we can learn from Noah’s story is that many people today are being destroyed for the simple reason that their hearts are not right before God. In their hearts they regard wickedness, they allow impure imaginations, and they think bad thoughts.

We cannot imagine how many areas of our lives would be straightened out if we would just get our hearts right with God! Our hearts may not be filled with the blatant evil we read about in Noah’s time, but bad attitudes and wrong thinking certainly qualify as evil imaginations and evil intentions. We need to have right attitudes toward everything we do, because our attitudes basically determine everything else about our situations. If our hearts are full of bad attitudes and our minds are full of “stinking thinking,” we will not make much progress in life.

We need to have pure, tender hearts. We need to hear and heed the voice of conscience so that the moment we realize we have a bad attitude about something or someone, we can make the necessary adjustments. That is why Proverbs 4:23 instructs us: “Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.”

So often, we fail to guard our hearts as diligently as we should, and we allow too many negative feelings into our hearts and too many negative thoughts into our minds. We need to remember the familiar phrase “garbage in, garbage out,” and realize that we cannot take in garbage and produce good things. We must be attentive not only to our actions, but also to our thoughts, imaginations, motives, intentions, and attitudes. God looks at these things because He is a God of hearts. Whatever you do, make sure you have a right heart before the Lord, and you will reap abundant life instead of destruction.
God’s sight, and the land was filled with violence [desecration, infringement, outrage, assault, and lust for power].

12 God looked on the earth and saw how debased and degenerate it was, for all humanity had corrupted their way on the earth and lost their true direction.

13 God said to Noah, “I intend to make an end of all that lives, for through men the land is filled with violence; and behold, I am about to destroy them together with the land.

14 “Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make in it rooms (stalls, pens, coops, nests, cages, compartments) and coat it inside and out with pitch (bitumen).

15 “This is the way you are to make it: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits (450’ x 75’ x 45’).

16 “You shall make a window [for light and ventilation] for the ark, and finish it to at least a cubit (eighteen inches) from the top—and set the [entry] door of the ark in its side; and you shall make it with lower, second and third decks.

17 “For behold, I, even I, will bring a flood of waters on the earth, to destroy all life under the heavens in which there is the breath and spirit of life; everything that is on the land shall die.

18 “But I will establish My covenant (solemn promise, formal agreement) with you; and you shall come into the ark—you and your [three] sons and your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.

19 “And of every living thing [found on land], you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.

20 “Of fowls and birds according to their kind, of animals according to their kind, of every crawling thing of the ground according to its kind—two of every kind shall come to you to keep them alive.

21 “Also take with you every kind of food that is edible, and you shall collect and store it; and it shall be food for you and for them.”

22 So Noah did this; according to all that God commanded him, that is what he did.

7 THEN THE LORD said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you with all your household, for you [alone] I have seen as righteous (doing what is right) before Me in this generation.

[Ps 27:5; 33:18, 19; 2 Pet 2:9]

2 “Of every clean animal you shall take with you seven pair, the male and his female, and of animals that are not clean, two each the male and his female; [Lev 11:1–13]

3 also of the birds of the air, seven pair, the male and the female, to keep the offspring alive on the surface of the earth.

4 “For in seven days I am going to cause it to rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and I will destroy (blot out, wipe away) every living thing that I have made from the surface of the earth.”

5 So Noah did all that the LORD commanded him. [Heb 11:7]

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood (deluge) of water came on the earth [covering all of the land].

7 Then Noah and his sons and his

speak the Word

God, I pray that I will be like Noah and do all that You have commanded me to do.
—ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 7:5
The waters prevailed so greatly and were so mighty and overwhelming on the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered.

In fact the waters became fifteen cubits higher [than the highest ground], and the mountains were covered.

All living beings that moved on the earth perished—birds and cattle (domestic animals), [wild] animals, all things that swarm and crawl on the earth, and all mankind.

Everything on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath and spirit of life, died.

God destroyed (blotted out, wiped away) every living thing that was on the surface of the earth; man and animals and the crawling things and the birds of the heavens were destroyed from the land. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. [Matt 24:37–44]

The waters covered [all of] the earth for a hundred and fifty days (five months).
At the end of [another] forty days Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made;

and he sent out a raven, which flew here and there until the waters were dried up from the earth.

Then Noah sent out a dove to see if the water level had fallen below the surface of the land.

But the dove found no place on which to rest the sole of her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were [still] on the face of the entire earth. So he reached out his hand and took the dove, and brought her into the ark.

He waited another seven days and again sent the dove out from the ark.

The dove came back to him in the evening, and there, in her beak, was a fresh olive leaf. So Noah knew that the water level had subsided from the earth.

Then he waited another seven days and sent out the dove, but she did not return to him again.

Now in the six hundred and first year [of Noah’s life], on the first day of the first month, the waters were [entirely] dry.

And God spoke to Noah, saying,

Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives with you.

Bring out with you every living thing from all flesh—birds and animals and every crawling thing that crawls on the earth—that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."

So Noah went out, and his wife and his sons and their wives with him [after being in the ark one year and ten days].

Every animal, every crawling thing, every bird—and whatever moves on the land—went out by families (types, groupings) from the ark.

And Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every [ceremonially] clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma [a soothing, satisfying scent] and the Lord said to Himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intent (strong inclination, desire) of man’s heart is wicked from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

“While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease.”

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

The fear and the terror of you shall be [instinctive] in every animal of the land and in every bird of the air; and together with everything that moves on the ground, and with all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hand.

Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; I give you everything, as I gave you the green plants and vegetables.

But you shall not eat meat along with its life, that is, its blood. [Lev 7:26; Acts 15:20; 21:25]

For your lifeblood I will most certainly require an accounting; from every animal [that kills a person] I will require it. And from man, from every man’s brother [that is, anyone who murders] I will require the life of man. [Ex 21:28, 29]

Whoever sheds man’s blood [unlawfully],
By man (judicial government)
shall his blood be shed,
For in the image of God
He made man. [Rom 13:4]
7 “As for you, be fruitful and multiply;
Populate the earth abundantly and
multiply in it.”
8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his
sons with him, saying,
9 “Now behold, I am establishing My
covenant (binding agreement, solemn
promise) with you and with your de-
cendants after you
10 and with every living creature
that is with you—the birds, the live-
stock, and the wild animals of the
earth along with you, of everything
that comes out of the ark—every living
creature of the earth.
11 “I will establish My covenant with
you: Never again shall all flesh be cut
off by the water of a flood, nor shall
there ever again be a flood to destroy
and ruin the earth.”
12 And God said, “This is the token
(visible symbol, memorial) of the [sol-
lemn] covenant which I am making be-
tween Me and you and every living
creature that is with you, for all future
generations;
13 I set My rainbow in the clouds, and
it shall be a sign of a covenant between
Me and the earth.
14 “It shall come about, when I bring
clouds over the earth, that the rain-
bow shall be seen in the clouds,
15 and I will [compassionately] remem-
ber My covenant, which is between Me
and you and every living creature of all
flesh; and never again will the water
become a flood to destroy all flesh.
16 “When the rainbow is in the clouds
and I look at it, I will [solemnly] re-
member the everlasting covenant be-
tween God and every living creature
of all flesh that is on the earth.”
17 And God said to Noah, “This
[rainbow] is the sign of the covenant
(sollemn pledge, binding agreement)
which I have established between Me
and all living things on the earth.”
18 The sons of Noah who came out
of the ark were Shem and Ham and
Japheth. Ham would become the fa-
threr of Canaan.
19 These are the three sons of Noah,
and from these [men] the whole earth
was populated and scattered with in-
habitants.
20 And Noah began to farm and cul-
tivate the ground and he planted a
vineyard.
21 He drank some of the wine and be-
came drunk, and he was uncovered
and lay exposed inside his tent.
22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw [by
accident] the nakedness of his father,
and [to his father’s shame] told his two
brothers outside.
23 So Shem and Japheth took a robe
and put it on both their shoulders, and
walked backwards and covered the
nakedness of their father; their faces
were turned away so that they did not
see their father’s nakedness.
24 When Noah awoke from his wine
[induced stupor], he knew what his
younger son [Ham] had done to him.
25 So he said,
“Cursed be Canaan [the son of Ham];
A servant of servants
He shall be to his brothers.”
[Deut 27:16]
26 He also said,
“Blessed be the LORD,
The God of Shem;
And let Canaan be his servant.
27 “May God enlarge [the land of]
Japheth,
And let him dwell in the tents of
Shem;
And let Canaan be his servant.”
28 Noah lived three hundred and fifty
years after the flood.
29 So all the days of Noah were nine
hundred and fifty years, and he died.
10 THESE ARE the records of the generations (descendants) of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and the sons born to them after the flood: the sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras; the sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphat, and Togarmah; the sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarsish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

5 From these, [the people of] the coastlands of the nations were separated and spread into their lands, every one according to his own language, according to their constituent groups (families), and into their nations:

6 the sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim [from whom descended the Egyptians], Put, and Canaan;

7 the sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raamah, and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan.

8 Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth.

9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD."

10 The beginning of his kingdom was *Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar [in Babylonia].

11 From that land Nimrod went to Assyria, and built Nineveh, and Rehoboth-ir, and Calah,

12 and [Nimrod built] Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah; all these [combined to form] the great city [Nineveh]. [Jon 1:2; 3:2]

13 Mizraim [the ancestor of the Egyptians] became the father of Ludim, Anamim, Laphitis, Naphtuhim

14 and Pathrusim and Casluhim—from whom came the Philistines—and Caphtorim.

15 Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth

16 and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite

17 and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite

18 and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad.

19 The territory of the Canaanite extended from Sidon as one goes to Gerar, as far as Gaza; and as one goes to Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.

20 These are the descendants of Ham according to their constituent groups, according to their languages, by their lands, and by their nations.

21 Also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber [including the Hebrews], the older brother of Japheth, children were born.

22 The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram;

23 the sons of Aram [ancestor of the Syrians]: Uz, Hul, Gether and Mash.

24 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber.

25 Two sons were born to Eber; the name of one was Peleg (division), for the inhabitants of the earth were divided in his days; and his brother’s name was Joktan.

26 Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,

27 and Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,

28 and Obal, Abimael, Sheba,

29 and Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan.

30 Now their territory extended from Mesha as one goes toward Sephar, to the hill country of the east.

31 These are Shem’s descendants according to their constituent groups (families), according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations.

32 These are the families of the sons
of Noah, according to their descendants, by their nations; and from these [people] the nations were separated and spread abroad on the earth after the flood. [Acts 17:26]

NOW THE whole earth spoke one language and used the same words (vocabulary).  
2And as people journeyed eastward, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and they settled there. [Gen 10:10]  
3They said one to another, "Come, let us make bricks and fire them thoroughly [in a kiln, to harden and strengthen them]." So they used brick for stone [as building material], and they used tar (bitumen, asphalt) for mortar.  
4They said, "Come, let us build a city for ourselves, and a tower whose top will reach into the heavens, and let us make a [famous] name for ourselves, so that we will not be scattered [into separate groups] and be dispersed over the surface of the entire earth [as the LORD instructed]." [Gen 9:1]  
5Now the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.  
6And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one [unified] people, and they all have the same language. This is only the beginning of what they will do [in rebellion against Me], and now no evil thing they imagine they can do will be impossible for them.  
7"Come, let Us (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) go down and there confuse and mix up their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech."  
8So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the surface of the entire earth; and they stopped building the city.  
9Therefore the name of the city was Babel—because there the LORD confused the language of the entire earth; and from that place the LORD scattered and dispersed them over the surface of all the earth.

10These are the records of the generations of Shem [from whom Abraham descended]. Shem was a hundred years old when he became the father of Arpachshad, two years after the flood.  
11And Shem lived five hundred years after Arpachshad was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
12When Arpachshad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah.  
13Arpachshad lived four hundred and thirty years after Shelah was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
14When Shelah had lived thirty years, he became the father of Eber.  
15Shelah lived four hundred and three years after Eber was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
16When Eber had lived thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg.  
17And Eber lived four hundred and thirty years after Peleg was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
18When Peleg had lived thirty years, he became the father of Reu.  
19And Peleg lived two hundred and nine years after Reu was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
20When Reu lived thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug.  
21And Reu lived two hundred and seven years after Serug was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
22When Serug had lived thirty years, he became the father of Nahor.  
23And Serug lived two hundred years after Nahor was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
24When Nahor had lived twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah.  
25And Nahor lived a hundred and nineteen years after Terah was born, and he had other sons and daughters.  
26After Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram and Nahor and Haran [his firstborn].
27 Now these are the records of the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram (Abraham), Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot.

28 Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

29 Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai (later called Sarah), and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah.

30 But Sarai was barren; she did not have a child.

31 Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together to go from Ur of the Chaldeans into the land of Canaan; but when they came to Haran [about five hundred and fifty miles northwest of Ur], they settled there.

32 Terah lived two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

12 NOW [in Haran] the Lord had said to Abram,

"Go away from your country,
And from your relatives
And from your father's house,
To the land which I will show you;"
[Heb 11:8–10]

2 And I will make you a great nation,
And I will bless you [abundantly],
And make your name great
(exalted, distinguished);
And you shall be a blessing [a source of great good to others];

3 And I will bless (do good for, benefit) those who bless you,
And I will curse [that is, subject to My wrath and judgment] the one who curses (despises, dishonors, has contempt for) you.

And in you all the families (nations) of the earth will be blessed." [Gal 3:8]

4 So Abram departed [in faithful obedience] as the Lord had directed him; and Lot [his nephew] left with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

5 Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had acquired, and the people (servants) which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan,

6 Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, to the [great] terebinth (oak) tree of Moreh. Now the Canaanites were in the land at that time.

7 Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." So Abram built an altar there to [honor] the Lord who had appeared to him.

8 Then he moved on from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and called

Life Point

We can read God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:2 and think, Oh, hallelujah! That applies to me, too! But we cannot forget that God required a sacrifice of obedience before Abraham could receive the promise. Abraham had to be willing to leave the place where he was comfortable; he had to leave his father and all of his relatives. And he did; he simply moved in faith to the place God said He would show him. If you are willing to have Abraham's kind of obedience, you can have Abraham's kind of blessing.
on the name of the Lord [in worship through prayer, praise, and thanksgiving].

9 Then Abram journeyed on, continuing toward the Negev (the South country of Judah).

10 Now there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to live temporarily, for the famine in the land was oppressive and severe.

11 And when he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, “Listen: I know that you are a beautiful woman; when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and they will kill me [to acquire you], but they will let you live.

12” Please tell them that you are my sister so that things will go well for me for your sake, and my life will be spared because of you.”

13 And when Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was very beautiful.

14 Pharaoh’s princes (officials) also saw her and praised her to Pharaoh; and the woman was taken [for the purpose of marriage] into Pharaoh’s house (harem).

15 Therefore Pharaoh treated Abram well for her sake: he acquired sheep, oxen, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

16 But the Lord punished Pharaoh

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**one step at a time**

Abraham learned to trust God to lead him one step at a time. God essentially told him, “Trust Me with this first step, because it is best for you to go where I lead you.” At that time, Abraham might have wondered whether or not packing up his tent and leaving his family and his country would be to his advantage, but God told him to go to the place that He would show him, and Abraham simply obeyed.

When God gave Abraham this instruction, He gave him only step one, not step two. Abraham would not get to step two until he had accomplished step one. This is so simple, but so profound: God gives us direction one step at a time.

You may be like many people who refuse to take step one until they think they understand steps two, three, four, and five. If so, I hope you will be inspired to go forward in God’s plan for your life by trusting Him with the first step. Understanding that His will for you is revealed a step at a time should build your confidence to do at least what you already know to do. After the first few steps, your faith will grow because you will realize there is always sure footing beneath each step God instructs you to take.

Know that God has a good plan for your life and that you will be blessed when you obey Him. You can miss out on blessings by not obeying what God clearly tells you to do. He shows you the way to go, and you are to walk in that direction. Sometimes God may be gracious enough to carry you part of the way, but there comes a time when the carrying is over, and He says, “Now walk.”

God wants you to obey Him quickly. He does not want you to argue with Him for three or four weeks before you will do a simple little thing. He wants you to trust Him and, like Abraham, take in faith the first step He calls you to take.
and his household with severe plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife.

18 Then Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What is this that you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?

19 “Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her as my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her and go!”

20 So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they escorted him on his way, with his wife and all that he had.

**lift up your eyes**

In Genesis 13, we read that the herdsmen of Abraham and his nephew, Lot, argued because there was not enough space for both their flocks and herds to graze. Abraham suggested that Lot go one way and said that he would go the other way so there would be room enough for both of their animals and households. Lot chose the best land for himself and left Abraham with an inferior portion (see Genesis 13:10, 11).

At that point, the Lord said to Abraham, “Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are standing, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever” (Genesis 13:14, 15).

We would do well to remember this story today. Instead of becoming discouraged, depressed, or angry when people disappoint us, God wants us to lift up our eyes, look around us, and trust Him to lead us into an even better situation. He wants us to look around and count our blessings instead of focusing on what we do not have. He wants us to fix our eyes on Him, not on the work of the enemy, because He has plans to bless us and bring us increase.

No matter how your life has turned out to this point, you have two options. One is to give up and quit; the other is to keep going. If you decide to keep going, you again have two choices. One is to live in misery and depression; the other is to live in faith, hope, and joy.

Choosing to live in faith, hope, and joy does not mean you will no longer have disappointments, but it does mean you have decided that your disappointments will not defeat you. Instead, you can lift up your eyes, your head, your hands, and your heart, not focusing on your problems, but looking at the Lord, Who has promised to see you through to abundance and victory.
Genesis 14:7

5 But Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents.

6 Now the land was not able to support them [that is, sustain all their grazing and water needs] while they lived near one another, for their possessions were too great for them to stay together.

7 And there was strife and quarreling between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle. Now the Canaanite and the Perizzite were living in the land at that same time [making grazing of the livestock difficult].

8 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife and disagreement between you and me, nor between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, because we are relatives.

9 "Is not the entire land before you? Please separate [yourself] from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or if you choose the right, then I will go to the left."

10 So Lot looked and saw that the valley of the Jordan was well watered everywhere—this was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah; [it was all] like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as you go to Zoar [at the south end of the Dead Sea].

11 Then Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan, and he traveled east. So they separated from each other.

12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot settled in the cities of the valley and camped as far as Sodom and lived there.

13 But the men of Sodom were extremely wicked and sinful against the Lord [unashamed in their open sin before Him].

14 The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had left him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are standing, northward and southward and eastward and westward;

15 for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever. [Acts 7:5]

16 "I will make your descendants [as numerous] as the dust of the earth, so that if a man could count the [grains of] dust of the earth, then your descendants could also be counted. [Gen 28:14]

17 "Arise, walk (make a thorough reconnaissance) around in the land, through its length and its width, for I will give it to you."

18 Then Abram broke camp and moved his tent, and came and settled by the [grove of the great] terebinths (oak trees) of Mamre [the Amorite], which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to [honor] the Lord.

IN THE days of the [Eastern] kings Amraphel of Shinar, Arioch of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer of Elam, and Tidal of Goiim,

2 they [invaded the Jordan Valley near the Dead Sea, and] made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).

3 All of these [kings] joined together [as allies] in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Sea of Salt).

4 Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer [the most powerful king in the invading confederacy], but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5 In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the [three] kings who were with him attacked and subdued the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim,

6 and the Horites in their mountainous country of Seir, as far as Elparan, which is on the border of the wilderness.

7 Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and subdued all the country of the Amalekites,
and also the Amorites who lived in Hazazon-tamar.
8Then the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela (that is, Zoar) came out; and they joined together for battle with the invading kings in the Valley of Siddim,
9against Chedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim and Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five.
10Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar (bitumen) pits; and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell into them. But the remainder [of the kings] who survived fled to the hill country.
11Then the victors took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food supply and provisions and left.
12And they also took [captive] Lot, Abram’s nephew, and his possessions and left, for he was living in Sodom.
13Then a survivor who had escaped [from the invading forces on the other side of the Jordan] came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the terebinths (oaks) of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner—they were allies of Abram.
14When Abram heard that his nephew [Lot] had been captured, he armed and led out his trained men, born in his own house, numbering three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far [north] as Dan.
15He divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and attacked and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.
16And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his nephew Lot and his possessions, and also the women, and the people.
17Then after Abram’s return from the defeat (slaughter) of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley).
18Melchizedek king of Salem (ancient Jerusalem) brought out bread and wine [for them]; he was the priest of God Most High.
19And Melchizedek blessed Abram and said,
“Blessed (joyful, favored) be Abram by God Most High, Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth;
20And blessed, praised, and glorified be God Most High,
Who has given your enemies into your hand.”
And Abram gave him a tenth of all [the treasure he had taken in battle]. [Heb 7:1–10]
21The king of Sodom said to Abram,
“Give me the people and keep the goods (spoils of battle) for yourself.”
22But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have raised my hand and sworn an oath to the Lord God Most High, the Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth,
23that I would not take anything that is yours, from a thread to a sandal strap, so you could not say, ‘I [the King of Sodom] have made Abram rich.’
24‘I will take nothing except what my young men have eaten, and the share of the spoils belonging to the men [my allies] who went with me—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share of the spoils.”

**life point**

If Abraham had bowed his knee to fear, the rest of the story would never have come to pass. He would never have experienced God as his shield, and he would never have received his very great reward (see Genesis 15:1).
15 After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying,

“Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; Your reward for [obedience] shall be very great.”

Abram said, “Lord God, what reward will You give me, since I am [leaving this world] childless, and he who will be the owner and heir of my house is this [servant] Eliezer from Damascus?”

And Abram continued, “Since You have given no child to me, one (a servant) born in my house is my heir.”

Then behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, “This man [Eliezer] will not be your heir but he who shall come from your own body shall be your heir.”

And the Lord brought Abram outside [his tent into the night] and said, “Look now toward the heavens and count the stars—if you are able to count them.” Then He said to him, “So [numerous] shall your descendants be.” [Heb 11:12]

Then Abram believed in (affirmed, trusted in, relied on, remained steadfast to) the Lord; and He counted (credited) it to him as righteousness (doing right in regard to God and man). [Rom 4:3, 18–22; Gal 3:6; James 2:23]

And He said to him, “I am the [same] Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land as an inheritance.”

But Abram said, “Lord God, by what [proof] will I know that I will inherit it?”

So God said to him, “Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.”

So Abram brought all these to Him and cut them down the middle, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds.

The birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

When the sun was setting, a deep sleep overcame Abram; and a horror (terror, shuddering fear, nightmare) of great darkness overcame him.

God said to Abram, “Know for sure that your descendants will be strangers [living temporarily] in a land (Egypt) that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. [Ex 12:40]

But on that nation whom your descendants will serve I will bring judgment, and afterward they will come out [of that land] with great possessions. [Ex 12:35, 36; Acts 7:6, 7]

As for you, you shall [die and] go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.

Then in the fourth generation your descendants shall return here [to Canaan, the land of promise], for the wickedness and guilt of the Amorites is not yet complete (finished).” [Josh 24:15]

When the sun had gone down and a [deep] darkness had come, there appeared a smoking brazier and a flaming torch which passed between the [divided] pieces [of the animals]. [Jer 34:18, 19]

On the same day the Lord made a covenant (promise, pledge) with Abram, saying,

“To your descendants I have given this land,
From the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates—

Speak the Word

God, I will not fear, because You are my shield. In You my reward shall be very great.

—Adapted from Genesis 15:1
Genesis 15:19

19[the land of] the Kenites and the Kenizzites and the Kadmonites
20and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Rephaim,
21the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Girgashites and the Jebusites.”

NOW SARAI, Abram’s wife, had not borne him any children, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar.

3So Sarai said to Abram, “See here, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. I am asking you to go in to [the bed of] my maid [so that she may bear you a child]; perhaps I will obtain children by her.” And Abram listened to Sarai and did as she said.

4After Abram had lived in the land of Canaan ten years, Abram’s wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian [maid], and gave her to her husband Abram to be his [secondary] wife.

4He went in to [the bed of] Hagar, and she conceived; and when she realized that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress [regarding Sarai as insignificant because of her infertility].

5Then Sarai said to Abram, “May the responsibility for the wrong done to me [by the arrogant behavior of Hagar] be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms, and when she realized that she had conceived, I was despised and looked on with disrespect. May the LORD judge [who has done right] between you and me.”

6But Abram said to Sarai, “Look, your maid is entirely in your hands

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and subject to your authority; do as you please with her.” So Sarai treated her harshly and humiliated her, and Hagar fled from her.

But the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, on the road to [Egypt by way of] Shur.

And He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where did you come from and where are you going?” And she said, “I am running away from my mistress Sarai.”

The Angel of the Lord said to her, “Go back to your mistress, and submit humbly to her authority.”

Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count.”

The Angel of the Lord continued, “Behold, you are with child, And you will bear a son; And you shall name him Ishmael (God hears), Because the Lord has heard and paid attention to your persecution (suffering).

“He (Ishmael) will be a wild donkey of a man; His hand will be against every man [continually fighting] And every man’s hand against him; And he will dwell in defiance of all his brothers.”

Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, “You are God Who Sees”; for she said, “Have I not even here [in the wilderness] remained alive after seeing Him [who sees me with understanding and compassion]?”

Therefore the well was called

don’t have an Ishmael

Abram and Sarai got tired of waiting. They were weary as they watched for God’s promise to come to pass, and they wondered if they might do something to help move things along. Sarai decided to see if her handmaid, Hagar, would conceive a child by Abram (see Genesis 16:2). She thought that could be God’s way of giving her and Abram the child He had promised. God had promised Abram a son by Sarai (see Genesis 17:16), but since it appeared God was not doing anything, she must have reasoned that she knew how to help!

Does that sound familiar? Have you ever tried or wanted to “help” God in your life?

In Sarai’s case, Abram heeded her advice and Hagar conceived. The child, named Ishmael, was indeed a son, as God had spoken, but he was not the child of the promise. Abram and Sarai waited another fourteen years before Isaac, the true promised son, arrived. I wonder if it took so long because once we give birth to the “Ishmaels” in our lives, we must deal with the consequences. In other words, once an Ishmael is born, we have to change his diapers and take care of him!

We would like to carry out our own plans and then have God bless them, but He taught me years ago that He is not obligated to bless or care for the things I give birth to out of the strength of my flesh. The psalmist affirms this point: “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it” (Psalm 127:1).

God has great things in store for you, and He will bring them to pass in His perfect timing. Let me encourage you to wait on Him. An Ishmael will be a burden in your life, but God’s “Isaacs” will bring blessing and delight.
Beer-lahai-roi (Well of the Living One Who Sees Me); it is between Kadesh and Bered.

15So Hagar gave birth to Abram’s son; and Abram named his son, to whom Hagar gave birth, Ishmael (God hears).

16Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.

17 WHEN ABRAM was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said,

“I am God Almighty; Walk [habitually] before Me [with integrity, knowing that you are always in My presence], and be blameless and complete [in obedience to Me].

2“I will establish My covenant (everlasting promise) between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly [through your descendants].”

3Then Abram fell on his face [in worship], and God spoke with him, saying,

4“As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And [as a result] you shall be the father of many nations.

5“No longer shall your name be Abram (exalted father), But your name shall be Abraham (father of a multitude); For I will make you the father of many nations.

6“I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.

7“I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. [Gal 3:16]

8“I will give to you and to your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger [moving from place to place], all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession [of property]; and I will be their God.” [Acts 7:5]

9Further, God said to Abraham, “As for you [your part of the agreement], you shall keep and faithfully obey [the terms of] My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.

10“This is [the sign of] My covenant, which you shall keep and faithfully obey, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

11“And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall

life point

When God entered into covenant with Abraham, He told him to circumcise himself and all the males eight days old and older (see Genesis 17:10–12). Blood was shed at what we might refer to as “the fountain of life”—the place from which the seed for future generations would come—and circumcision was a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham.

Blood is a powerful entity, and that is because life is in the blood (see Leviticus 17:11). When anything is covered by blood, in God’s way of looking at it, it is covered with life and thus cleansed. Therefore, when we receive Jesus as our Savior, we are covered by His blood, and God sees us as clean and pure before Him.

speak the Word

Thank You, God Almighty, for helping me to walk habitually before You with integrity, knowing that I am always in Your presence, and for helping me to be blameless and complete in obedience to You.

—ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 17:1
Genesis 17:15

be the sign (symbol, memorial) of the covenant between Me and you.

12“Every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, including a servant whether born in the house or one who is purchased with your money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.

13“A servant who is born in your house or one who is purchased with your money must be circumcised; and [the sign of] My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

14“And the male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”

15Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai (my princess), but her name will be Sarah (Princess).

what’s in a name?

Names meant so much more to people during Bible times than they do to many of us today. Even here in the early chapters of the Bible, we see that names were tremendously important, because they described a person’s character.

In Genesis 17, we read that God gave new names to Abram and Sarai (see Genesis 17:4, 5, 15, 16). He was changing things in their lives, and He wanted to give them new names to declare what He was doing in and through them. Abram and Sarai knew well the importance of names, so they understood the profound significance of God’s changing their names. When He gave them new names, He was beginning to speak of “nonexistent things” as though they already existed (see Romans 4:17). The name changes indicated to Abram and Sarai that God was beginning to fulfill His promise when He said to Abram: “Look now toward the heavens and count the stars—if you are able to count them.” Then He said to him, “So [numerous] shall your descendants be” (Genesis 15:5).

So what’s in a name? A lot more than many of us realize. Think about Sarai, for instance. She was a barren woman, who probably had a poor self-image because, in biblical societies, so much of a woman’s worth depended on her ability to bear children. She was an old woman, and, biologically, she had no hope of ever being able to conceive and deliver a baby. But God changed her name.

Sarah means “princess.” So when Abraham or anyone else called Sarai by her new name, Sarah, they were helping her change her image of herself. They were calling her beautiful and valuable, a king’s daughter—and they were speaking forth the image of the mother God had destined her to be. As a result, she must have begun to see herself differently. She must have felt faith rising in her heart. She must have begun to be sure God would keep His word to her.

Similarly, Abram must have undergone his own transformation and had his own faith bolstered when God changed his name to Abraham, meaning “father of a multitude.”

Following this idea through to the New Testament and to our lives today, I encourage you to remember the significance of a name when you speak the name of Jesus. Remember, His is not just a name; it is a word loaded with meaning and filled with life. It declares His character; it proclaims all that He is, all He has done, and all He will do in your life.
16“I will bless her, and indeed I will also give you a son by her. Yes, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.”

17Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”

18And Abraham said to God, “Oh, that Ishmael [my firstborn] might live before You!”

19But God said, “No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son indeed, and you shall name him Isaac (laughter); and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant and with his descendants after him.

20“As for Ishmael, I have heard and listened to you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful and will greatly multiply him [through his descendants]. He will be the father of twelve princes (chieftains, sheiks), and I will make him a great nation.

[Gen 25:12–18]

21“But My covenant [My promise, My solemn pledge], I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year.”

22And God finished speaking with him and went up from Abraham.

23Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all the servants who were born in his house and all who were purchased with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s household, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin the very same day, as God had said to him.

24So Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised.

25And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised.

26On the very same day Abraham was circumcised, as well as Ishmael his son.

18:10 Lit when the time revives.

27All the men [servants] of his household, both those born in the house and those purchased with money from a foreigner, were circumcised along with him [as the sign of God’s covenant with Abraham].

18 NOW THE LORD appeared to Abraham by the terebinth trees of Mamre [in Hebron], while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day.

2When he raised his eyes and looked up, behold, three men were standing [a little distance] from him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed down [with his face] to the ground,

3and Abraham said, “My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass by your servant [without stopping to visit].

4“Please let a little water be brought [by one of my servants] and [you may] wash your feet, and recline and rest comfortably under the tree.

5And I will bring a piece of bread to refresh and sustain you; after that you may go on, since you have come to your servant.” And they replied, “Do as you have said.”

6So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quickly, get ready three measures of fine meal, knead it and bake cakes.”

7Abraham also ran to the herd and brought a calf, tender and choice, and he gave it to the servant [to butcher], and he hurried to prepare it.

8Then he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before the men; and he stood beside them under the tree while they ate.

9Then they said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “There, in the tent.”

10He said, “I will surely return to you at this *time next year; and behold,
31

And the LORD said, “The outcry [of the sin] of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave.

21“I will go down now, and see whether they have acted [as vilely and wickedly] as the outcry which has come to Me [indicates]; and if not, I will know.”

22Now the [two] men (angelic beings) turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD.

23Abraham approached [the LORD] and said, “Will You really sweep away the righteous (those who do right) with the wicked (those who do evil)?

24“Suppose there are fifty righteous [people] within the city; will You really sweep it away and not spare it for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it?

25Far be it from You to do such a thing—to strike the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right [by executing just and righteous judgment]?"

26So the LORD said, “If I find within the city of Sodom fifty righteous [people] then I will spare the entire place for their sake.”

27Abraham answered, “Now behold, I who am but dust [in origin] and ashes have decided to speak to the Lord. [Gen 3:19; Job 30:19]

28“For I have known (chosen, acknowledged) him [as My own], so that he may teach and command his children and [the sons of] his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is righteous and just, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has promised him.”

**speak the Word**

*Father, I thank You that there is nothing too difficult for You!*

—ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 18:14
found there.” And He said, “I will not do it for the sake of the forty [who are righteous].”

30Then Abraham said [to Him], “Oh, may the Lord not be angry, and I will speak; suppose thirty [righteous people] are found there?” And He said, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”

31And he said, “Now behold, I have decided to speak to the Lord [again]. Suppose [only] twenty [righteous people] are found there?” And the Lord said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty.”

32Then Abraham said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry [with me], and I will speak only this once; suppose ten [righteous people] are found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten.”

33As soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham the Lord departed, and Abraham returned to his own place.

19It was evening when the two angels came to Sodom. Lot was sitting at Sodom’s [city] gate. Seeing them, Lot got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.

2And he said, “See here, my lords, please turn aside and come into your servant’s house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may get up early and go on your way.” But they said, “No, we shall spend the night in the open plaza [of the city].”

3However, Lot strongly urged them, so they turned aside and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them [with wine], and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

4But before they lay down [to sleep], the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, surrounded the house, all the men from every quarter; and they called out to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we may know them [intimately].”

5But Lot went out of the doorway to the men, and shut the door after him,

6and said, “Please, my brothers, do not do something so wicked.

8“See here, I have two daughters who have not known a man [intimately]; please let me bring them out to you [instead], and you can do as you please with them; only do nothing to these men, because they have in fact come under the shelter of my roof [for protection].”

9But they said, “Get out of the way!” And they said, “This man (Lot) came [as an outsider] to live here temporarily, and now he is acting like a judge. Now we will treat you worse than your visitors!” So they rushed forward and pressed violently against Lot and came close to breaking down the door [of his house].

10But the men (angels) reached out with their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door [after him].

11They struck (punished) the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, from the young men to the old men, so that they exhausted themselves trying to find the doorway.

12And the [two] men (angels) asked Lot, “Have you any others here [in

**putting the Word to work**

Lot and his wife had to leave the city where they lived in order to escape the destruction God would bring upon that city because of the sin of the people who lived there. They were instructed not to look back as they left the city. In what situations in your life do you need to heed God’s instruction not to look back? How can you look ahead instead of behind you in those areas?
Sodom]—a son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters? Whomever you have in the city, take them out of here; 

13for we are destroying this place, because the outcry [for judgment] against them has grown so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy and ruin it.”

14So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were [betrothed, and legally promised] to marry his daughters, and said, “Get up, get out of this place, for the LORD is about to destroy this city!” But to his sons-in-law he appeared to be joking.

15When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot [to hurry], saying, “Get up! Take your wife and two daughters who are here [and go], or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city.”

16But Lot hesitated and lingered. The men took hold of his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, because the LORD was merciful to him [for Abraham’s sake]; and they brought him out, and left him outside the city [with his family].

17When they had brought them outside, one [of the angels] said, “Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, or stop anywhere in the entire valley; escape to the mountains [of Moab], or you will be consumed and swept away.”

18But Lot said to them, “Oh no, [not that place] my lords!

19“Please listen, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness (mercy) to me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, because the disaster will overtake me and I will be killed.

20”Now look, this town [in the distance] is near enough for us to flee to, and it is small [with only a few people]. Please, let me escape there (is it not small?) so that my life will be saved.”

21And the angel said to him, “Behold, I grant you this request also; I will not destroy this town of which you have spoken.

22”Hurry and take refuge there, for I cannot do anything [to punish Sodom] until you arrive there.” For this reason the town was named Zoar (few, small).

23The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

24Then the LORD rained down brim-stone (flaming sulfur) and fire on Sodom and on Gomorrah from the LORD out of heaven,

25and He overthrew (demolished, ended) those cities, and the entire valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and whatever grew on the ground.

26But Lot’s wife, from behind him, [foolishly, longingly] looked [back toward Sodom in an act of disobedience], and she became a pillar of salt. [Luke 17:32]

27Abraham started out early the next morning to the place where he [only the day before] had stood before the LORD; 28and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley [of the Dead Sea]; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a kiln (pottery furnace).

29Now when God ravaged and destroyed the cities of the plain [of Siddim], He remembered Abraham [and for that reason], and He sent [Abraham’s nephew] Lot out of the midst of the destruction, when He destroyed the cities in which Lot had lived.

30Now Lot went up from Zoar, and lived in the mountain together with his two daughters, for he was afraid to stay [any longer] in Zoar; and he lived in a cave with his two daughters.

31The firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is aging, and there is not a man on earth [available] to be intimate with us in the customary way [so that we may have children].

32“Come, let us make our father drunk with wine, and we will lie with
Genesis 19:33

33 So they gave their father wine that night, and the firstborn went in and lay with her father; and he did not know when she lay down or when she got up [because he was completely intoxicated].

34 Then the next day, the firstborn said to the younger, “Behold, I lay with my father last night; let us make him drunk with wine tonight also, and then you go in and lie with him, so that we may preserve our family through our father.”

35 So they gave their father wine that night also, and the younger got up and lay with him; and again he did not know when she lay down or when she got up.

36 Thus both the daughters of Lot conceived by their father.

37 The firstborn gave birth to a son, and named him Moab (from father); he is the father of the Moabites to this day.

38 The younger also gave birth to a son and named him Ben-ami (son of my people); he is the father of the Ammonites to this day.

20 NOW ABRAHAM journeyed from there toward the Negev (the South country), and settled between Kadesh and Shur; then he lived temporarily in Gerar.

2 Abraham said [again] of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” So Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah [into his harem].

3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream during the night, and said, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken [as your wife], for she is another man’s wife.”

4 Now Abimelech had not yet come near her; so he said, “Lord, will you kill a people who are righteous and innocent and blameless [regarding Sarah]?

5 “Did Abraham not tell me, ‘She is my sister?’ And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this.”

6 Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know you did this in the integrity of your heart, for it was I who kept you back and spared you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not give you an opportunity to touch her.

7 “So now return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her [to him], know that you shall die, you and all who are yours (your household).”

8 So Abimelech got up early in the morning and called all his servants and told them all these things; and the men were terrified.

9 Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? And how have I offended you that you have brought on me and my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me what ought not to be done [to anyone].”

10 And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What have you encountered or seen [in us or our customs], that you have done this [unjust] thing?”

11 Abraham said, “Because I thought, ‘Surely there is no fear or reverence of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’

12 “Besides, she actually is my [half] sister; she is the daughter of my father [Terah], but not of my mother; and she became my wife.

13 “When God caused me to wander from my father’s house, I said to her, ‘This kindness and loyalty you can show me: at every place we stop, say of me, “He is my brother.”’

14 Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen and male and female slaves, and gave them to Abraham, and returned Sarah his wife to him [as God commanded].

15 So Abimelech said, “Behold, my
land is before you; settle wherever you please.”
16 Then to Sarah he said, “Look, I have given this brother of yours a thousand pieces of silver; it is to compensate you [for all that has happened] and to vindicate your honor before all who are with you; before all men you are cleared and compensated.”
17 So Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maids, and they again gave birth to children,
18 for the Lord had securely closed the wombs of all [the women] in Abimelech’s household because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife. [1 Pet 3:1–6]

THE LORD graciously remembered and visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for her as He had promised.

19 So Sarah conceived and gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.
20 Abraham named his son Isaac (laughter), the son to whom Sarah gave birth.
21 So Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, just as God had commanded him.
22 Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born.
23 Sarah said, “God has made me laugh; all who hear [about our good news] will laugh with me.”
24 And she said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have given birth to a son by him in his old age.” [Heb 11:12]
25 The child [Isaac] grew and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.
26 Now [as time went on] Sarah saw [Ishmael] the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking [Isaac]. [Gal 4:29]
27 Therefore she said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.” [Gal 4:28–31]
28 The situation distressed Abraham greatly because of his son [Ishmael].
29 God said to Abraham, “Do not let it distress you because of Ishmael and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her and do what she asks, for your descendants will be named through Isaac. [Rom 9:7]
30 And I will also make a nation of [Ishmael] the son of the maid, because he is your descendant.”
31 So Abraham got up early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. And she left [but lost her way] and wandered aimlessly in the Wilderness of Beersheba.
32 When the water in the skin was all gone, Hagar abandoned the boy under one of the bushes.
33 Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, “Do not let me see the boy die.” And as she sat down opposite him, she raised her voice and wept.
34 God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the boy from where he is [resting].
35 Get up, help the boy up, and hold him by the hand, for I will make him a great nation.”

putting the Word to work

Abraham and Sarah had to wait a long time before God’s promise came to pass, but it finally did, as we read in Genesis 21:1–3. What promises of God are you waiting to have fulfilled in your life? How can you be like Abraham and wait with a heart full of faith?
Genesis 21:19

Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the [empty] skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

God was with Ishmael, and he grew and
devolved; and he lived in
the wilderness and became an [expert] archer.

He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Now at that time Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, said to Abraham, "God is with you in everything you do;

so now, swear to me here by God that you will not deal unfairly with me [by breaking any agreements we have] or with my son or with my de-
sendants, but as I have treated you
with kindness, you shall do the same
to me and to the land in which you
have sojourned (temporarily lived)."

And Abraham said, "I will swear."

Then Abraham complained to
Abimelech about a well of water which
the servants of Abimelech had [vio-
lently] seized [from him].

Abimelech said, "I do not know who
did this thing. Indeed, you did not tell
me, and I did not hear of it until today."

So Abraham took sheep and oxen
and gave them to Abimelech, and the
two men made a covenant (binding
agreement).

Then Abraham set apart seven
ewe lambs of the flock,

and Abimelech said to Abraham,
"What is the meaning of these seven
ewe lambs which you have set apart?"

Abraham said, "You are to accept
these seven ewe lambs from me as a
witness for me, that I dug this well."

Therefore that place was called
Beersheba (Well of the Oath or Well
of the Seven), because there the two
of them swore an oath.

So they made a covenant at Beersheba; then Abimelech and Phicol, the
commander of his army, got up and returned to the land of the Philistines.

Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he called on
the name of the LORD [in prayer], the Eternal God.

And Abraham lived [as a resident alien] in the land of the Philistines
for many days.
burnt offering." So the two walked on together.

9When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood, and bound Isaac his son and placed him on the altar, on top of the wood. [Matt 10:37]

10Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. [Heb 11:17–19]

11But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" He answered, "Here I am."

12The LORD said, "Do not reach out [with the knife in] your hand against the boy, and do nothing to [harm] him; for now I know that you fear God [with reverence and profound respect], since you have not withheld from Me your son, your only son [of promise]."

13Then Abraham looked up and glanced around, and behold, behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering (ascending sacrifice) instead of his son.

14So Abraham named that place The LORD Will Provide. And it is said to this day, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be seen and provided."

15The Angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time

16and said, "By Myself (on the basis of Who I Am) I have sworn [an oath], declares the LORD, that since you have done this thing and have not withheld [from Me] your son, your only son [of promise],

17indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your descendants like the stars of the heavens and like the sand on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies [as conquerors]. [Heb 6:13, 14; 11:12]

18"Through your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have heard and obeyed My voice." [Gen 12:2, 3; 13:16; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Acts 3:25, 26; Gal 3:16]

19So Abraham returned to his servants, and they got up and went with him to Beersheba; and Abraham settled in Beersheba.

20Now after these things Abraham was told, "Milcah has borne children to your brother Nahor:

21Uz the firstborn and Buz his brother and Kemuel the father of Aram, Chessed and Hazo and Pildash and Jidlaph and Bethuel."

22Bethuel became the father of Rebekah. These eight [children] Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

23Nahor's concubine, whose name was Reumah, gave birth to Tebah and Gaham and Tahash and Maacah.

23SARAH LIVED a hundred and twenty-seven years; this was the length of the life of Sarah.

2Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

3Then Abraham stood up before his dead [wife's body], and spoke to the sons of Heth (Hittites), saying,

4"I am a stranger and a sojourner (resident alien) among you; give (sell) me property for a burial place among you so that I may bury my dead [in the proper manner]."

5The Hittites replied to Abraham, "Listen to us, my lord; you are a prince of God [a mighty prince] among you; give (sell) me property for a burial place among you so that I may bury my dead [in the proper manner]."

6Then Abraham stood up before his dead [wife's body], and spoke to the sons of Heth (Hittites), saying,

7"I am a stranger and a sojourner (resident alien) among you; give (sell) me property for a burial place among you so that I may bury my dead [in the proper manner]."

8 equated with Abraham's fulfillment of his vows to the Lord. Then the Lord made this promise to Abraham: “Through your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have heard and obeyed My voice.” [Gen 12:2, 3; 13:16; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Acts 3:25, 26; Gal 3:16]
Now Ephron was present there among the sons of Heth; so within the hearing of all the sons of Heth and all who were entering the gate of his city, Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham, saying,

“No, my lord, hear me; I give you the [entire] field, and I also give you the cave that is in it. In the presence of the men of my people I give (sell) it to you; bury your dead [there].”

Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land.

He said to Ephron in the presence of the people of the land, “If you will only please listen to me and accept my offer. I will give you the price of the field; accept it from me and I will bury my dead there."

Ephron replied to Abraham,

“My lord, listen to me. The land [you seek] is worth four hundred shekels of silver; what is that between you and me? So bury your dead.”

So Abraham listened to Ephron [and agreed to his terms]; and he weighed out for Ephron the [amount of] silver which he had named in the hearing of the Hittites: four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weights current among the merchants.

So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre (Hebron)—the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field and in all its borders around it—were deeded over [legally] to Abraham as his possession in the presence of the Hittites, before all who were entering at the gate of his city.

After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah to the east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan.

The field and the cave in it were deeded over to Abraham by the Hittites as a [permanent] possession and burial place.

NOW ABRAHAM was old, [well] advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

Abraham said to his servant [Eliezer of Damascus], the oldest of his household, who had charge over all that Abraham owned, “Please, put your hand under my thigh [as is customary for affirming a solemn oath], [Gen 15:2] and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live,

but you will [instead] go to my [former] country (Mesopotamia) and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac [the heir of the covenant promise].”

The servant said to him, “Suppose the woman will not be willing to follow me back to this country; should I take your son back to the country from which you came?”

Abraham said to him, “See to it that you do not take my son back there!

“The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house, from the land of my family and my birth, who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give this land’—He will send His angel before you [to guide you], and you will take a wife from there for my son [and bring her here].

“If the woman is not willing to follow you [to this land], then you will be free from this my oath and blameless; only you must never take my son back there.”

So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.
Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels, and set out, taking some of his master’s good things with him; so he got up and journeyed to Mesopotamia [between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers], to the city of Nahor [the home of Abraham’s brother].

He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of the evening when women go out to draw water.

And he said, “O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today, and show lovingkindness (faithfulness) to my master Abraham.

Behold, I stand here at the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; now let it be that the girl to whom I say, ‘Please, let down your jar so that I may [have a] drink,’ and she replies, ‘Drink, and I will also give your camels water to drink’—may she be the one whom You have selected [as a wife] for Your servant Isaac; and by this I will know that You have shown loving-kindness (faithfulness) to my master.”

Before Eliezer had finished speaking (praying), Rebekah came out with her [water] jar on her shoulder. Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, who was the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor.

The girl was very beautiful, a virgin and unmarried; and she went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up.

Then the servant ran to meet her, and said, “Please let me drink a little water from your jar.”

And she said, “Drink, my lord”; and she quickly lowered her jar to her hand, and gave him a drink.

When she had given Eliezer a drink, she said, “I will also draw water for your camels until they have finished drinking.”

So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, and ran again to the well and drew water for all his camels.

Meanwhile, the man stood gazing at Rebekah in [reverent] silence, [waiting] to know if the L ORD had made his trip successful or not.

When the camels had finished drinking, Eliezer took a gold ring weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets for her hands weighing ten shekels in gold,

and said, “Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room in your father’s house for us to lodge?”

And she said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah’s son, whom she bore to [her husband] Nahor.”

Again she said to him, “We have plenty of both straw and feed, and also room to lodge.”

The man bowed his head and worshiped the L ORD.

He said, “Blessed be the L ORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not denied His lovingkindness and His truth to my master. As for me, the L ORD led me to the house of my master’s brothers.”

Then the girl ran and told her mother’s household what had happened.

Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban; and Laban ran out to the man at the well.

When he saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister’s arms, and when he heard Rebekah his sister saying, “The man said this to me,” he went to Eliezer and found him standing by the camels at the spring.

**speak the Word**

*God, I pray that I will walk before You habitually and obediently, that You will send Your angel with me to make my journey successful.*

—ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 24:40
And Laban said, “Come in, blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside since I have made the house ready and have prepared a place for the camels?”

So the man came into the house, and Laban unloaded his camels and gave them straw and feed, and [he gave] water to [Eliezer to] wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him.

But when food was set before him, he said, “I will not eat until I have stated my business.” And Laban said, “Speak on.”

So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant.

The LORD has greatly blessed my master, and he has become great (wealthy, powerful); He has given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and servants and maids, and camels and donkeys.

Now Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master when she was in her old age, and he has given everything that he has to him.

My master made me swear [an oath], saying, ‘You must not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live; but you shall [instead] go to my father’s house and to my family and take a wife for my son [Isaac].’

Then I said to my master, ‘But suppose the woman will not follow me [back to this land].’

He said to me, ‘The LORD, before whom I walk [habitually and obediently], will send His angel with you to make your journey successful, and you will take a wife for my son from my relatives and from my father’s house; then you will be free of my oath, when you come to my relatives; and if they do not give her to you, you will [also] be free of my oath.’

I came today to the spring, and said, ‘O LORD, God of my master Abraham, if now You will make my journey on which I go successful; please look, I am standing by the spring of water; now let it be that when the maiden [whom You have chosen for Isaac] comes out to draw [water], and to whom I say, “Please, give me a little water to drink from your jar”; and if she says to me, “You drink, and I will also draw [water] for your camels”; let that woman be the one whom the LORD has selected and chosen [as a wife] for my master’s son.’

Before I had finished praying in my heart, behold, Rebekah came out with her [water] jar on her shoulder, and she went down to the spring and drew water. And I said to her, ‘Please, let me have a drink.’

And she quickly let down her jar from her shoulder, and said, ‘Drink, and I will also water your camels’; so I drank, and she also watered the camels.

Then I asked her, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She said, ‘The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son, whom Milcah bore to him’; and I put the ring in her nose, and the bracelets on her arms.

And I bowed down my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abra- ham, who had led me in the right way to take the daughter of my master’s brother to his son [as a wife].

So now if you are going to show kindness and truth to my master [being faithful to him], tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right or to the left [and go on my way].”

Then Laban and Bethuel answered, “The matter has come from the LORD; so we dare not speak bad or good [to you about it—we cannot interfere].

Rebekah is before you; take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master’s son, as the LORD has spoken.”

When Abraham’s servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the ground [in worship] before the LORD.
41 Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and articles of clothing, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave precious things to her brother and her mother.

42 Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night [there]. In the morning when they got up, he said, “Now send me back to my master.”

43 But Rebekah’s brother and mother said, “Let the girl stay with us a few days—at least ten; then she may go.”

44 But Eliezer said to them, “Do not delay me, since the LORD has prospered my way. Send me away, so that I may go back to my master.”

45 And they said, “We will call the girl and ask her what she prefers.”

46 So they called Rebekah and said, “Will you go with this man?” And she answered, “I will go.”

47 So they sent off their sister Rebekah and her nurse [Deborah, as her attendant] and Abraham’s servant [Eliezer] and his men.

48 They blessed Rebekah and said to her,

“May you, our sister,
Become [the mother of] thousands of ten thousands,
And may your descendants possess (conquer)
The [city] gate of those who hate them.”

49 Then Rebekah and her attendants stood, and they mounted camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and went on his way.

50 Now Isaac had returned from going to Beer-lahai-roi (Well of the Living One Who Sees Me), for he was living in the Negev. [Gen 16:14]

51 Isaac went out to bow down [in prayer] in the field in the [early] evening; he raised his eyes and looked, and camels were coming.

52 Rebekah also raised her eyes and looked, and when she saw Isaac, she dismounted from her camel.

53 She said to the servant, “Who is that man there walking across the field to meet us?” And the servant said, “He is my master [Isaac].” So she took a veil and covered herself [as was customary].

54 The servant told Isaac everything that he had done.

55 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and he took Rebekah [in marriage], and she became his wife, and he loved her; therefore Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

25 ABRAHAM TOOK another wife, whose name was Keturah.

2 She gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

3 Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim.

4 The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah.

5 Now Abraham gave everything that he had to Isaac;

6 but to the sons of his concubines [Hagar and Keturah], Abraham gave gifts while he was still living and he sent them to the east country, away from Isaac his son [of promise].

7 The days of Abraham’s life were a hundred and seventy-five years.

8 Then Abraham breathed his last and he died at a good old age, an old man who was satisfied [with life]; and he was gathered to his people [who had preceded him in death]. [Gen 15:15; Heb 11:13–16]

9 So his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is east of Mamre,

10 the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth; there Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife.
11 Now after the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac lived at Beer-lahai-roi.

12 Now these are the records of the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s maid, bore to Abraham;

13 and these are the names of the [twelve] sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their births: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael, and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,

14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa,

15 Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

16 These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their settlements, and by their encampments (sheepfolds); twelve princes (sheiks) according to their tribes. [Foretold in Gen 17:20]

17 Ishmael lived a hundred and thirty-seven years; then he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people [who had preceded him in death].

18 Ishmael’s sons (descendants) settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled opposite (east) of all his relatives.

19 Now these are the records of the descendants of Isaac, Abraham’s son: Abraham was the father of Isaac.

20 Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean (Syrian) of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean.

21 Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was unable to conceive children; and the Lord granted his prayer and Rebekah his wife conceived [twins].

22 But the children struggled together within her [kicking and shoving one another]; and she said, “If it is so [that the Lord has heard our prayer], why then am I this way?” So she went to inquire of the Lord [praying for an answer].

23 The Lord said to her,

“[The founders of] two nations are in your womb;
And the separation of two nations
has begun in your body;
The one people shall be stronger
than the other;
And the older shall serve the
younger.”

24 When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

25 The first came out reddish all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau (hairy).

26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand grasped Esau’s heel, so he was named Jacob (one who grabs by the heel, supplanter). Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

27 When the boys grew up, Esau was an able and skilled hunter, a man of the outdoors, but Jacob was a quiet and peaceful man, living in tents.

28 Now Isaac loved [and favored] Esau, because he enjoyed eating his game, but Rebekah loved [and favored] Jacob.

29 Jacob had cooked [reddish-brown lentil] stew [one day], when Esau came from the field and was famished;

30 and Esau said to Jacob, “Please, let me have a quick swallow of that red stuff there, because I am exhausted and famished.” For that reason Esau was [also] called Edom (Red).

31 Jacob answered, “First sell me your birthright (the rights of a firstborn).”

32 Esau said, “Look, I am about to die [if I do not eat soon]; so of what use is this birthright to me?”

33 Jacob said, “Swear [an oath] to me today [that you are selling it to me for this food]”; so he swore [an oath] to him, and sold him his birthright.
43 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and got up and went on his way. In this way Esau scorned his birthright. [Heb 12:15–17]

NOW THERE was a famine in the land [of Canaan], besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines.

2 The Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I will tell you. 3 Live temporarily [as a resident] in this land and I will be with you and will bless and favor you, for I will give all these lands to you and to your descendants, and I will establish and carry out the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. [Gen 22:16–18; Ps 105:9] 4 I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of the heavens, and will give to your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, [Gen 22:18; Acts 3:25, 26; Gal 3:16] 5 because Abraham listened to and obeyed My voice and [consistently] kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” 6 So Isaac stayed in Gerar. 7 The men of the place asked him about his wife, and he said, “She is my sister,” for he was afraid to say, “my wife”—thinking, “the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, since she is very beautiful.” 8 It happened when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah his wife. 9 Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, “See here, Rebekah is in fact your wife! How did you [dare to] say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And Isaac said to him, “Because I thought I might be killed because of her [desirability].” 10 Abimelech said, “What is this that you have done to us? One of the men [among our people] might easily have been intimate with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us [before God].” 11 Then Abimelech commanded all his people, “Whoever touches this man [Isaac] or his wife [Rebekah] shall without exception be put to death.” 12 Then Isaac planted [seed] in that land [as a farmer] and reaped in the same year a hundred times [as much as he had planted], and the Lord blessed and favored him. 13 And the man [Isaac] became great and gained more and more until he became very wealthy and extremely distinguished; 14 he owned flocks and herds and a great household [with a number of servants], and the Philistines envied him. 15 Now all the wells which his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped up by filling them up with dirt. 16 Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from here, because you are far too powerful for us.” 17 So Isaac left that region and camped in the Valley of Gerar, and settled there. 18 Now Isaac again dug [and re-opened] the wells of water which had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, because the Philistines had filled them up [with dirt] after the death of Abraham; and he gave the wells the same names that his father had given them. 19 But when Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing [spring] water, 20 the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “The water is ours!” So Isaac named the well Esek (quarreling), because they quarreled with him. 21 Then his servants dug another
sent them on their way and they left him in peace.

32 Now on the same day, Isaac’s servants came and told him about the well they had dug, saying, “We have found water.”

33 So he named the well Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba to this day. [Gen 21:31]

34 When Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite as his wives;

35 and they were a source of grief to [Esau’s parents] Isaac and Rebekah.

NOW WHEN Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, he called his elder [and favorite] son Esau and said to him, “My son.” And Esau answered him, “Here I am.”

2 Isaac said, “See here, I am old; I do not know when I may die.

3 So now, please take your [hunting] gear, your quiver [of arrows] and your bow, and go out into the open country and hunt game for me;

4 and make me a savory and delicious life point

One of the things Isaac did when he grew to adulthood was to open the wells of his father, Abraham, wells that had been stopped up by their enemies (see Genesis 26:18). The very name Isaac, the one who caused the wells to flow again, means “laughter.” I think we may draw from this story the idea that laughter and joy in the Holy Spirit will open the deep wells of life inside us—wells that may have been stopped up by the enemy through depression, discouragement, or disappointment. Go ahead and laugh; and let God’s joy bubble up in you right now!
And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

Then she gave her son Jacob the delicious meat and the bread which she had prepared.

So he went to his father and said, “My father.” And Isaac said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?”

Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn; I have done what you told me to do. Now please, sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may bless me.”

Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have found the game so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the Lord your God caused it to come to me.”

But Isaac [wondered and] said to Jacob, “Please come close [to me] so that I may touch you, my son, and determine if you are really my son Esau or not.”

So Jacob approached Isaac, and his father touched him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.”

He could not recognize him [as Jacob], because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him.

But he said, “Are you really my son Esau?” Jacob answered, “I am.”

Then Isaac said, “Bring the food to me, and I will eat some of my son’s game, so that I may bless you.” He brought it to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine and he drank.

Then his father Isaac said to him, “Please come, my son, and kiss me.”

So he came and kissed him; and Isaac smelled his clothing and blessed him and said,

“The scent of my son [Esau] is like the aroma of a field which the Lord has blessed; now may God give you of the dew of heaven [to water your land],

dish [of meat], the kind I love, and bring it to me to eat, so that my soul may bless you [as my firstborn son] before I die.”

5But Rebekah overheard what Isaac said to Esau his son; and when Esau had gone to the open country to hunt for game that he might bring back,

6Rebekah said to Jacob her [younger and favorite] son, “Listen carefully: I heard your father saying to Esau your brother,

7Bring me some game and make me a savory and delicious dish [of meat], so that I may eat it, and declare my blessing on you in the presence of the Lord before my death.’

8“So now, my son, listen [carefully] to me [and do exactly] as I command you.

9“Go now to the flock and bring me two good and suitable young goats, and I will make them into a savory dish [of meat] for your father, the kind he loves [to eat].

10“Then you shall bring it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before his death.”

11Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, “Listen, Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth [skinned] man.

12“Suppose my father touches me and feels my skin; then I will be seen by him as a cheat (imposter), and I will bring his curse on me and not a blessing.”

13But his mother said to him, “May your curse be on me, my son; only listen and obey me, and go, bring the young goats to me.”

14So Jacob went and got the two young goats, and brought them to his mother; and his mother prepared a delicious dish of food [with a delightful aroma], the kind his father loved [to eat].

15Then Rebekah took her elder son Esau’s best clothes, which were with her in her house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. 

16And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

17Then she gave her son Jacob the delicious meat and the bread which she had prepared.

18So he went to his father and said, “My father.” And Isaac said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?”

19Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn; I have done what you told me to do. Now please, sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may bless me.”

20Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have found the game so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the Lord your God caused it to come to me.”

21But Isaac [wondered and] said to Jacob, “Please come close [to me] so that I may touch you, my son, and determine if you are really my son Esau or not.”

22So Jacob approached Isaac, and his father touched him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.”

23He could not recognize him [as Jacob], because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him.

24But he said, “Are you really my son Esau?” Jacob answered, “I am.”

25Then Isaac said, “Bring the food to me, and I will eat some of my son’s game, so that I may bless you.” He brought it to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine and he drank.

26Then his father Isaac said to him, “Please come, my son, and kiss me.”

27So he came and kissed him; and Isaac smelled his clothing and blessed him and said,

“The scent of my son [Esau] is like the aroma of a field which the Lord has blessed; now may God give you of the dew of heaven [to water your land],
And of the fatness (fertility) of the earth,
And an abundance of grain and new wine; [Gen 27:39; Deut 33:13, 28]
29 May peoples serve you,
And nations bow down to you;
Be lord and master over your brothers,
And may your mother’s sons bow down to you.
May those who curse you be cursed,
And may those who bless you be blessed.”

30 Now as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely left the presence of Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 Esau also made a delicious dish [of meat] and brought it to his father and said to him, “Let my father get up and eat some of his son’s game, so that you may bless me.”

32 Isaac his father said to him, “Who are you?” And he replied, “I am your son, your firstborn, Esau.”

33 Then Isaac trembled violently, and he said, “Then who was the one [who was just here] who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I blessed him. Yes, and he [in fact] shall be (shall remain) blessed.”

34 When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with a great and extremely bitter cry and said to his father, “Bless me, even me also, O my father!” [Heb 12:16, 17]

35 Isaac said, “Your brother came deceitfully and has [fraudulently] taken away your blessing [for himself].”

36 Esau replied, “Is he not rightly named Jacob (the supplanter)? For he has supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright, and now he has taken away my blessing. Have you not reserved a blessing for me?”

37 But Isaac replied to Esau, “Listen carefully: I have made Jacob your lord and master; I have given him all his brothers and relatives as servants; and I have sustained him with grain and new wine. What then, can I do for you, my son?”

38 Esau said to his father, “Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father.” Then Esau [no longer able to restrain himself] raised his voice and wept [loudly].

39 Then Isaac his father answered and [prophesied and] said to him,

“Your dwelling shall be away from the fertility of the earth
And away from the dew of heaven above;

40 But you shall live by your sword,
And serve your brother;
However it shall come to pass when you break loose [from your anger and hatred],
That you will tear his yoke off your neck [and you will be free of him].”

41 So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him; and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are very near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

42 When these words of her elder son Esau were repeated to Rebekah, she sent for Jacob her younger son, and said to him, “Listen carefully, your

putting the Word to work

When Isaac was old and sick, his son Jacob deceived him into thinking that he (Jacob) was his brother Esau (see Genesis 27:30–32). That way, Jacob tricked Isaac into giving him the birthright that should have gone to Esau. Have you, like Isaac, ever been deceived by someone? Have you forgiven that person?
brother Esau is comforting himself concerning you by planning to kill you.
43"So now, my son, listen and do what I say; go, escape to my brother Laban in Haran!
44"Stay with him for a while, until your brother’s anger subsides.
45"When your brother’s anger toward you subsides and he forgets what you did to him, then I will send and bring you back from there. Why should I be deprived of you both in a single day?"
46Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth [these insolent wives of Esau]. If Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?" [Gen 26:34]

SO ISAAC called Jacob and blessed him and charged him, and said to him, "You shall not marry one of the women of Canaan.
2"Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father; and take from there as a wife for yourself one of the daughters of Laban your mother’s brother.
3"May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, so that you may become a [great] company of peoples.
4"May He also give the blessing of Abraham to you and your descendants with you, that you may inherit the [promised] land of your sojournings, which He gave to Abraham."
5Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.
6Now Esau noticed that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him to Paddan-aram to take a wife for himself from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a prohibition, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,"
7and that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Paddan-aram.
8So Esau realized that [his two wives] the daughters of Canaan displeased Isaac his father;
9and [to appease his parents] Esau went to [the family of] Ishmael and took as his wife, in addition to the wives he [already] had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, the sister of Nebaioth [Ishmael’s firstborn son].
10Now Jacob left Beersheba [never to see his mother again] and traveled toward Haran.
11And he came to a certain place and stayed overnight there because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down there [to sleep].
12He dreamed that there was a ladder (stairway) placed on the earth, and the top of it reached [out of sight] toward heaven; and [he saw] the angels of God ascending and descending on it [going to and from heaven]. [John 1:51]
13And behold, the LORD stood above and around him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your [father’s] father and the God of Isaac; I will give to you and to your descendants the land [of promise] on which you are lying.
14"Your descendants shall be as [countless as] the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and the east and the north and the south; and all the families (nations) of the earth shall be blessed through you and your descendants. [Gen 12:2, 3; 13:16; 22:18; 26:4; Acts 3:25, 26; Gal 3:8, 16]
15"Behold, I am with you and will keep [careful watch over you and guard] you wherever you may go, and I will bring you back to this [promised] land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."
Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and he said, “Without any doubt the Lord is in this place, and I did not realize it.”

So he was afraid and said, “How fearful and awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gateway to heaven.”

So Jacob got up early in the morning, and took the stone he had put under his head and he set it up as a pillar [that is, a monument to the vision in his dream], and he poured [olive] oil on the top of it [to consecrate it].

He named that place Bethel (the house of God); the previous name of that city was Luz (Almond Tree).

Then Jacob made a vow (promise), saying, “If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and clothing to wear,

and if [He grants that] I return to my father’s house in safety, then the Lord will be my God.

This stone which I have set up as a pillar (monument, memorial) will be God’s house [a sacred place to me], and of everything that You give me I will give the tenth to You [as an offering to signify my gratitude and dependence on You].” [Deut 12:8–11; 14:22–26; 26:1–11]

THEN JACOB went on his way and came to the land of the people of the East [near Haran].

As he looked, he saw a well in the field, and three flocks of sheep lying there [resting] beside it because the flocks were watered from that well. Now the stone on the mouth of the well [that covered and protected it] was large,

and when all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of the well, water the sheep, and [afterward] replace the stone on the mouth of the well.

Jacob said to them, “My brothers, where are you from?” And they said, “We are from Haran.”

So he said to them, “Do you know Laban the grandson of Nahor [Abraham’s brother]?” And they replied, “We know him.”

And he asked them, “Is it well with him?” And they said, “He is doing well; look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep!”

Jacob said, “Look, the sun is still high [overhead]; it is a long time before the flocks need to be gathered [in their folds for the night]. Water the sheep, and go, and return them to their pasture.”

But they said, “We cannot [leave] until all the flocks are gathered together, and the shepherds roll the stone from the mouth of the well; then we will water the sheep.”

While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess.

When Jacob saw [his cousin] Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother’s brother, and Laban’s sheep, he came up and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban, his uncle.

Then Jacob kissed Rachel [in greeting], and he raised his voice and wept.

Father, I thank You that You are with me and that You are keeping careful watch over me and guarding me wherever I go.

—ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 28:15
12 Jacob told Rachel he was her father’s relative, Rebekah’s son; and she ran and told her father.

13 When Laban heard of the arrival of Jacob, his sister’s son, he ran to meet him, and embraced and kissed him and brought him to his house. Then he told Laban all these things.

14 Then Laban said to him, “You are my bone and my flesh.” And Jacob stayed with him a month.

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, “Just because you are my relative, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?”

16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

17 Leah’s eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance.

18 Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, “I will serve you [as a hired workman] for seven years [in return] for [the privilege of marrying] Rachel your younger daughter.”

19 Laban said, “It is better that I give her [in marriage] to you than give her to another man. Stay and work with me.”

20 So Jacob served [Laban] for seven years for [the right to marry] Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

21 Finally, Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my time [of service] is completed, so that I may take her to me [as my wife].”

22 So Laban gathered together all the men of the place and prepared a [wedding] feast [with wine].

23 But in the evening he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob went in to [consummate the marriage with] her.

24 Laban also gave Zilpah his maid to his daughter Leah as a maid.

25 But in the morning [when Jacob awoke], it was Leah [who was with him]! And he said to Laban, “What is this that you have done to me? Did I not work for you [for seven years] for Rachel? Why have you deceived and betrayed me [like this]?”

26 But Laban only said, “It is not the tradition here to give the younger [daughter in marriage] before the older.

27 “Finish the week [of the wedding feast] for Leah; then we will give you Rachel also, and in return you shall work for me for seven more years.”

28 So Jacob complied and fulfilled Leah’s week [of celebration]; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as his [second] wife.

29 Laban also gave Bilhah his maid to his daughter Rachel as a maid.

30 So Jacob consummated his marriage and lived with Rachel [as his wife], and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years.

31 Now when the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, He made her able to bear children, but Rachel was barren.

32 Leah conceived and gave birth to a son and named him Reuben (See, a son!), for she said, “Because the LORD has seen my humiliation and suffering; now my husband will love me [since I have given him a son].”

33 Then she conceived again and gave birth to a son and named him Simeon (God hears).

34 She conceived again and gave birth to a son and named him Levi (He will join).
Then Leah said, “I am happy! For women will call me happy.” So she named him Asher (happy).

Now at the time of wheat harvest Reuben [the eldest child] went and found some mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, “Please give me some of your son’s mandrakes.”

But Leah answered, “Is it a small thing that you have taken my husband? Would you take away my son’s mandrakes also?” So Rachel said, “Jacob shall sleep with you tonight in exchange for your son’s mandrakes.”

When Jacob came in from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, “You must sleep with me [tonight], for I have in fact hired you with my son’s mandrakes.” So he slept with her that night.

God listened and answered [the prayer of] Leah, and she conceived and gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob. Leah said, “God has given me my reward because I have given my maid to my husband.” So she named him Issachar.

Leah conceived again and gave birth to a sixth son for Jacob. Leah said, “God has endowed me with a good [marriage] gift [for my husband]; now he will live with me [regarding me with honor as his wife], because I have given birth to six sons.” So she named him Zebulun.

Afterward she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah.

Then God remembered [the prayers of] Rachel, and God thought of her and opened her womb [so that she would conceive].

So she conceived and gave birth to a son; and she said, “God has taken away my disgrace and humiliation.”

She named him Joseph (may He add) and said, “May the LORD add to me another son.”

Now when Rachel had given birth
to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, “Send me away, that I may go back to my own place and to my own country.

26“Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know the work which I have done for you.”

27But Laban said to him, “If I have found favor in your sight, stay with me; for I have learned [from the omens in divination and by experience] that the LORD has blessed me because of you.”

28He said, “Name your wages, and I will give it [to you].”

29Jacob answered him, “You know how I have served you and how your possessions, your cattle and sheep and goats, have fared with me.

30“For you had little before I came and it has increased and multiplied abundantly, and the LORD has favored you with blessings wherever I turned. But now, when shall I provide for my own household?”

31Laban asked, “What shall I give you?” Jacob replied, “You shall not give me anything. But if you will do this one thing for me [which I now propose], I will again pasture and keep your flock:

32Let me pass through your entire flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep and every dark or black one among the lambs and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and those shall be my wages.

33So my honesty will be evident for me later, when you come [for an accounting] concerning my wages. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and dark among the young lambs, if found with me, shall be considered stolen.”

34And Laban said, “Good! Let it be done as you say.”

35So on that same day Laban [secretly] removed the male goats that were streaked and spotted and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one with white on it, and all the dark ones among the sheep, and put them in the care of his sons.

36And he put [a distance of] three days’ journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob was then left in care of the rest of Laban’s flock.

37Then Jacob took branches of fresh poplar and almond and plane trees, and peeled white stripes in them, exposing the white in the branches.

38Then he set the branches which he had peeled in front of the flocks in the watering troughs, where the flocks came to drink; and they mated and conceived when they came to drink.

39So the flocks mated and conceived by the branches, and the flocks gave birth to streaked, speckled, and spotted offspring.

40Jacob separated the lambs, and [as he had done with the peeled branches] he made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the dark or black in the [new] flock of Laban; and he put his own herds apart by themselves and did not put them [where they could breed] with Laban’s flock.

41Furthermore, whenever the stronger [animals] of the flocks were breeding, Jacob would place the branches in the sight of the flock in the watering troughs, so that they would mate and conceive among the branches;

42but when the flock was sickly, he did not put the branches there; so the sicker [animals] were Laban’s and the stronger Jacob’s.

43So Jacob became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks [of sheep and goats], and female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

31JACOB HEARD that Laban’s sons were saying: “Jacob has taken away everything that was our father’s, and from what belonged to our father he has acquired all this wealth and honor.”
Jacob noticed [a change in] the attitude of Laban, and saw that it was not friendly toward him as before.

Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your people, and I will be with you."

So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to his flock in the field,

and he said to them, "I see [a change in] your father's attitude, that he is not friendly toward me as [he was] before; but the God of my father [Isaac] has been with me.

You know that I have served your father with all my strength.

Yet your father has cheated me [as often as possible] and changed my wages ten times; but God did not allow him to hurt me.

If he said, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then the entire flock gave birth to speckled [young]; and if he said, 'The streaked shall be your wages,' then the entire flock gave birth to streaked [young].

Thus God has taken away the flocks of your father and given them to me.

And it happened at the time when the flock conceived that I looked up and saw in a dream that the rams which mated [with the female goats] were streaked, speckled, and spotted.

And the Angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.'

He said, 'Look up and see, all the rams which are mating [with the flock] are streaked, speckled, and spotted; for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you.

I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar, and where you made a vow to Me; now stand up, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.'

Rachel and Leah answered him, "Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?"

Are we not counted by him as foreigners? For he sold us [to you in marriage], and has also entirely used up our purchase price.

Surely all the riches which God has taken from our father are ours and our children's. Now then, whatever God has told you to do, do it."

Then Jacob stood [and took action] and put his children and his wives on camels;

and he drove away all his livestock and [took along] all his property which he had acquired, the livestock he had obtained and accumulated in Paddan-aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

When Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel [went inside the house and] stole her father's household gods.

And Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean (Syrian) by not telling him that he intended to leave and he slipped away secretly.

So he fled with everything that he had, and got up and crossed the river [Euphrates], and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead [east of the Jordan River].

On the third day [after his departure] Laban was told that Jacob had fled.

So he took his relatives with him and pursued him for seven days, and they overtook him in the hill country of Gilead.

God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him, "Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob, either good or bad."

Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent on the hill, and Laban with his relatives camped on the same hill of Gilead.

Then Laban said to Jacob, "What do you mean by deceiving me and leaving without my knowledge, and carrying off my daughters as if [they were] captives of the sword?"

Why did you run away secretly
and deceive me and not tell me, so that [otherwise] I might have sent you away with joy and with songs, with [music on the] tambourine and lyre?

28"And why did you not allow me to kiss my grandchildren and my daughters [goodbye]? Now you have done a foolish thing [in behaving like this].

29"It is in my power to harm you, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to speak to Jacob, either good or bad.'

30"Now [I suppose] you felt you must go because you were homesick for your father’s house and family; but why did you steal my [household] gods?"

31]Jacob answered Laban, “[I left secretly] because I was afraid, for I thought you would take your daughters away from me by force.

32"The one with whom you find your gods shall not live; in the presence of our relatives [search my possessions and] point out whatever you find that belongs to you and take it.” For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the idols.

33]So Laban went into Jacob’s tent and into Leah’s tent and the tent of the two maids, but he did not find them. Then he came out of Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s tent.

34]Now Rachel had taken the household idols and put them in the camel’s saddlebag and sat on them. Laban searched through all her tent, but did not find them.

35]So Rachel said to her father, “Do not be displeased, my lord, that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is on me and I am unwell.” He searched [further] but did not find the household idols.

36]Then Jacob became angry and argued with Laban. And he said to Laban, “What is my fault? What is my sin that you pursued me like this?

37]Although you have searched through all my possessions, what have you found of your household goods? Put it here before my relatives and your relatives, so that they may decide [who has done right] between the two of us.

38]These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not lost their young, nor have I eaten the rams of your flocks.

39]I did not bring you the torn carcases [of the animals attacked by predators]; I [personally] took the loss. You required of me [to make good] everything that was stolen, whether it occurred by day or night.

40]This was my situation: by day the heat consumed me and by night the cold, and I could not sleep.

41]These twenty years I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for [my share of] your flocks, and you have changed my wages ten times.

42]If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and [the Feared One] of Isaac, had not been with me, most certainly you would have sent me away now empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and humiliation and the [exhausting] labor of my hands, so He rendered judgment and rebuked you last night.”

43]Laban answered Jacob, “These women [that you married] are my daughters, these children are my grandchildren, these flocks are [from] my flocks, and all that you see [here] is mine. But what can I do today to these my daughters or to their children to whom they have given birth?

44]“So come now, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it serve as a witness between you and me.”

45]So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a [memorial] pillar.
THEN AS Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him [to reassure and protect him].

2 When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s camp.” So he named that place Mahanaim (double camps). [Gen 32:7, 10]

3 Then Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

4 He commanded them, saying, “This is what to say to my lord Esau: ‘Your servant Jacob says this, “I have been living temporarily with Laban, and have stayed there until now;

5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants; and I have sent [this message] to tell my lord, so that I may find grace and kindness in your sight.”

6 The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him.”

7 Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps;

8 and he said, “If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the other camp which is left will escape.”

9 Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the L ORD, who said to me, ’Return to your country and to your people, and I will make you prosper,’

10 I am unworthy of all the loving-kindness and compassion and of all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant. With only my staff [long ago] I crossed over

speak the Word

Father, thank You for all the loving-kindness, compassion, and faithfulness You show to me, even though I am unworthy.

– ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 32:10
thirty milking camels with their colts, forty cows, ten bulls, twenty female donkeys, and ten [donkey] colts.

16 He put them into the care of his servants, every herd by itself, and said to his servants, “Go on ahead of me, and put an interval [of space] between the individual herds.”

17 Then he commanded the one in front, saying, “When Esau my brother meets you and asks to whom you belong, and where you are going, and whose are the animals in front of you?

18 then you shall say, ‘They are your servant Jacob’s; they are a gift sent to my lord Esau. And he also is behind us.’ “

19 And so Jacob commanded the second and the third as well, and all that followed the herds, saying, “This is

Jacob was a man with many weaknesses, yet he pressed on with God and was determined to receive God’s blessing. God likes that kind of determination. He actually told Jacob in Genesis 32:28 that he (Jacob) had struggled with God and men and had prevailed. Because of that struggle, God would be glorified in him. God can always be glorified through people who do not allow their personal weaknesses to stop Him from flowing through them.

In order for God to flow through us, we must first come face-to-face with the fact that we have weaknesses—and then we must determine not to let them bother us. Our imperfections will not stop God from working through us unless we let them. We need to accept ourselves completely—weaknesses and all—because God does.

I am going to ask you to do something very important. Right now, stop and wrap your arms around yourself. Give yourself a great big hug and say aloud: “I accept myself. I love myself. I know I have weaknesses and imperfections, but I will not let them stop me, and I will not allow them to stop God from working through me.” Try doing that several times per day, and you will soon develop a new attitude toward yourself, a new outlook on life, and a greater level of confidence in God.

Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord, who touched the hollow of his thigh. As a result of that encounter, he developed a limp (see Genesis 32:24–32). I like to say that Jacob limped away from the fight, but he took his blessing with him! God will bless all of us even though we limp, even though we are not perfect. Remember, God looks at our hearts. If we have faith in Him and hearts that long to obey Him and bring Him glory, then He will work wonders through us in spite of our weaknesses.
what you shall say to Esau when you meet him;

20 and you shall say, ‘Look, your servant Jacob is behind us.’” For he said [to himself], “I will try to appease him with the gift that is going ahead of me. Then afterward I will see him; perhaps he will accept and forgive me.”

21 So the gift [of the herds of livestock] went on ahead of him, and he himself spent that night back in the camp.

22 But he got up that same night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and waded over the ford of the Jabbok.

23 Then he took them and sent them across the brook. And he also sent across whatever he had.

24 So Jacob was left alone, and a Man [came and] wrestled with him until daybreak.

25 When the Man saw that He had not prevailed against Jacob, He touched his hip joint; and Jacob’s hip was dislocated as he wrestled with Him.

26 Then He said, “Let Me go, for day is breaking.” But Jacob said, “I will not let You go unless You declare a blessing on me.”

27 So He asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.”

28 And He said, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.” [Hos 12:3, 4]

29 Then Jacob asked Him, “Please tell me Your name.” But He said, “Why is it that you ask My name?” And He declared a blessing [of the covenant promises] on Jacob there.

30 So Jacob named the place Peniel (the face of God), saying, “For I have seen God face to face, yet my life has not been snatched away.”

31 Now the sun rose on him as he passed Penuel (Peniel), and he was limping because of his hip.

32 Therefore, to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon of the hip which is on the socket of the thigh, because He touched the socket of Jacob’s thigh by the tendon of the hip.

33 THEN JACOB looked up, and saw Esau coming with four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids.

He put the maids and their children in front, Leah and her children after them, and Rachel and Joseph last of all.

3 Then Jacob crossed over [the stream] ahead of them and bowed himself to the ground seven times [bowing and moving forward each time], until he approached his brother.

4 But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and hugged his neck and kissed him, and they wept [for joy]. [Luke 15:20]

5 Esau looked up and saw the women and the children, and said, “Who are these with you?” So Jacob replied, “They are the children whom God has graciously given your servant.”

6 Then the maids approached with their children, and they bowed down. Leah also approached with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel approached, and they bowed down.

7 Esau asked, “What do you mean by all this company which I have met?” And he answered, “[These are] to find favor in the sight of my lord.”

8 But Esau said, “I have plenty, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.”

9 Jacob replied, “No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then accept my gift [as a blessing] from my hand, for I see your face as if I had seen the face of God, and you have received me favorably.

11 “Please accept my blessing (gift) which has been brought to you, for God has dealt graciously with me and I have everything [that I could possibly
Genesis 34:11

[57]

57

[262x651]57

[395x651]Genesis 34:11

[274x623]with her by force [humbling and offending her].

[283x604]But his soul longed for and clung to Dinah daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke comfortingly to her young heart’s wishes.

[283x559]So Shechem said to his father Hamor, “Get me this young woman as a wife.”

[283x544]Now Jacob heard that Shechem had defiled (violated) Dinah his daughter; but his sons were in the field with his livestock, so Jacob said nothing until they came in.

[283x511]But Shechem’s father Hamor went to Jacob to talk with him.

[283x432]Now when Jacob’s sons heard of it they came in from the field; they were deeply grieved, and they were very angry, for Shechem had done a disgraceful thing to Israel by lying with Jacob’s daughter, for such a thing is not to be done.

[283x354]But Hamor conferred with them, saying, “The soul of my son Shechem [deeply] longs for your daughter [and sister]. Please give her to him as his wife.

[283x320]In this way you shall live with us; the country will be open to you; live and do business in it and acquire property and possessions in it.”

[283x253]Shechem also said to Dinah’s father and to her brothers, “Let me find favor in the sight of my lord.”

[283x186]Then Esau said, “Let us get started on our journey and I will go in front of you [to lead the way].”

[283x103]When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince (sheik) of the land, saw her, he kidnapped her and lay [intimately] with her by force [humbling and offending her].

[283x220]So Jacob kept urging him and Esau accepted it.

[283x127]Have you, like Dinah, ever been an innocent victim? I can assure you that even in the worst circumstances, God gives us grace to forgive so that we can go on with our lives.

34 NOW DINAH the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out [unescorted] to visit the girls of the land.

2When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince (sheik) of the land, saw her, he kidnapped her and lay [intimately] with her by force [humbling and offending her].

3But his soul longed for and clung to Dinah daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke comfortingly to her young heart’s wishes.

4So Shechem said to his father Hamor, “Get me this young woman as a wife.”

5Now Jacob heard that Shechem had defiled (violated) Dinah his daughter; but his sons were in the field with his livestock, so Jacob said nothing until they came in.

6But Shechem’s father Hamor went to Jacob to talk with him.

7Now when Jacob’s sons heard of it they came in from the field; they were deeply grieved, and they were very angry, for Shechem had done a disgraceful thing to Israel by lying with Jacob’s daughter, for such a thing is not to be done.

8But Hamor conferred with them, saying, “The soul of my son Shechem [deeply] longs for your daughter [and sister]. Please give her to him as his wife.

9And [beyond that] intermarry with us; give your daughters to us [as wives] and take our daughters for yourselves. [Ex 34:15, 16; Deut 7:3; Josh 23:12, 13]

10"In this way you shall live with us; the country will be open to you; live and do business in it and acquire property and possessions in it.”

11Shechem also said to Dinah’s father and to her brothers, “Let me find favor in your sight, and I will give you whatever you ask of me.

putting the Word to work

Have you, like Dinah, ever been an innocent victim? I can assure you that even in the worst circumstances, God gives us grace to forgive so that we can go on with our lives.
12”Demand of me a very large bridal payment and gift [as compensation for giving up your daughter and sister], and I will give you whatever you tell me; only give me the girl to be my wife.”

13Jacob’s sons answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, because Shechem had defiled and disgraced their sister Dinah.

14They said to them, “We cannot do this thing and give our sister [in marriage] to one who is not circumcised, because that would be a disgrace to us.

15“But we will consent to you only on this condition: if you will become like us, in that every male among you consents to be circumcised, 
then we will give our daughters to you [in marriage], and we will take your daughters for ourselves, and we will live with you and become one people.

16“But if you do not listen to us and refuse to be circumcised, then we will take our daughter [Dinah] and go.”

17Their words seemed reasonable to Hamor and his son Shechem, and the young man did not hesitate to do the [required] thing, for he was delighted with Jacob’s daughter. Now he was more respected and honored than all [others] in the household of his father.

18Then Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their [walled] city [where the leading men would meet] and spoke with the men of the city, saying,

19“These men are peaceful and friendly with us; so let them live in the land and do business in it, for the land is large enough [for us and] for them; let us take their daughters for wives and let us give them our daughters [in marriage].

20“But only on this condition will the men consent to our request that they live among us and become one people: that every male among us become circumcised just as they are circumcised.

21“Will not their cattle and their possessions and all their animals be ours [if we do this]? Let us consent [to do as they ask], and they will live here with us.”

22And every [Canaanite] man who went out of the city gate listened and considered what Hamor and Shechem said; and every male who was a resident of that city was circumcised.

23Now on the third day [after the circumcision], when all the men were [terribly] sore and in pain, two of Jacob’s sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s full brothers, took their swords, boldly entered the city [without anyone suspecting them of evil intent], and they killed every male.

24They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem’s house [where she was staying], and left.

25Then Jacob’s [other] sons came upon those who were killed and looted the town, because their sister had been defiled and disgraced.

26They took the Canaanites’ flocks and their herds and their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field;

27they looted all their wealth, and [took captive] all their children and their wives, even everything that was in the houses.

28Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have ruined me, making me a stench to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites! My men are few in number, and the men of the land will band together against me and attack me; I shall be destroyed, I and my household.”

31But they said, “Should he [be permitted to] treat our sister as a prostitute?”
35 Then God said to Jacob, “Go up to Bethel and live there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you [in a distinct manifestation] when you fled [years ago] from Esau your brother.” [Gen 28:11–22]

Then Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Get rid of the [idols and images of] foreign gods that are among you, and ceremonially purify yourselves and change [into fresh] clothes;

then let us get up and go up to Bethel, and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.”

So they gave Jacob all the [idols and images of the] foreign gods they had and the rings which were in their ears [worn as charms against evil], and Jacob buried them under the oak tree near Shechem.

As they journeyed, there was a great [supernatural] terror [sent from God] on the cities around them, and [for that reason] the Canaanites did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him.

There he built an altar [to worship the LORD], and called the place El-bethel (God of the House of God), because there God had revealed Himself to him when he escaped from his brother.

Now Deborah, [who once was] Rebekah’s nurse, died and was buried below Bethel under the oak; and the name of it was called Allon-bacuth (Oak of Weeping).

Then God [in a visible manifestation] appeared to Jacob again when he came out of Paddan-aram, and declared a blessing on him. [Gen 32:28]

Again God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name.”

So he was called Israel.

And God said to him, “I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, And kings shall be born of your loins.

“The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and to your descendants after you I will give the land.”

Then God ascended from Jacob in the place where He had spoken with him.

Jacob set up a pillar (memorial, monument) in the place where he had talked with God, a pillar of stone, and he poured a drink offering [of wine] on it; he also poured oil on it [to declare it sacred for God’s purpose].

So Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him, Bethel (the House of God).

Then they journeyed from Bethel; and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath (Bethlehem), Rachel began to give birth and had difficulty and suffered severely.

When she was in hard labor the midwife said to her, “Do not be afraid; you now have another son.”

And as her soul was departing, (for she died), she named him Ben-oni (son of my sorrow); but his father called him Benjamin (son of the right hand).

So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).

Jacob set a pillar (memorial, monument) on her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel’s grave to this day.

Then Israel (Jacob) journeyed on and pitched his tent on the other side of the tower of Eder [the lookout point used by shepherds].
22 While Israel was living in that land, Reuben [his eldest son] went and lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine, and Israel heard about it.
Now Jacob had twelve sons—
23 The sons of Leah: Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun;
24 and the sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin;
25 and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s maid: Dan and Naphtali;
26 and the sons of Zilpah, Leah’s maid: Gad and Asher. These are the sons of Jacob born to him in Paddan-aram.
27 Jacob came to Isaac his father at Mamre of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had lived temporarily.
28 Now the days of Isaac were a hundred and eighty years.
29 Isaac’s spirit departed and he died and was gathered to his people [who had preceded him in death], an old man full of days (satisfied, fulfilled); his sons Esau and Jacob buried him [in the cave of Machpelah with his parents Abraham and Sarah].

NOW THESE are the records of the descendants of Esau, (that is, Edom).
2 Esau took his [three] wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the son of Zibeon the Hivite,
3 and Basemath, Ishmael’s daughter, sister of Nebaioth.
4 Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel,
5 and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These are the sons of Esau born to him in Canaan.
6 Now Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all the members of his household, and his livestock and all his cattle and all his possessions which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and he went to a land away from his brother Jacob.
7 For their [great flocks and herds and] possessions made it impossible for them to live together [in the same region]; the land in which they lived temporarily could not support them because of their livestock.
8 So Esau lived in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom.
9 These are the records of the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.
10 These are the names of Esau’s sons: Eliphaz, the son of Adah, Esau’s wife, and Reuel, the son of Basemath, Esau’s wife.
11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz,
12 and Timna was a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau’s son; and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These are the sons of Adah, Esau’s wife.
13 These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These are the sons of Reuel in the land of Edom; they are the sons of Basemath, Esau’s wife.
14 And these are the sons of Oholibamah, Esau’s wife, the daughter of Anah, the son of Zibeon. She bore to Esau: Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.
15 These are the tribal chiefs of the sons of Esau: The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn of Esau: Chiefs Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz,
16 Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. These are the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; they are the sons of Adah.
17 These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These are the sons of Basemath, Esau’s wife.
18 These are the sons of Oholibamah, Esau’s wife: Chiefs Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These are the sons of Basemath, Esau’s wife.
19 These are the sons of Esau, (that is, Edom), and these are their chiefs.
These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These are the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom.
22The sons of Lotan are Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister is Timna.
23The sons of Shobal are these: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.
24These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. This is the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness as he pastured the donkeys of Zibeon his father.
25The children of Anah are these: Dishon and Oholibamah [Esau's wife], the daughter of Anah.
26These are the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran.
27Ezer's sons are these: Bilhan, Zavan, and Akan.
28These are the sons of Dishan: Heman, Shavan, and Athran.
29The Horite chiefs are these: Chiefs Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 30Dishon, Ezer, Dishan. These are the Horite chiefs, according to their various clans in the land of Seir.
31And these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites:
32Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah.
33Now Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned as his successor.
34Then Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned as his successor.
35And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, reigned as his successor. The name of his [walled] city was Avith.
36Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah succeeded him.
37Then Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the river [Euphrates] reigned as his successor.
38And Shaul died, and Baal-hanan son of Achbor reigned as his successor.
39Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and then Hadar reigned [as his successor]. His [walled] city was Pau; his wife's name was Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.
40And these are the names of the tribal chiefs of Esau, according to their families and places of residence, by their names: Chiefs Timna, Alvan, Jetheth, 41Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, 42Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, 43Magdiel, and Iram. These are the tribal chiefs of Edom (that is, of Esau the father of the Edomites), according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession.

SO JACOB (Israel) lived in the land where his father [Isaac] had been a stranger (sojourner, resident alien), in the land of Canaan.
2These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, when he was seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers [Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher]; the boy was with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's secondary wives; and Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.
3Now Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a [distinctive] multicolored tunic.
4His brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than all of his brothers; so they hated him and could not [find it within themselves to] speak to him on friendly terms.
5Now Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brothers, and they hated him even more.
6He said to them, “Please listen to [the details of] this dream which I have dreamed;
7we [brothers] were binding sheaves [of grain stalks] in the field, and lo, my sheaf [suddenly] got up and stood upright and remained standing; and behold, your sheaves stood all around my sheaf and bowed down [in respect]."

8His brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us? Are you really going to rule and govern us as your subjects?" So they hated him even more for [telling them about] his dreams and for his [arrogant] words.

9But Joseph dreamed still another dream, and told it to his brothers [as well]. He said, "See here, I have again dreamed a dream, and lo, [this time I saw] eleven stars and the sun and the moon bowed down [in respect] to me!"

10He told it to his father as well as to his brothers; but his father rebuked him and said to him [in disbelief], "What is [the meaning of] this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow down to the ground [in respect] before you?"

11Joseph’s brothers were envious and jealous of him, but his father kept the words [of Joseph] in mind [wondering about their meaning].

**life point**

God gave Joseph dreams of greatness, but in his zeal and excitement, Joseph unwisely told his dreams to his brothers, who did not share his enthusiasm (see Genesis 37:5). As a result, they sold him as a slave, and he had to endure some hard years and difficult experiences.

During those years, though, God developed wisdom in Joseph and thereby prepared him for his life’s call. Just as He did for Joseph, God is able to develop in you whatever you may lack today so that you can fulfill His purpose for your life.

12Then his brothers went to pasture their father’s flock near Shechem.

13Israel (Jacob) said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing [the flock] at Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them.” And he said, “Here I am [ready to obey you].”

14Then Jacob said to him, “Please go and see whether everything is all right with your brothers and all right with the flock; then bring word [back] to me.” So he sent him from the Hebron Valley, and he went to Shechem.

15Now a certain man found Joseph, and saw that he was wandering around and had lost his way in the field; so the man asked him, "What are you looking for?"

16He said, "I am looking for my brothers. Please tell me where they are pasturing our flocks."

17Then the man said, "[They were here, but] they have moved on from this place. I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

18And when they saw him from a distance, even before he came close to them, they plotted to kill him.

19They said to one another, "Look, here comes this dreamer.

20"Now then, come and let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits (cisterns, underground water storage); then we will say [to our father], 'A wild animal killed and devoured him'; and we shall see what will become of his dreams!"

21Now Reuben [the eldest] heard this and rescued him from their hands and said, "Let us not take his life."

22Reuben said to them, “Do not shed his blood, but [instead] throw him [alive] into the pit that is here in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him [to kill him]”—[he said this so] that he could rescue him from them and return him [safely] to his father.

23Now when Joseph reached his
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Genesis 38:11

NOW AT that time, Judah left his brothers and went down to [stay with] a certain Adullamite named Hirah.

2There Judah saw a daughter of Shua, a Canaanite, and he took her [as his wife] and lived with her.

3So she conceived and gave birth to a son and Judah named him Er.

4Then she conceived again and gave birth to still another son and named him Onan.

5Again she conceived and gave birth to another child and named him Shelah. It was at Chezib that she gave birth to him.

6Now Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn; her name was Tamar.

7But Er, Judah’s firstborn, was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him [in judgment].

8Then Judah told Onan, “Go in to your brother’s widow, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law [under the levirate marriage custom]; [be her husband and] raise children for [the name of] your brother.” [Deut 25:5–10]

9Onan knew that the child (heir) would not be his [but his dead brother’s]; so whenever he lay with his brother’s widow, he spilled his seed on the ground [to prevent conception], so that he would not give a child to his brother.

10But what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD; therefore He killed him also [in judgment].

11Then Judah said to Tamar, his brothers, they stripped him of his tunic, the [distinctive] multicolored tunic which he was wearing;

24then they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was empty; there was no water in it.

25Then they sat down to eat their meal. When they looked up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead [east of the Jordan], with their camels bearing ladanum resin [for perfume] and balm and myrrh, going on their way to carry the cargo down to Egypt.

26Judah said to his brothers, “What do we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood (murder)?

27”Come, let us [instead] sell him to these Ishmaelites [and Midianites] and not lay our hands on him, because he is our brother and our flesh.” So his brothers listened to him and agreed. [Gen 22:24; 25:2]

28Then as the Midianite [and Ishmaelite] traders were passing by, the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and they sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And so they took Joseph [as a captive] into Egypt.

29Now Reuben [unaware of what had happened] returned to the pit, and [to his great alarm found that] Joseph was not in the pit; so he tore his clothes [in deep sorrow].

30He rejoined his brothers and said, “The boy is not there; as for me, where shall I go [to hide from my father]?”

31Then they took Joseph’s tunic, slaughtered a male goat and dipped the tunic in the blood;

32and they brought the multicolored tunic to their father, saying, “We have found this; please examine it and decide whether or not it is your son’s tunic.”

33He recognized it and said, “It is my son’s tunic. A wild animal has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces!”

34So Jacob tore his clothes [in grief], put on sackcloth and mourned many days for his son.

35Then all his sons and daughters attempted to console him, but he refused to be comforted and said, “I will go down to Sheol (the place of the dead) in mourning for my son.” And his father wept for him.

36Meanwhile, in Egypt the Midianites sold Joseph [as a slave] to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and the captain of the [royal] guard.

38NOW AT that time, Judah left his brothers and went down to [stay with] a certain Adullamite named Hirah.

2There Judah saw a daughter of Shua, a Canaanite, and he took her [as his wife] and lived with her.

3So she conceived and gave birth to a son and Judah named him Er.

4Then she conceived again and gave birth to a son and named him Onan.

5Again she conceived and gave birth to still another son and named him Shelah. It was at Chezib that she gave birth to him.

6Now Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn; her name was Tamar.

7But Er, Judah’s firstborn, was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him [in judgment].

8Then Judah told Onan, “Go in to your brother’s widow, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law [under the levirate marriage custom]; [be her husband and] raise children for [the name of] your brother.” [Deut 25:5–10]

9Onan knew that the child (heir) would not be his [but his dead brother’s]; so whenever he lay with his brother’s widow, he spilled his seed on the ground [to prevent conception], so that he would not give a child to his brother.

10But what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD; therefore He killed him also [in judgment].

11Then Judah said to Tamar, his
daughter-in-law, “Remain a widow at your father’s house until Shelah my [youngest] son is grown”; [but he was deceiving her] for he thought that [if Shelah should marry her] he too might die like his brothers did. So Tamar went and lived in her father’s house.

12 But quite a while later, Judah’s wife, the daughter of Shua, died; and when the time of mourning was ended, he went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah with his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

13 Tamar was told, “Listen, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.”

14 So she removed her widow’s clothes and covered herself with a veil, and wrapped herself up [in disguise], and sat in the gateway of Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife [as Judah had promised].

15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a [temple] prostitute, for she had covered her face [as such women did].

16 He turned to her by the road, and said, “Please come, let me lie with you”; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, “What will you give me, that you may lie with me?”

17 He answered, “I will send you a young goat from the flock.” And she said, “Will you give me a pledge [as a deposit] until you send it?”

18 He said, “What pledge shall I give you?” She said, “Your seal and your cord, and the staff that is in your hand.” So he gave them to her and was intimate with her, and she conceived by him.

19 Then she got up and left, and removed her veil and put on her widow’s clothing.

20 When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite, to get his pledge [back] from the woman, he was unable to find her.

21 He asked the men of that place, “Where is the temple prostitute who was by the roadside at Enaim?” They said, “There was no prostitute here.”

22 So he returned to Judah, and said, “I cannot find her; also the local men said, ‘There was no prostitute around here.’”

23 Then Judah said, “Let her keep the things (pledge articles) for herself, otherwise we will be a laughingstock [searching everywhere for her]. After all, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her.”

24 About three months later Judah was told, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the [role of a] prostitute, and she is with child because of her immorality.” So Judah said, “Bring her out and let her be burned [to death as punishment]!”

25 While she was being brought out, she [took the things Judah had given her and] sent [them along with a message] to her father-in-law, saying, “I am with child by the man to whom these articles belong.” And she added, “Please examine [them carefully] and see [clearly] to whom these things belong, the seal and the cord and staff.”

26 Judah recognized the articles, and said, “She has been more righteous [in this matter] than I, because I did not give her to my son Shelah [as I had promised].” And Judah did not have [intimate] relations with her again.

27 Now when the time came for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb.

28 And when she was in labor, one [baby] put out his hand, and the midwife took his hand and tied a scarlet thread on it, saying, “This one was born first.”

29 But he pulled back his hand, and his brother was born first. And she said, “What a breach you have made for yourself [to be the firstborn]!” So he was named Perez (breach, break forth). [Matt 1:3]
Now Joseph was handsome and attractive in form and appearance. [Gen 43:32]

Then after a time his master’s wife looked at Joseph with desire, and she said, “Lie with me.”

But he refused and said to his master’s wife, “Look, with me in the house, my master does not concern himself with anything; he has put everything that he owns in my charge.

“He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God [and your husband]?”

And so it was that she spoke to Joseph persistently day after day, but he did not listen to her plea to lie beside her or be with her.

Then it happened one day that Joseph went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the men of the household was there in the house.

She caught Joseph by his [outer] robe, saying, “Lie with me!” But he left his robe in her hand and ran, and got outside [the house].

When she saw that he had left his robe in her hand and had run outside,

She called to the men of her household and said to them, “Look at this, your master has brought a Hebrew into the household to mock and insult us; he came to me to lie with me, and I screamed.

When he heard me screaming, he left his robe with me and ran outside [the house].”

So she left Joseph’s [outer] robe beside her until his master came home.

Then she told her husband the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you brought among us, came to me to mock and insult me;

then as soon as I raised my voice and screamed, he left his robe with me and ran outside [the house].”

And when Joseph’s master heard

Afterward his brother who had the scarlet [thread] on his hand was born and was named Zerah (brightness).

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the [royal] guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there.

The Lord was with Joseph, and he [even though a slave] became a successful and prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.

Now his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to prosper (succeed) in his hand. [Gen 21:22; 26:27, 28; 41:38, 39]

So Joseph pleased Potiphar and found favor in his sight and he served him as his personal servant. He made Joseph overseer over his house, and he put all that he owned in Joseph’s charge.

It happened that from the time that he made Joseph overseer in his house and [put him in charge] over all that he owned, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian’s house because of Joseph; so the Lord’s blessing was on everything that Potiphar owned, in the house and in the field.

So Potiphar left all that he owned in Joseph’s charge; and with Joseph there he did not [need to] pay attention to anything except the food he ate.

life point

While we are waiting on God, it is important for us to take our positions and stay faithful. Then, like Joseph, God will raise us up in His timing (see Genesis 39:2–5). Be faithful as you wait on God, do your work well, and people will see that God’s hand is upon you for good.
the words of his wife, saying, “This is the way your servant treated me,” his anger burned.

So Joseph’s master took him and put him in the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were confined; so he was there in the prison.

But the Lord was with Joseph and extended lovingkindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the warden.

The warden committed to Joseph’s care (management) all the prisoners who were in the prison; so that whatever was done there, he was in charge of it.

The warden paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph’s care because the Lord was with him; whatever Joseph did, the Lord made to prosper.

receive God’s favor

Joseph had been unjustly accused and imprisoned, but the Lord was with him and showed him mercy and grace. In Genesis 39:20–23, we see that God gave him favor in the eyes of the prison warden, who basically put Joseph in charge of running the prison. Even in the dismal circumstances of incarceration, the Lord caused Joseph to prosper.

God’s favor is also available to us, His children. But like many other good things in life, the fact that something is available to us does not mean that we will ever partake of it. The Lord offers us many things that we never enjoy because we do not activate our faith to receive what He has provided.

Favor is actually a part of grace. In the English New Testament, the word grace and the word favor are both translated from the same Greek word charis. So the grace of God is the favor of God. And the favor of God is the grace of God—that which causes things to happen in our lives through the channel of our faith. It is the power of God doing something for us that we do not earn or deserve. For example, if you ask someone, “Can you do me a favor?,” you are asking that person to do something for you that you have not earned or paid for. You are depending on that individual’s goodness to manifest in the form of a blessing, even though there is no natural reason for that person to extend it to you.

God wants to give you favor, just as He did Joseph. But in order to receive that favor, it’s necessary to follow Joseph’s example and believe God for it. Joseph maintained a good attitude in a bad situation, and his “faith attitude” led to God’s favor. Expect God’s favor and keep your attitude of faith in every situation you face.
with his [own significant] dream and each dream with its [personal] interpretation.

6When Joseph came to them in the morning and looked at them, [he saw that] they were sad and depressed.

7So he asked Pharaoh’s officials who were in confinement with him in his master’s house, “Why do you look so down-hearted today?”

8And they said to him, “We have [each] dreamed [distinct] dreams and there is no one to interpret them.” So Joseph said to them, “Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell me [your dreams].”

9So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, “In my dream there was a grapevine in front of me;

10and on the vine were three branches. Then as soon as it budded, its blossoms burst open, and its clusters produced ripe grapes [in rapid succession].

11“Now Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh’s cup; then I placed the cup into Pharaoh’s hand.”

12Then Joseph said to him, “This is the interpretation of it: the three branches represent three days;

13within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head (present you in public) and restore you to your position; and you will [again] put Pharaoh’s cup into his hand just as [you did] when you were his cupbearer.

14“Only think of me when it goes well with you, and please show me kindness by mentioning me to Pharaoh and get me out of this house.

15“For in fact I was taken (stolen) from the land of the Hebrews by [unlawful] force, and even here I have done nothing for which they should put me in the dungeon.”

16When the chief baker saw that the interpretation [of the dream] was good, he said to Joseph, “I also dreamed, and [in my dream] there were three cake baskets on my head;

17and in the top basket there were some of all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds [of prey] were eating [these foods] out of the basket on my head.”

18Joseph answered, “This is the interpretation of it: the three baskets represent three days;

19within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head and will hang you on a tree (gallows, pole), and [you will not so much as be given a burial, but] the birds will eat your flesh.”

20Now on the third day, [which was] the Pharaoh’s birthday, he [released the two men from prison and] made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker [that is, presented them in public] among his servants.

21He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, and the cupbearer [once again] put the cup into Pharaoh’s hand;

22but Pharaoh hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted [the meaning of the dreams] to them.

23Yet [even after all that] the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot [all about] him.

41NOW IT happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile.

2And lo, there came up out of the Nile seven [healthy] cows, sleek and handsome and fat; and they grazed in the reed grass [in a marshy pasture].

3Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the Nile, ugly and gaunt and raw-boned, and stood by the fat cows on the bank of the Nile.

4Then the ugly and gaunt and raw-boned cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke.

5Then he fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of
grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good.

6 Then behold, seven ears [of grain], thin and dried up by the east wind, sprouted after them.

7 Then the thin ears swallowed the seven plump and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and it was a dream.

8 So when morning came his spirit was troubled and disturbed and he sent and called for all the magicians and all the wise men of Egypt. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them to him.

9 Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, "I would mention my faults today.

10 [Two years ago] Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and he put me in confinement in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker.

11 We dreamed a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to [the significance of] the interpretation of his own dream.

12 Now there was with us [in the prison] a young man, a Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us, to each man according to the significance of his own dream.

13 And just as he interpreted [the dreams] for us, so it happened; I was restored to my office [as chief cupbearer], and the baker was hanged.”

14 Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when Joseph shaved himself and changed his clothes [making himself presentable], he came to Pharaoh.

**life point**

God can speak to us today through dreams, just as He did in Joseph’s time (see Genesis 41). But we need to be balanced in our approach because many of our dreams are not spiritual. If God is trying to show you something or speak to you through a dream, I believe He will confirm it in your heart if you ask Him for wisdom, use discernment, and stay in balance with His Word.

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have dreamed a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you that you can understand a dream and interpret it.”

16 Joseph answered Pharaoh, “It is not in me [to interpret the dream]; God [not I] will give Pharaoh a favorable answer [through me].”

17 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream, I was standing on the bank of the Nile;

18 and seven fat, sleek and handsome cows came up out of the river, and they grazed in the reed grass [of a marshy pasture].

19 “Lo, seven other cows came up after them, very ugly and gaunt [just skin and bones]; such emaciated animals as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt.

20 “And the lean and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows.

21 Yet when they had devoured them, it could not be detected that they had eaten them, because they

**speak the Word**

*God, I thank You for causing me to be fruitful and very successful even when I am suffering.*

—ADAPTED FROM Genesis 41:52
were still as thin and emaciated as before. Then I awoke [but again I fell asleep and dreamed].
22"I saw in my [second] dream, seven ears [of grain], plump and good, growing on a single stalk;
23and lo, seven [other] ears, withered, thin, and scorched by the east wind, sprouted after them;
24and the thin ears devoured the seven good ears. Now I told this to the magicians and soothsayers, but there was no one who could explain it [to me]."

Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The [two] dreams are one [and the same and have one interpretation]; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do.
26"The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the [two] dreams are one [and the same].
27"The seven thin and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years; and also the seven thin ears, dried up and scorched by the east wind, they are seven years of famine and hunger.

from the pit to the palace

Because his brothers hated him, Joseph was thrown into a pit and left there to die (see Genesis 37:23–24). But God had other plans! As it turned out, Joseph was sold as a slave in Egypt, became a servant to a wealthy ruler, and then was thrown into a pit again for a crime he did not commit (see Genesis 39). Ultimately, Joseph was freed from prison and ended up in the palace, second in command to Pharaoh, the ruler over all Egypt.

How did Joseph get from the pit to the palace? I believe he made that journey by staying positive, refusing to be bitter, being confident in God, and trusting Him. Even though Joseph was labeled a "slave," he refused to have a slave mentality. Even though he appeared to be defeated on many occasions, he kept standing up on the inside. In other words, Joseph had a right attitude. Without a right attitude, we can start in the palace and end up in the pit. This happens to a lot of people. Some people have great opportunities given to them, and they do nothing with their lives. Others may get a very bad start in life, but then overcome all obstacles and succeed.

I also believe Joseph believed in the dreams God had given him. Joseph was a dreamer; he made big plans and refused to give them up (see Genesis 37:5–10). The devil does not want us to have dreams and visions of better things. He wants us to stay in the pit and be “do-nothings.”

I challenge you to make up your mind right now to do something great for God. No matter where you started, you can have a great finish. If people have mistreated and abused you, do not waste your time trying to get revenge—leave them in God’s hands and trust Him to bring justice into your life. Know what you want out of life and what you want to do. Don’t be vague; be confident! To be confident means to be bold, open, plain, and straightforward—that does not sound like a vague, sheepish, fearful individual who is uncertain about everything. Decide to leave your mark in this world. When you depart from this earth, people should know that you have been here. Even if you are in a “pit” today, God can still raise you up and do great things in you and through you!
28"This is the message just as I have told Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do.
29"Listen very carefully: seven years of great abundance will come throughout all the land of Egypt;
30but afterward seven years of famine and hunger will come, and [there will be such desperate need that] all the great abundance [of the previous years] will be forgotten in the land of Egypt [as if it never happened], and famine and destitution will ravage and destroy the land.
31"So the great abundance will become forgotten in the land because of that subsequent famine, for it will be very severe.
32"That the dream was repeated twice to Pharaoh [and in two different ways] indicates that this matter is fully determined and established by God, and God will bring it to pass very quickly.
33"So now let Pharaoh [prepare ahead and] look for a man discerning and clear-headed and wise, and set him [in charge] over the land of Egypt [as governor under Pharaoh].
34"Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers and officials over the land, and set aside one-fifth [of the produce] of the [entire] land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance.
35"Let them gather [as a tax] all [of the fifth of] the food of these good years that are coming, and store up grain under the direction and authority of Pharaoh, and let them guard the food [in fortified granaries] in the cities.
36"That food shall be put [in storage] as a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine and hunger which will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land [people] will not be ravaged during the famine."
37Now the plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all of his servants.
38So Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this [a man equal to Joseph], in whom is the divine spirit [of God]?
39Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since [your] God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and clear-headed and wise as you are.
40"You shall have charge over my house, and all my people shall be governed according to your word and pay respect [to you with reverence, submission, and obedience]; only in matters of the throne will I be greater than you [in Egypt]."
41Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you [in charge] over all the land of Egypt."
42Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and dressed him in official vestments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.
43He had him ride in his second chariot; and runners proclaimed before him, "[Attention,] bow the knee!" And he set him over all the land of Egypt.
44Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Though I am Pharaoh, yet without your permission shall no man raise his hand [to do anything] or set his foot [to go anywhere] in all the land of Egypt [all classes of people shall submit to your authority]."
45Then Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On (Heliopolis in Egypt), as his wife. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt [to inspect and govern it].
46Now Joseph had been in Egypt thirteen years and] was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Joseph departed from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt [performing his duties].
47In the seven abundant years the earth produced handfuls [for each seed planted].
And Joseph gathered all the [surplus] food of the seven [good] years in the land of Egypt and stored [enormous quantities of] the food in the cities. He stored away in every city the food [collected] from its own surrounding fields.

Thus Joseph gathered and stored up grain in great abundance like the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting it, for it could not be measured.

Now two sons were born to Joseph before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore to him.

Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh (causing to forget), for he said, "God has made me forget all my trouble and hardship and all [the sorrow of the loss of] my father’s household.”

He named the second [son] Ephraim (fruitfulness), for “God has caused me to be fruitful and very successful in the land of my suffering.”

When the seven years of plenty came to an end in the land of Egypt, the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said [they would]; the famine was in all the [surrounding] lands, but in the land of Egypt there was bread (food).

So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried out to Pharaoh for food; and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph; do whatever he says to you.”

When the famine was spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold [surplus grain] to the Egyptians; and the famine grew [extremely] severe in the land of Egypt.

And [the people of] all countries came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the [known] earth.

NOW WHEN Jacob (Israel) learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why are you staring at one another [in bewilderment and not taking action]?”

He said, “I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy [some] grain for us, so that we may live and not die [of starvation].”

So ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.

But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph’s [younger] brother, with his brothers, for he said, “I am afraid that some harm or injury may come to him.”

So the sons of Israel came [to Egypt] to buy grain along with the others who were coming, for famine was in the land of Canaan also.

Now Joseph was the ruler over the land, and he was the one who sold [grain] to all the people of the land; and Joseph’s [half] brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the ground.

When Joseph saw his brothers he recognized them, but they did not recognize him.

Joseph remembered the dreams he had dreamed about them, and said to them, “You are spies; you have come [with a malicious purpose] to observe the undefended parts of our land.”

But they said to him, “No, my lord, for your servants have [only] come to buy food.

“I am all the sons of one man; we are honest men, your servants are not spies.”

Yet he said to them, “No, you have come to see the undefended parts of our land.”
But they said, "Your servants are twelve brothers [in all], the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; please listen: the youngest is with our father today, and one is no longer alive."

Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you, you are spies."

In this way you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here!

"Send one of you [back home], and let him bring your brother [here], while [the rest of] you remain confined, so that your words may be tested, [to see] whether there is any truth in you [and your story]; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, certainly you are spies."

Then Joseph put them all in prison for three days.

Now Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and [you may] live, for I fear God:

if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your [place here in] prison; but as for the rest of you, go, carry grain for the famine in your households,

but bring your youngest brother to me, so your words will be verified and you will not die." And they did so.

And they said to one another, "Truly we are guilty regarding our brother [Joseph], because we saw the distress and anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us [to let him go], yet we would not listen [to his cry]; so this distress and anguish has come on us.

Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Now the accounting for his blood is required [of us for we are guilty of his death]."

They did not know that Joseph understood [their conversation], because he spoke to them through an interpreter.

He turned away from his brothers and [left the room and] wept; then he returned and talked with them, and took Simeon from them and bound him in front of them [to be kept as a hostage in Egypt].

Then Joseph gave orders [privately] that their bags be filled with grain, and that every man’s money [used to pay for the grain] be put back in his sack, and that provisions be given to them for the journey. And so this was done for them.

They loaded their donkeys with grain and left from there.

And at the lodging place, as one of them opened his sack to feed his donkey, he saw his money in the opening of his sack.

And he said to his brothers, "My money has been returned! Here it is in my sack!" And their hearts sank, and they were afraid and turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

When they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, they told him everything that had happened to them, saying,

"The man who is the lord of the land spoke harshly to us, and took us for spies of the land.

But we told him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies.

We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no longer alive, and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.'

And the man, the lord of the country, said to us, 'By this [test] I will know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers here with me and take grain for your starving households and go.

Bring your youngest brother to me; then I will know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. Then I will return your [imprisoned] brother [back] to you, and you may trade and do business in the land.'"

Now when they emptied their
sacks, every man's bundle of money [paid to buy grain] was in his sack. When they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

30Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me [by causing the loss] of my children. Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin [from me]. All these things are [working] against me."

31Then Reuben spoke to his father, "You may put my two sons to death if I do not bring Benjamin back to you; put him in my care, and I will return him to you."

32But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down [to Egypt] with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left [of Rachel's children]. If any harm or accident should happen to him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol (the place of the dead) in sorrow."

43 NOW THE famine was very severe in the land [of Canaan].

2And it happened that when the families of Jacob's sons had finished eating [all of] the grain which they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again, buy us a little food."

3But Judah said to him, "The man [representing Pharaoh] solemnly and sternly warned us, saying, 'You will not see my face [again] unless your brother is with you.'"

4If you will send our brother with us, we will go down [to Egypt] and buy you food.

5"But if you will not send him, we will not go down there; for the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

6And Israel (Jacob) said, "Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man that you had another brother?"

7And they said, "The man asked us straightforward questions about ourselves and our relatives. He said, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' And we answered him accordingly. How could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down [here to Egypt]'?"

8Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the young man with me and we will get up and go [buy food], so that we may live and not die [of starvation], we as well as you and our little ones.

9"I will be security (a guarantee) for him; you may hold me [personally] responsible for him. If I do not bring him [back] to you and place him [safely] before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever.

10"For if we had not delayed like this, surely by now we would have returned the second time."

11Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this; take some of the choicest products of the land in your sacks, and carry it as a present [of tribute] to the man [representing Pharaoh], a little balm and a little honey, aromatic spices or gum, resin, pistachio nuts, and almonds.

12"Take double the [amount of] money with you, and take back the money that was returned in the opening of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight.

13"Take your brother [Benjamin] also, and get up, and go to the man; and may God Almighty grant you compassion and favor before the man, so that he will release to you your other brother [Simeon] and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children [Joseph, Simeon, and Benjamin], I am bereaved."

15Then the men took the present, and they took double the [amount of] money with them, and Benjamin; then they left and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

16When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his
house, “Bring the men into the house, and kill an animal and make [a meal] ready; for the men will dine with me at noon.”

17So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house.

18The men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house; and [expecting the worst] they said, “It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time [we came] that we are being brought in, so that he may find a reason to accuse us and assail us, and take us as slaves, and seize our donkeys.”

19So they approached the steward of Joseph's house, and talked with him at the entrance of the house,

20and said, “Oh, my lord, we indeed came down here the first time to buy food;

21and when we arrived at the inn [after leaving here], we opened our sacks and there was each man's money [with which he had paid for grain], in full, returned in the mouth of his sack. So we have brought it back [this time].

22“We have also brought down with us additional money to buy food; we do not know who put our money [back] in our sacks [last time].”

23But the steward [encouraged them] and said, “Peace be to you, do not be afraid; your God and the God of your father has [miraculously] given you treasure in your sacks. I [already] had your money [which you paid to us].” Then he brought Simeon out to them.

24Then the steward brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed [the dust off] their feet, and he gave their donkeys feed.

25So they prepared the present [of tribute] for Joseph before his arrival at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there.

26When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present [of tribute] which they had with them and bowed to the ground before him.

27He asked them about their well-being, and said, “Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”

28And they answered, “Your servant our father is in good health; he is still alive.” And they bowed down [their heads before Joseph] in respect.

29And he looked up and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's [only other] son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?” And Joseph said, “God be gracious to you and show you favor, my son.”

30Then Joseph hurried out [of the room] because his heart was deeply touched over his brother, and he sought privacy to weep; so he entered his chamber and wept there.

31Then he washed his face and came out, and, restraining himself, said, “Let the meal be served.”

32So the servants served Joseph by himself [in honor of his rank], and his brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because [according to custom] the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome to the Egyptians.

33Now Joseph's brothers were seated [by the steward] before him [in the order of their birth]—the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked at one another in astonishment [because so much was known about them].

34Joseph selected and sent portions to them from his own table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they feasted and drank freely and celebrated with him.
AND HE commanded the steward of his house, saying, “Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man’s [grain] money in the mouth of the sack.

2”Put my [personal] cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, with his grain money.” And the steward did as Joseph had told him.

3As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys.

4When they had left the city, and were not yet far away, Joseph said to his steward, “Get up, follow after the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you repaid evil [to us] for good [paid to you]?

5Is this not my lord’s drinking cup and the one which he uses for divination? You have done [a great and unforgivable] wrong in doing this.’”

6So the steward overtook them and he said these words to them.

7They said to him, “Why does my lord speak these things? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing!

8Please remember, the money which we found in the mouths of our sacks we have brought back to you from the land of Canaan. Is it likely then that we would steal silver or gold from your master’s house?

9With whomever of your servants your master’s cup is found, let him die, and the rest of us will be my lord’s slaves.”

10And the steward said, “Now let it be as you say; he with whom the cup is found will be my slave, but the rest of you shall be blameless.”

11Then every man quickly lowered his sack to the ground and each man opened his sack [confident the cup would not be found among them].

12The steward searched, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack.

13Then they tore their clothes [in grief]; and after each man had loaded his donkey again, they returned to the city.

14When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph’s house, he was still there; and they fell to the ground before him.

15Joseph spoke harshly to them, “What is this thing that you have done? Do you not realize that such a man as I can indeed practice divination and foretell [everything you do without outside knowledge of it]?”

16So Judah said, “What can we say to my lord? What can we reply? Or how can we clear ourselves, since God has exposed the sin and guilt of your servants? Behold, we are my lord’s slaves, the rest of us as well as he with whom the cup is found.”

17But Joseph said, “Far be it from me that I should do that; but the man in whose hand the cup has been found, he will be my servant; and as for [the rest of] you, get up and go in peace to your father.”

18Then Judah approached him, and said, “O my lord, please let your servant say a word to you in private, and do not let your anger blaze against your servant, for you are equal to Pharaoh [so I speak as if directly to him].

19”My lord asked his servants, saying, ‘Have you a father or a brother?’

20”We said to my lord, ‘We have an old father and a young [brother, Benjamin, the] child of his old age. Now his brother [Joseph] is dead, and he alone is left of [the two sons born of] his mother, and his father loves him.’

21”Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me that I may actually see him.’

22”But we said to my lord, ‘The young man cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.’
THEN JOSEPH could not control himself [any longer] in front of all those who attended him, and he called out, “Have everyone leave me.” So no man stood there when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers.

Joseph wept aloud, and the Egyptians [who had just left him] heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers were speechless, for they were stunned and dismayed by [the fact that they were in] Joseph’s presence.

And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come closer to me.” And they approached him. And he said, “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.

Now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save life and preserve our family.

For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five more years in which there will be no plowing and harvesting.

God sent me [to Egypt] ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great escape.

Now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save life and preserve our family.

For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five more years in which there will be no plowing and harvesting.

God sent me [to Egypt] ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great escape.

So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

Hurry and go up to my father, and tell him, ‘Your son Joseph says this to you: “God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall live in the land of Goshen [the best pasture land of Egypt], and you shall be close to me—you and your children and your grandchildren, your flocks and your herds and all you have.

23“You said to your servants, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes with you, you shall not see my face again.’

24“So when we went back to your servant my father, we told him what my lord had said.

25“Our father said, ‘Go back [to Egypt], and buy us a little food.’

26“But we said, ‘We cannot go down [to Egypt]. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down [there]; for we [were sternly told that we] cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’

27“Young servant my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife [Rachel] bore me [only] two sons.

28“And one [son] went out from me, and I said, “Surely he is torn to pieces,” and I have not seen him since.

29“If you take this one also from me, and harm or an accident happens to him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.’

30“Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the young man is not with us, since his life is bound up in the young man’s life,

31“When he sees that the young man is not with us, he will die; and your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant our father down to Sheol in [great] sorrow.

32“For your servant became security for the young man to my father, saying, ‘If I do not bring him back to you, then let me bear the blame before my father forever.’

33“Now, therefore, please let your servant (Judah) remain here instead of the youth [to be] a slave to my lord, and let the young man go home with his brothers.

34“How can I go up to my father if the young man is not with me—for fear that I would see the tragedy that would overtake my [elderly] father [if Benjamin does not return]?"
Genesis 46:5

So Israel set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba [where both his father and grandfather had worshiped God], and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. [Gen 21:33; 26:23-25]

And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, “Jacob, Jacob!” And he said, “Here I am.”

And He said, “I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you (your descendants) a great nation there.

I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you (your people) up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes [to close them at the time of your death].”

So Jacob set out from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob and their children and their
wives in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him.
6 And they took their livestock and the possessions which they had acquired in the land of Canaan and came to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him.
7 His sons and his grandsons, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.
8 Now these are the names of the sons of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn.
9 The sons of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.
10 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman.
11 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.
12 The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah—but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.
13 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Job, and Shimron.
14 The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.
15 These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah; all of his sons and daughters numbered thirty-three.
16 The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.
17 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and Serah their sister. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel.
18 These are the sons of Zilpah, [the maid] whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter [when she married Jacob]; and she bore to Jacob these sixteen persons [two sons and fourteen grandchildren].
19 The sons of Rachel, Jacob’s wife: Joseph and Benjamin.
20 Now to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On (Heliopolis in Egypt), bore to him.
21 And the sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard.
22 These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob; [there were] fourteen persons in all [two sons and twelve grandchildren].
23 The son of Dan: Hushim.
24 The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.
25 These are the sons of Bilhah, [the maid] whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter [when she married Jacob]. And she bore these to Jacob; [there were] seven persons in all [two sons and five grandchildren].
26 All the persons who came with Jacob into Egypt—who were his direct descendants, not counting the wives of [Jacob or] Jacob’s sons, were sixty-six persons in all,
27 and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two. All the persons of the house of Jacob [including Jacob, and Joseph and his sons], who came into Egypt, were seventy.
28 Now Jacob (Israel) sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph, to direct him to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.
29 Then Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen; as soon as he presented himself before him (authenticating his identity), he fell on his [father’s] neck and wept on his neck a very long time.
30 And Israel said to Joseph, “Now let me die [in peace], since I have seen your face [and know] that you are still alive.”
31 Joseph said to his brothers and to his father’s household, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘My brothers and my father’s household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me;
and the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.’

“And it shall be that when Pharaoh calls you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’
you shall say, ‘Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth until now, both we and our fathers [before us],’ in order that you may live [separately and securely] in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is repulsive to the Egyptians.”

THEN JOSEPH came and told Pharaoh, “My father and my brothers, with their flocks and their herds and all that they own, have come from the land of Canaan, and they are in the land of Goshen.”

He took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh.

And Pharaoh said to his brothers [as Joseph expected], “What is your occupation?” And they said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers [before us].”

Moreover, they said to Pharaoh, “We have come to live temporarily (sojourn) in the land [of Egypt], for there is no pasture for the flocks of your servants [in our land], for the famine is very severe in Canaan. So now, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen.”

Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, “Your father and your brothers have come to you.

“The land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land. Let them live in the land of Goshen; and if you know of any men of ability among them, put them in charge of my livestock.”

Then Joseph brought Jacob (Israel) his father and presented him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

And Pharaoh asked Jacob, “How old are you?”

Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty. Few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, and they have not reached the years that my fathers lived during the days of their pilgrimage.”

And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and departed from his presence.

So Joseph settled his father and brothers and gave them a possession in Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses (Goshen), as Pharaoh commanded.

Joseph provided and supplied his father and his brothers and all his father’s household with food, according to [the needs of] their children.

Now [in the course of time] there was no food in all the land, for the famine was distressingly severe, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan languished [in destitution and starvation] because of the famine.

Joseph gathered all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan [in payment] for the grain which they bought, and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh’s house.

And when the money was exhausted in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, “Give us food! Why should we die before your very eyes? For our money is gone.”

Joseph said, “Give up your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock, since the money is gone.”

So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and he gave them food in exchange for the horses and the flocks and the herds and the donkeys; and he supplied them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year.

When that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to
And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the length of Jacob’s life was a hundred and forty-seven years.

And when the time drew near for Israel to die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “If now I have found favor in your sight, please put your hand under my thigh and [promise to] deal loyally and faithfully with me. Please do not bury me in Egypt,

but when I lie down with my fathers [in death], you will carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place [at Hebron in the cave of Machpelah].” And Joseph said, “I will do as you have directed.”

Then he said, “Swear to me [that you will do it].” So he swore to him. Then Israel (Jacob) bowed in worship at the head of the bed.

Now some time after these things happened, Joseph was told, “Your father is sick.” So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him [to go to Goshen].

And when Jacob (Israel) was told, “Look now, your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed.

Then Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz (Bethel) in the land of Canaan and blessed me, and said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a great company of people, and will give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.’ [Gen 28:13–22; 35:6–15]

Now your two sons [Ephraim and Manasseh], who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine [that is, adopted as my heirs and sons as surely], as Reuben and Simeon are my sons.

But other sons who were born to
you after them shall be your own; they shall be called by the names of their [two] brothers in their inheritance.

7 "Now as for me, when I came from Paddan [in Mesopotamia], Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

8 When Israel [who was almost blind] saw Joseph’s sons, he said, "Who are these?"

9 Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here [in Egypt]." So he said, "Please bring them to me, so that I may bless them."

10 Now Israel’s eyes were so dim from age that he could not see [clearly]. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed and embraced them.

11 Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, but see, God has shown me your children as well."

12 Then Joseph took the boys [from his father’s embrace], and he bowed [before him] with his face to the ground.

13 Then Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel’s left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel’s right, and brought them close to him.

14 But Israel reached out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh’s head, crossing his hands [intentionally], even though Manasseh was the firstborn.

15 Then Jacob (Israel) blessed Joseph, and said,

"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked [in faithful obedience],
The God who has been my Shepherd [leading and caring for me] all my life to this day,

16 The Angel [that is, the Lord Himself] who has redeemed me [continually] from all evil,
Bless the boys;
And may my name live on in them [may they be worthy of having their names linked with mine],
And the names of my fathers
Abraham and Isaac;
And may they grow into a [great] multitude in the midst of the earth."

17 When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim’s head, it displeased him [because he was not the firstborn]; and he grasped his father’s hand to move it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head.

18 Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this is the firstborn; place your right hand on Manasseh’s head."

19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know; Manasseh also will become a people and he will be great; but his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

20 Then Jacob blessed them that day, saying,

"By you Israel will pronounce a blessing, saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.’"

And he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to [Canaan] the land of your fathers.

22 Moreover, I have given you [the birthright,] one portion [Shechem, one mountain ridge] more than any of your brothers, which I took [reclaiming it] from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow." [Gen 33:18, 19; Josh 24:32, 33; John 4:5]
THEN JACOB called for his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves around me that I may tell you what will happen to you and your descendants in the days to come.

2 "Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel (Jacob) your father.

3 "Reuben, you are my firstborn; My might, the beginning of my strength and vigor, Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power that should have been your birthright.

4 "But unstable and reckless and boiling over like water [in sinful lust], you shall not excel or have the preeminence [of the firstborn], Because you went up to your father's bed [with Bilhah]; You defiled it—he went up to my couch. [Gen 35:22]

5 "Simeon and Levi are brothers [equally headstrong, deceitful, vindictive, and cruel]; Their swords are weapons of violence and revenge. [Gen 34:25–30]

6 "O my soul, do not come into their secret council; Let not my glory (honor) be united with their assembly [for I knew nothing of their plot]; Because in their anger they killed men [an honored man, Shechem, and the Shechemites], And in their self-will they lamed oxen.

7 "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; And their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide and disperse them in Jacob,

And scatter them in [the midst of the land of] Israel.

8 "Judah, you are the one whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons shall bow down to you.

9 "Judah, a lion's cub; With the prey, my son, you have gone high up [the mountain]. He stooped down, he crouched like a lion, And like a lion—who dares rouse him? [Rev 5:5]

10 "The scepter [of royalty] shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh [the Messiah, the Peaceful One] comes, And to Him shall be the obedience of the peoples. [Num 24:17; Ps 60:7; Ezek 21:27]

11 "Tying his foal to the [strong] vine And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washes his clothing in wine [because the grapevine produces abundantly], And his robes in the blood of grapes. [Is 63:1–3; Zech 9:9; Rev 19:11–16]

12 "His eyes are darker and sparkle more than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.

13 "Zebulun shall dwell at the seashore; And he shall be a haven (landing place) for ships, And his flank shall be toward Sidon.

14 "Issachar is [like] a strong-boned donkey; Crouching down between the sheepfolds.

15 "When he saw that the resting place was good
And that the land was pleasant, 
He bowed his shoulder to bear [burdens],
And became a servant at forced labor.

16 “Dan shall judge his people, 
As one of the tribes of Israel.
17 “Dan shall be a [venomous] serpent in the way, 
A fanged snake in the path, 
That bites the horse’s heels, 
So that his rider falls backward.
18 “I wait for Your salvation, O LORD.
19 “As for Gad—a raiding troop shall raid him, 
But he shall raid at their heels and assault them [victoriously].
20 “Asher’s food [supply] shall be rich and bountiful, 
And he shall yield and deliver royal delights.
21 “Naphtali is a doe let loose, [a swift warrior,] 
Which yields branched antlers (eloquent words).
22 “Joseph is a fruitful bough (a main branch of the vine), 
A fruitful bough by a spring (a well, a fountain); 
Its branches run over the wall [influencing others].
23 “The [skilled] archers have bitterly attacked and provoked him; 
They have shot [at him] and harassed him.
24 “But his bow remained firm and steady [in the Strength that does not fail], 
For his arms were made strong and agile 
By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, 
(By the name of the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), [Gen 48:15; Deut 32:4; Is 9:6; 49:26]
25 By the God of your father who will help you,
And by the Almighty who blesses you 
With blessings of the heavens above, 
Blessings lying in the deep that couches beneath, 
26 “The blessings of your father 
Are greater than the blessings of my ancestors [Abraham and Isaac] 
Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; 
They shall be on the head of Joseph, 
Even on the crown of the head of him who was the distinguished one and the one who is prince among (separate from) his brothers.
27 “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; 
In the morning he devours the prey, 
And at night he divides the spoil.”

28 All these are the [beginnings of the] twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each one according to the blessing appropriate to him. 
29 He charged them and said to them, “I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 
30 in the cave in the field at Machpelah, east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, that Abraham bought, along with the field from Ephron the Hittite, to possess as a burial site. [Gen 23:17–20]
31 “There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah—
32 the field and the cave that is in it was purchased from the sons of Heth.” 
33 When Jacob (Israel) had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people [who had preceded him in death].
50 Then Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him tenderly.

2Then Joseph ordered his servants the physicians to embalm (mummify) his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel (Jacob).

3Now forty days were required for this, for that is the customary number of days [of preparation] required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept and grieved for him [in public mourning as they would for royalty] for seventy days.

4When the days of weeping and public mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to [the nobles of] the house of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying,

5‘My father made me swear [an oath], saying, “Hear me, I am about to die; bury me in my tomb which I prepared for myself in the land of Canaan.” So now let me go up [to Canaan], please, and bury my father; then I will return.’”

6And Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”

### turn your mess into your message

Joseph’s brothers were afraid he would never forgive them for wanting him dead and for selling him into slavery. In Genesis 50:20, we see that Joseph had a good and loving attitude as he gave his brothers the assurance that he had forgiven their wrongdoing. They may have meant to do evil against him, but God meant it for good.

It is amazing how many times Satan will set a trap for us, meaning it for our harm and destruction. But when God gets involved, He takes what Satan meant to destroy us and turns it so that it works for our good instead. Nobody else can make things work out that way, but God can. He can take any negative situation, and through His miracle-working power use it to make us stronger and more dangerous to the enemy than we would have been without it.

My own situation bears this out. I was sexually, mentally, and emotionally abused for many years during my childhood. This was certainly a terrible thing to happen to a child, and it was definitely a work of Satan, but God has worked it out for good. My mess has become my message; my misery has become my ministry, and I am using the experience I gained from my pain to help multitudes of others who are hurting.

I encourage you not to waste your pain. God will use it if you give it to Him. He has given me beauty for ashes, just as He promised in Isaiah 61:3 (see the Amplified Classic or KJV, NKJV, or NIV translations of this verse), but I had to let go of the ashes. I had to learn to have a good attitude, as Joseph did. I had to learn to let go of the bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness I felt toward the people who hurt me.

When we have been hurt, it is important not to let the pain go on and on by having a bitter attitude. We hurt only ourselves when we hate people. We would not waste our time hating people if we realized that they are probably enjoying their lives and are not the least concerned with how we feel about them. Remember, God is our Vindicator, and He will bring good out of what the enemy intended for evil.
7So Joseph went up [to Canaan] to bury his father, and with him went all the officials of Pharaoh, [the nobles of his court and] the elders of his household and all [the nobles and] the elders of the land of Egypt—
8and all the household of Joseph and his brothers and his father’s household. They left only their little ones and their flocks and herds in the land of Goshen.
9Both chariots and horsemen also went up [to Canaan] with Joseph; and it was a very great company.
10When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they mourned there with a great lamentation (expressions of mourning for the deceased) and [extreme demonstrations of] sorrow [according to Egyptian custom]; and Joseph observed a seven-day mourning for his father.
11When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians.” Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim (mourning of Egypt); it is west of the Jordan.
12So Jacob’s sons did for him as he had commanded them;
13for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, east of Mamre, which Abraham bought along with the field as a burial site from Ephron the Hittite.
14After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him.
15When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph carries a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him?”
16So they sent word to Joseph, saying, “Your father commanded us before he died, saying,
17‘You are to say to Joseph, “I beg you, please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong.”’ Now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

life point

So often in our lives, Satan thinks he is doing some terrible thing to bring about our destruction, and yet God has another plan entirely (see Genesis 50:20). He intends to take what Satan means for our harm and work it out not only for our good, but for the good of the many to whom we will minister.

18Then his brothers went and fell down before him [in confession]; then they said, “Behold, we are your servants (slaves).”
19But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? [Vengeance is His, not mine.]
20As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present outcome, that many people would be kept alive [as they are this day].
21“So now, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and support you and your little ones.” So he comforted them [giving them encouragement

speak the Word

Father, I thank You that when others mean evil against me, You mean it for good.

—ADAPTED FROM GENESIS 50:20
this land to the land which He promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob [to give you]."

25 Then Joseph made the sons of Israel (Jacob) swear [an oath], saying, "God will surely visit you and take care of you [returning you to Canaan], and when that happens you shall carry my bones up from here."

26 So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.