

A photograph of a person reading a Bible. The Bible is open on a white surface. In the foreground, a person's hands are holding a grey cup filled with dark coffee. A small green plant is visible in the background. The word "January" is written in a large, white, serif font across the middle of the image.

January

RIBLE
ISCOVERY

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JANUARY 2025

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JANUARY 2025

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The Law of God

I remember taking police training earlier in my life, and I learned a lot in a short period of time. One thing that really caught my attention was that all our laws in Western civilization were based on the Bible, particularly, the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were considered foundational and necessary to have a sustainable society, so to remove, relax, or break them could (and would) result in a societal catastrophe. And look where we are today! Amazingly, God wrote the Ten Commandments with His own hand (EXODUS 31:18). And I don't think that's a coincidence.

Jesus Christ became a Man to not only free us from sin and death, but to write these laws on our hearts, so that we, too, may have the humility of Christ whom all things were created through. In so doing, He revealed that we have two adversaries: the devil and his demonic forces, and

ourselves—our pride and desire for power. God speaks about this problem of pride to the people of Israel when Moses is commissioning them in the book of Leviticus, He says, “And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. I will break the pride of your power...” (LEV. 26:18-19).

Thankfully, Christ fulfilled the Law! Through the power of our risen LORD Jesus Christ, He will help us obey His word and His will, and to do His works His way, so that sin, death, and the works of the devil will have no power in our lives—praise God!

The book of Genesis and Exodus covers a lot of time and history. May the LORD help us to hear it and learn from it.



Rod Hembree, Th.D, DE.



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JANUARY 2025

How to use this Guide

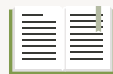
Make the most of your devotional time with our Guide to the Bible in a year. Each Guide provides valuable context and theological insight to help strengthen your faith and dig deeper into the richness of God's Word every day.

The following three tips will help you make the most of your daily Bible reading and Guide:



SPOTLIGHT ON...

In every Guide, you'll find a section with specific highlights from the perspectives of history, apologetics, theology, and more. These viewpoints provide a holistic context from which to view the month's Bible reading, giving us a greater understanding of the Word, and equipping us to grasp the impact of the Bible in these important fields.



DAILY READING

The readings are in traditional order, with a date corresponding to the Hebrew calendar. Each reading consists of a daily insight and a focus on three major takeaways from the day's Bible passage. Challenge yourself to meditate on the *Discovering The Truth* and *Today's Prayer* sections as you go about your day.



WATCH THE DAILY SHOW

Catch our companion TV series for even more valuable insight and theological discussion, hosted daily by the Hembree family. Join Rod, Janice, Ryan and Corie in this thirty-minute devotional show that will change the way you see and read the Bible. Visit **BibleDiscoveryTv.com** to watch our show online or to find a TV channel in your area.

Genesis 1 & 2: Different Accounts?

by Ryan Hembree



While practically every chapter and verse of the Bible has come under scrutiny at some time or another, probably no other Biblical book has been more viciously attacked than Genesis. And there's a very good reason for that: The historical account of Genesis is foundational to Christianity. All the major doctrines of the Bible are directly or indirectly rooted in Genesis. Salvation through Christ is spiritual, of course. But that salvation is based upon events that physically took place in history beginning with Creation. And even though many Christians today think this is merely a side issue, unbelievers know how critical a role Genesis plays which is why they make such a concerted effort to discredit it as a historical record.

For example, one of the accusations they make is that Genesis 1 and 2 contain two different (and

...BUT THE REASON FOR THE CONFUSION IS DUE IN PART TO SOME APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS WITH THE ORDER OF CREATION.

contradictory) creation accounts. Some Christians who reject Genesis as actual history also concur with this view. But this is just simply not true. A careful reading will show that Genesis 1:1-2:2 documents the entire seven-day process of the creation of the universe while Genesis 2:3-25 zooms in on the sixth day: The creation of mankind, the pinnacle and main focus of God's creation. In other words, Genesis 1 is more general while Genesis 2 is more specific.

But the reason for the confusion is due in part to some apparent contradictions with the order of creation. Because some English translations make it seem like the plants, herbs, and trees were

created *after* Adam in Genesis 2 instead of *before* as Genesis 1 records (plants on day 3, people on day 6). But remember that "Genesis 2 focuses on issues of direct importance *to* Adam and Eve *in the garden*, not creation in general. Notice that the plants and herbs are described as 'of the field' in chapter 2 (COMPARE 1:12) and they needed a man to tend them (2:5). These are clearly cultivated plants, not plants in general. Also, the trees (2:9) are only the trees planted in the garden [of Eden], not trees in general. These events relate to God creating the garden, not creation in general." Some English translations of Genesis 2 also make it seem that Adam came *before* the animals instead of *after* as Genesis 1 says. But here again, there is no true contradiction because, "The original Hebrew used in Gen. 2 indicated that God had already (yâtsar) formed the animals from the earth, and then brought them to Adam. He did not create them again." So this is the order: On day six God made the animals first, then he made Adam second, He then showed the animals He had already made to Adam, so Adam could see that he had no suitable mate. And then God created Eve. The ESV's translation of Genesis 2:19 follows the meaning of the Hebrew really well here when it says, "Now out of the ground the LORD God *had* formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them."

So no, Genesis 1 and 2 are not different creation accounts nor are they contradictory and so cannot be discredited as an accurate historical record on these grounds. ■

Covenants

by Corie Bobeckko



The concept of the ancient Near-Eastern covenant is extremely important for readers of the Bible to understand. The whole salvation story of the Bible is presented to us in the form of covenants. Even the Bible itself is called, in the Christian world at least, the Old and New Testaments which means the Old and New Covenants. On its surface, a covenant is very similar to a contract: an agreed upon set of rules between two parties for their mutual benefit.

In the patriarchal society of the ancient Near-East that Abraham and Israel were a part of, society completely revolved around family units, and the authority and responsibility for maintaining order and survival was the patriarch, the oldest male member of a family unit. Family was responsible for family. So then, what about when you needed for one reason or the other to team up with another family that socially had no reason to protect or care for you? You could strike a covenant, a type of contract, that would make you like family, at least legally.

As I already mentioned, we see covenants all over the Bible, and they could happen on an individual level (David and Jonathan), a tribal level, or a national level. Covenants could be parity treaties, meaning a covenant between equals, that would make the two parties like legal brothers. Covenants could also be Suzerain/Vassal treaties, which is a covenant between non equals. There's a powerful and a less powerful party. Which would create a legal relationship of Father/Son or even Master/servant. A Suzerain/Vassal treaty often happened in the context of an invading king. The king or leader who had conquered a people's territory would lay out everyone's rights and responsibilities, the way life would now operate. As a Suzerain, he now owned the land and the people, they could live their lives but now owed loyalty and yearly tribute to him.

As a result, the Suzerain would allow the people to remain, to live on the land, and he would owe them protection. If the people rebelled against the Suzerain by not following the stipulations of the covenant or by withholding tribute, they would lose their right to the land.

At a covenant ceremony, animals would be sacrificed for a few reasons. It marked the occasion as special or set apart, it involved the godly authorities in the process, the sacrificial animals often served as a meal, and the animals showed the parties what would happen to them if they were to rebel against the covenant. They would become like the sacrificial animals, dead.

For our understanding today, in Genesis 15 God was cutting a covenant with Abram. God had already made covenant promises of offspring to Abram, for Abram's allegiance God also offered land. He would give Canaan to Abram's descendants. But by Genesis 15 Abram had been waiting a long time for this promised son, he seems to have been struggling. He asks, "Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?" God creates a covenant ceremony. Something that Abram would have been very familiar with. God instructs Abram to get the sacrificial animals, which he does, and he sacrifices, cuts in half and arranges. When God shows up though and outlines the stipulations of their covenant, it is GOD, the Suzerain, who passes through the sacrificial animals not Abram the lesser party. In an amazing twist of expectation, God promises to Abram that it is HE who will pay with His divine life if the covenant is broken.

Amazingly, the Bible clearly portrays the descendants of Abram breaking the covenant. And what happens? God comes to earth as Christ Jesus, and He offers His life to make a new covenant. His body was broken for us. ■



2025 BIBLE DISCOVERY GUIDE

January

GENESIS — LEVITICUS



The Beginning

GENESIS 1-2

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The first three days of creation showcase God's perfect handiwork as He carefully and lovingly crafted and prepared the world to be inhabited (ISAIAH 45:18). Unfortunately, this perfection would soon be lost due to our own bad choices. Worse still, humanity's relationship with God was broken and without His life-sustaining power we are physically and spiritually dead. Though Satan was the one who enticed us to sin, it was us who chose to listen to him rather than to God, even though God clearly warned us about the consequences. So sin is the key element that explains why this world is cursed with death and devastation and why God sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. Jesus, the second Adam, came to rescue us and re-establish our relationship to our Creator and will one day restore the creation to its original perfection. Thanks to Him, sin with all its consequences is not a permanent citizen of this universe!

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 1:1–12

– 1 –

The Spirit of God was with God, in the beginning.

The Holy Spirit did not come later, He is God.

(v. 1-2)

– 2 –

God created the days and nights at the beginning for a good reason.

From this point on God would use the light to describe Himself, and the darkness to describe life without Him. (v. 3-5)

– 3 –

The first three days were the establishment of planet Earth.

God made the Earth so that we could live on it; other planets do not have provisions for life.

(v. 6-12)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The Bible tells us that God was very intentional about how the earth was created. In this, we can understand the rights and wrongs and the beginning and end of our experience called life. This is important for us to understand in eternity.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I CHOOSE TO MAKE YOUR WAYS A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING WHO YOU ARE.

Afraid

GENESIS 3-5

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The first time fear erupted in the mind of man was in the wake of sin. In Hebrew, the word sin is defined as a violation against God, to fail or to miss the mark, which causes separation from Him. Without the knowledge of sin, humanity would not recognize the reason we are separated from God. There are all kinds of emotions and problems that come from sin that bring us to its consequences. Being afraid and the power of fear is one of those deep consequences. We see that powerfully illustrated here as the human mind experienced fear for the very first time. And it was terrible fear as man (the created) was afraid of God (the Creator), someone more powerful than all things. This is not the will of God. We were never created to be afraid of God. But sin, doing its work in our minds, accomplishes fear and is a powerful motivator. Jesus Christ came into this world to break that curse and cast out the effects of sin in our lives.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 3:1-10

– 1 –

God never said not to touch the fruit, He said not to eat the fruit. The enemy of our soul uses deception to lure us to question God's authority and truth.

(v. 1-3)

– 2 –

Both the man and the woman followed their simple desire, instead of consulting God. Too often we make decisions without first consulting the LORD.

(v. 4-6)

– 3 –

The first couple was embarrassed when their nakedness was exposed. God made men and women to be safe and secure in Him, not to hide or be embarrassed. (v. 7-10)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God does not seek to embarrass us but gives each of us the opportunity to come to Him. The enemy of our soul, the father of lies, tries to show a God who is unfair, violent, undisciplined, and a force that demeans us.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO SEE
AND UNDERSTAND WHO
YOU TRULY ARE.**

The Flood

GENESIS 6-9

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The global flood is the greatest disaster that has occurred on planet Earth. Nevertheless, many do not believe in a one-time global flood but only in local floods. Yet, there are over 135 cultures around the world who report stories of a serious flood in their history. Several of the popular scientists today believe that the planet Mars had a global (or near global) flood in its past. But the idea of believing in a similar event on Earth where there is an even greater amount of evidence is out of the question. This is remarkably ignorant. But if one does not believe the Bible, then we can make up and believe whatever we want. However, the evidence seems to clearly point to a devastating global flood in history. The Ice Age, for example, while hard to explain for secular scientists was probably triggered by the great flood due to the modified weather that followed. In today's reading of Genesis 7, we will look at the provisions of the floating ark. God even points to the animals that would be saved from the flood—He would bring them to Noah.

DISCOVERING GOD — GENESIS 7:1-12

— 1 —

God made plans for man to be accountable. The rebellion that had violated mankind would be punished. There is accountability with our actions before God.

(v. 1-4)

— 2 —

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood was on the earth. God sees our lives and has a calling for us in the times He has placed us.

(v. 5-7)

— 3 —

The waters came from the earth below and the sky above. The flood came because God responded to human sin.

(v. 8-12)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is important for us to pay attention to how we treat each other. Now more than ever we need to tell everyone about the provision of Jesus Christ—saving us from the cost of hell itself, so that we can be with Him for eternity.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT WHO YOU ARE TO ME.

The Tower

GENESIS 10-11

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The Tower of Babel is the famous story of mankind's great failure after the global flood. It is the origin of the many languages we have in the world today. From the beginning, the language of man was one and it was an act of God that confused the languages and our thinking so that we could not do whatever we wanted. While that may sound nefarious, the truth is that we are individuals who propagate selfishness and war. We learn that from the book of James who asked: "Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures" (JAMES 4:1-3). Today as we read Genesis 11, we will see how God moves to curb man's proclivity because of sin.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 11:1-9

– 1 –

It seems that men tried to build a structure so tall it could escape another flood. Sometimes we arrogantly think that we can outwit God. We cannot.

(v. 1-4)

– 2 –

God chose to confuse their language, rather than strike them dead. God gives us another chance in our sinful thinking—this is who He is.

(v. 5-7)

– 3 –

The word Babel in Hebrew means confusion. God confused the languages of men to stop his disobedience.

(v. 8-9)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is impossible to threaten God. We would do well not to resist His work in this world. The LORD desires that we go into all the world to share the good news of the gospel to build His Kingdom and not to focus on building our own.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO BUILD YOUR KINGDOM AND NOT MY OWN.

Blessing

PSALMS 1-3

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The book of Psalms consists of one hundred and fifty chapters divided into five parts that seem to communicate, in one way or another, an approach to achieve blessing from God. It contains not only hymns but more than one-third of the Psalms are made up of prayers to God. Some have referred to the Psalms as the hymnal of ancient Israel. This certainly holds some truth. Yet this book can also be described as a book of God's music. While we do not have the style or rhythm of these ancient poetic songs and prayers, we do have the words. These lyrics are critical and important to understanding our emotions and how to communicate with God. Psalm 1 is a beautiful arrangement of remarkable words designed to tell us how we are blessed. It is six verses long and communicates what the book of Psalms is all about. How are we blessed? And what is the attitude of those who are blessed in this life by God? These are just some of the questions that the Psalms answer.

DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 1:1-6

— 1 —

The Word of God is the law of God, and blessed is the one who lives in it.

We do so much better when we study, learn, and apply the Word of God.

(v. 1-2)

— 2 —

The man of God is unique and one who always prospers in everything he does. God not only sets

our goals but helps us achieve them.

(v. 3)

— 3 —

Those who are not connected with God are lost and condemned. God knows those who love and seek Him, and He provides for them.

(v. 4-6)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We should pay attention to the way God communicates to His people; He speaks carefully to us. Our actions should follow our words. The actions and reactions we have in our life show everyone around us who we believe God is.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I WANT TO KNOW YOU AND LEARN MORE ABOUT YOU EVERY DAY.

Abram Begins His Trek

GENESIS 12-13

DISCOVERING THE WORD

One thing that is very clear as we read the history of Abram, who will eventually be renamed Abraham by God, is that he is being led by God. Genesis 12 explains that it is God who told Abram to move into the land called Canaan. God gave him that land around 2100 BC. To be clear, that was roughly 4,100 years ago. Abram was a man who faithfully trusted in God and the LORD credited it to him as righteousness. This was the beginning of his journey in which God was giving him more and more faith. This is the life of a man who trusted in God from the beginning. It is interesting that he was seventy-five years old when God called him, too. The length of our earthly life is not important to God, of course, but fulfilling His callings is, and should be our first priority. Abram fulfilled God's calling at a very old age, in a very dramatic way. The LORD would appear to him and tell him what He was about to do. It is fascinating how God gets close to us as we seek to do His will and build His Kingdom.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 12:1-9

– 1 –

God placed a promise on Abram: God will bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him.

God's covenants remain intact. We must pray for and bless Israel.

(v. 1-3)

– 2 –

The Canaanites were in the land when God gave it to Abram. God has the authority to dictate who has possession over the land of Israel.

(v. 4-6)

– 3 –

Everywhere Abram went he built an altar to the LORD God. Two thousand years before Jesus Christ came to earth, God had the land dedicated to Himself.

(v. 7-9)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

As Christians, we realize that God has redeemed us from the world. What that means is that we belong to the LORD! That is why everything that we have and do is dedicated to the Kingdom of God. The LORD is the Lord of our life, strength, and heart.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, YOU ARE EVERYTHING TO ME. HELP ME TO GIVE EVERYTHING I HAVE TO YOUR WILL AND WORK.

The Son Rejected?

GENESIS 14-16

DISCOVERING THE WORD

When we believe that God has anointed us for a task, we can get overly excited and make plans. The problem is that many times those plans are our ideas instead of God's direction. That is how Sarai envisioned God's promise to give her and Abram a son in their old age. She became inventive thinking that her maiden, Hagar, was the only way they could have a son. And that is the problem; sometimes we think of our own solutions, instead of believing and waiting on God. But God sees her impatience. When Hagar's attitude changes toward Sarai, and runs away feeling that she and her unborn baby are forgotten, God intervenes and helps. In fact, she names the LORD who intercepts her, *You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees*. There are many things we can discuss when we read through this story. Many people believe that this Ishmael-Isaac conflict still plays out today between Islam and Israel. But God seems to have His reasons and ways of making things right, even when we *really* mess up. No wonder Jesus Christ took God's provision and remained quiet when He was being crucified. The LORD sees everything: past, present, and future.

DISCOVERING GOD — GENESIS 16:1-14

— 1 —

Abram listened to his wife when she gave him Hagar to bear a child for her.

Although we may doubt, God does miracles even when they seem impossible.

(v. 1-2)

— 2 —

Sarai's impatience and anger were a result of her own disobedience. God will help us in the trouble we get ourselves into, when we come to Him.

(v. 3-6)

— 3 —

It is God who sees us wherever we are. It is impossible to hide from God.
(v. 7-14)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When we understand that God is everywhere at all times, that He sees and hears us no matter who or where we are. Then, we are comforted in spirit. The LORD has told us that He will be with us always, even until the end of the age!

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, THANK YOU FOR THE ASSURANCE I HAVE, KNOWING YOU CAN ALWAYS SEE ME AND HEAR ME AT ALL TIMES.

A Covenant at Heart

GENESIS 17-19

DISCOVERING THE WORD

According to the dictionary, the English word *covenant* means “an agreement or promise, usually formal, between two or more people or groups to do or not to do something specified”. However, the word covenant in Hebrew, *briyth* (*ber-eeth*), means something much more profound, it is “an alliance or pledge between God and man”. In other words, God was setting up a binding promise between Him and Abraham, to bless him and his descendants. But we need to remember that the LORD is very serious about His covenants. We should not take anything the LORD says *with a grain of salt*, as the saying goes. When God speaks, it is profound and holy—it is truth. So, we, too, should make every effort to listen to what He says and take very seriously what He is telling us.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 17:1-8

– 1 –

God made serious and profound arrangements about Abram and his future. We would do well to hear God’s Word and take it seriously.

(v. 1-4)

– 2 –

God changed Abram’s name to Abraham, meaning “father of many”. When we accept the LORD, God renames us and makes us His unique and called child.

(v. 5-6)

– 3 –

God gave the land of Israel to Abraham, and promised to be their God. This covenant is longstanding and establishes God’s covenant.

(v. 7-8)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is no simple task to take on the covenants of God. We should understand that our life is no longer our own to do as we want to do, but we are called by God to do what He has called us to do and build His Kingdom.

TODAY’S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME LEARN HOW TO BUILD YOUR KINGDOM.

His Sister

GENESIS 20–23

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The cultures that once flourished in the ancient world were influenced by their ancient past and their understanding of who God was. Even though we do not have the history of every ancient culture, God was still working with humanity. Abimelech was not from the family of Abraham, yet he heard from God. Abraham did not understand that Abimelech, the king of Gerar, not only heard from God, but sought to follow Him. As a result of his mistrust, Abraham got himself into a bind when he claimed Sarah was his sister and she was taken into the king's harem. Granted, Abraham was technically not lying, because Sarah was his half-sister, but he was lying by omission to preserve his own life. It was not an act of faith, and whatever does not proceed from faith is sin (ROMANS 14:23). Although Abimelech accepted Sarah into his harem, he had acted with a clear conscience. God did not allow him to violate her in any way and confronted the king in a dream. God had other plans. This failure to trust in the plans of God is specifically interesting today, as we ready ourselves to face the coming of the LORD.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 20:1–13

– 1 –

God speaks to Abimelech in a dream about Sarah.

God knows every secret we have, there is nothing hidden from God.

(v. 1–3)

– 2 –

Abimelech was a king who looked to God's righteous mercy.

When we seek the LORD, He speaks to us about how we move forward in every way.

(v. 4–6)

– 3 –

It surprised Abraham to learn that Abimelech had heard from God.

God always has His people, even in the darkest places on earth.

(v. 7–13)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There are many people who truly love and serve the LORD God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. It is important for us to pray for our brothers and sisters around the world, every day.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE MANY OTHERS WHO LOVE YOU LIKE I DO.

Abraham is Gone

GENESIS 24–26

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Abraham was truly a man who knew the LORD. He had many difficulties and troubles, and his share of sinful tendencies like we all do, but he began to understand who God was and apply how God wants each of us to live. Abraham had a calling on his life as all of us do, and he began to get insight from God on how to follow through in his purpose. This is the essence of studying the life of Abraham. We not only gain understanding of Israel, but we learn how God speaks, and get to see His invisible heart more clearly. Abraham was one hundred and seventy-five years old when he died—longer than we will ever live. The lifespan today on this side of the cross seems short, as Christ said the days would be shortened for the sake of the elect (MATTHEW 24:22), but we have eternity in our hearts when we give our souls to Jesus Christ. The brothers Isaac and Ishmael buried their father in the cave of Machpelah, where Sarah, his wife was buried. We are now beginning a new transition with Isaac. We will see the covenant of God continue to work through Abraham through his son Isaac.

DISCOVERING GOD — GENESIS 25:1–10

— 1 —

Abraham sent the sons from his concubines to the country of the east.

God has His people all over the world.

(v. 1–6)

— 2 —

Abraham was 175 years old when he died. We must learn to trust in Jesus Christ to gain eternal life.

(v. 7–8)

— 3 —

The field Abraham bought earlier in his life became the place of his rest.

Jesus Christ purchased our salvation when He died on the cross and rose again—death was defeated. (v. 9–10)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The LORD Jesus Christ is the firstborn of eternal life. When we come to Christ, we join a large army of people who trust in God. Heaven is about gaining, not losing. As born again believers, when we die in the physical, we do not die in the spiritual.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I TRUST IN YOU.
LET ME RECEIVE YOUR HOLY
SPIRIT AND THE GIFT OF
ETERNAL LIFE RIGHT NOW.

Isaac and Jacob

GENESIS 27-29

DISCOVERING THE WORD

After deceiving his father Isaac into blessing him rather than his older twin brother Esau, Jacob was sent away by his father to find a wife. Isaac made it perfectly clear to his son that under no circumstances was he to take a wife from the land of Canaan. I well remember hearing the story of Jacob and Esau in Sunday School class and how Jacob was sent away to find a bride, but I didn't fully understand the circumstances and complexities that led up to this event. Before Jacob and Esau were even born, the LORD had already revealed that God's covenant was with Jacob, not Esau. So when Isaac attempted to bless Esau instead of Jacob he was misdirecting the patriarchal blessing. Besides, the birthright no longer belonged to Esau anyway since he had sold it to Jacob sometime earlier. This led to the unfortunate deception carried out by Jacob and his mother to deceive his father into thinking he was Esau. The plan worked. Isaac gave Jacob the blessing and when he discovered that he had been tricked, Isaac told Jacob that things had now changed. He was the one who needed to protect God's covenant as he moved forward.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 28:1-9

– 1 –

Jacob received the call to fulfill and protect the covenant given to him by God. Christ followers have a responsibility to fulfill God's call on their lives.

(v. 1-4)

– 2 –

Jacob set off to begin his responsibility. What God has given us He will finish in us, no matter how much we might mess it up.

(v. 5)

– 3 –

Esau tried to please his father by marrying the daughter of Ishmael. Esau had no understanding of God's covenant. You cannot fulfill God's covenants with man's ideas. (v. 6-9)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The best understanding of the LORD's covenants is to understand that they originate in the Spirit, meaning that the only way to fulfill them is with a willing heart. The strength for serving Jesus Christ comes from God's Holy Spirit.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WILLINGLY GIVE
YOU MY WILL, SO THAT
I CAN FOLLOW YOU.**

You Alone

PSALMS 4-6

DISCOVERING THE WORD

David was a shepherd who became a king, the greatest human king of Israel. He learned much as a young shepherd boy watching over his father's sheep as they grazed on the mountains. This is the place where David also seems to have learned how to improve his musical ability. He was a brilliant musician. He is the master author of the book of Psalms. And although David did not write all of them, these poems were composed into music to sing to God. As we read Psalm 4, we hear the calls of David to his God asking Him to listen to his prayer. David praises the name of the LORD, amid the sons of men. It is interesting that David calls on God to hear him and then speaks to men as well as God. What does David attempt to gain from this music? Simple—he makes the point of God's greatness. David publishes in music the wonder of God's ability to keep him safe among the men of this earth. He sings, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety" (PSALM 4:8).

DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 4:1-8

— 1 —

David calls on God and men to listen as he proclaims what God has done. The Psalms are songs and prayers for us today. We can proclaim God's mercy and protection in the midst of men. (v. 1-2)

— 2 —

This song of David tells us to be angry and do not sin. There is an anger that comes from God which is pure. We must yield our emotions to the LORD. (v. 3-4)

— 3 —

It is God alone who keeps us, His people, in safety. We must remember that it is in God we trust, nothing else. (v. 5-8)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Too often it is easy to become reliant on the government or our own things to keep us safe. But the reality is that it is only God who can truly protect us and keep evil from descending on our souls. We should seek the provision of God—in Him we trust.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I TRUST IN
YOU ALONE.**

Jacob's Departure

GENESIS 30–32

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Jacob was not a nice guy, he was sneaky, he was hard and focused on himself. Many don't like that image of Jacob because they feel like we are speaking badly about God when we confront the facts of Jacob. But the truth is that Jacob needed God to make him ready to come back to his home. The LORD knew all this about Jacob, and God still chose him and used him as he has chosen and uses us! The truth about our culture is not a commentary on how great we are, but how weak we are as people. It is God alone who can and will help us in our destruction. Remember the words of Psalm 107:20, "He sent His word and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions." Keep in mind that we are reading the story of Jacob's life becoming transformed and changed. People do not change, but with God's Holy Spirit, everything changes.

DISCOVERING GOD — GENESIS 31:1–16

– 1 –

Jacob lost favor with Laban. God uses things in our lives to move us to His calling, even things that are not comfortable.

(v. 1–2)

– 2 –

God was with Jacob because of His covenant with him. Covenants with God are sacred. He will always honour His covenant, even if we do not.

(v. 3–13)

– 3 –

The change God had orchestrated was followed by Jacob's wives. The best thing for us to do is seek and follow God in everything.

(v. 14–16)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There are things that seem too difficult for us to do when we decide to follow God. Yet if we choose to follow Him no matter how we feel, then the LORD will help us and make us happy in His will. This is the safest place in the world to be.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I MUST ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR WILL. HELP ME TO LIVE AS YOU LEAD.

The Dinah Incident

GENESIS 33–35

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Jacob had made peace with his brother Esau and returned to the land of Canaan. He settled at a place called Shechem, and camped in front of the city. He purchased a section of the field where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor, a prince of the country. One of the sons of Hamor was named Shechem—the same name as the city. Being new to the area, Dinah, the daughter of Leah and Jacob, went out to find some young women to have as friends. But during her visit she caught the attention of Hamor's son Shechem, who forcefully took and raped her. The Bible says that Shechem loved her and ordered his father to get Dinah as a wife for him. While this may have been a cultural norm for the Hivites to obtain a wife, it was a most grievous thing for Jacob and his sons. As a prince of the country, Hamor had the right to make an agreement with Jacob for his daughter, who was now a landowner in the region. Hamor negotiated in good faith with Jacob because he had been trustworthy in past business dealings. But Jacob's older sons answered Hamor and the Hivite leaders deceitfully.

DISCOVERING GOD — GENESIS 34:1–17

– 1 –

Dinah had been violated by Shechem.

The violation of God's covenant is not looked on lightly, Jesus Christ paid our cost.

(v. 1–7)

– 2 –

Hamor offered favor and riches to Jacob as a human covenant for his daughter.

The covenant of God is the most important. There is no price on obedience.

(v. 8–12)

– 3 –

The sons of Jacob lied to Hamor and Shechem, forcing them into circumcision.

Jesus Christ is God's covenant fulfilled for us, we need to receive Him.

(v. 13–17)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Jesus Christ fulfilled the new covenant when He gave His life for our sins on the cross. There is no going back on a covenant, only violation. But Jesus Christ took the cost of our violations and sins, once and for all. Thank You, LORD Jesus!

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I PRAISE YOUR NAME
FOR PAYING THE COST OF
MY SIN.

Dreams

GENESIS 36–39

DISCOVERING THE WORD

People have dreams. We have used the idea of a dream—something we experience when we are asleep—to represent future hopes, achievements, or aspirations. Dreams in this sense are very personal. The definition for the term aspiration is “a desire, a longing, or aim, ambition”. This is the way we tend to think of dreams. Like his father Jacob, Joseph received two dreams in his lifetime by God. Unfortunately, Joseph tended to be very arrogant. He was greatly favored by his father over his other brothers, and carried around the entitlements of a premium son. He boldly told his dreams to his older brothers and his father and, to be frank about it, they were disgusted and marked it up to the arrogance of a young, teenager Joseph. The dreams were taken very much out of context. The dreams were true and God would certainly make them come true but they were not for that time or space. We should work hard to hear what God is saying to us in the context of what is happening around us.

DISCOVERING GOD — GENESIS 37:1–11

– 1 –

Jacob favored Joseph more than all his children.

God does not favor one over another, and neither should we.

(v. 1–4)

– 2 –

Joseph mouthed off about his dreams.

God does not give us gifts to promote ourselves, but to build His Kingdom.

(v. 5–8)

– 3 –

Joseph continued to misuse his giftings.

The LORD knew that Joseph needed his pride dealt with. God would take him on that journey.

(v. 9–11)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Pride comes before destruction (PROVERBS 16:18). Satan, the enemy of our soul promotes our pride, but God teaches us that humility is one of the greatest features of our character. “A man’s pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor” (PROVERBS 29:23).

TODAY’S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO TAKE ON THE GIFTINGS YOU HAVE GIVEN ME IN THE RIGHT WAY.

Joseph & God

GENESIS 40-43

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Many have tried to make sense of Joseph's devastating fall into Egypt. To suggest that God was late or impeded in His rescue is a misunderstanding of what God was doing. Remember that Joseph was troubled by pride. This was encouraged by his father who treasured him more than his other sons. Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brothers and their father was told that he was dead. Jacob deeply grieved for Joseph. But Joseph was very much alive. God was removing him from the trouble that he had inherited from his father. The LORD separated Joseph from the ungodly sins that he had inherited and grown around as a young boy. The man was becoming a man of God. Sometimes God allows those He loves to go through unjust suffering, persecution, trials, and tribulation to refine their souls for a greater task. After his service as a slave to Potiphar and his undeserved time in prison, Joseph was finally ready to move in the direction God had orchestrated behind the scenes all along. Although it seemed like Joseph didn't know any of this would happen, it was God's will for his life.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 41:1-14

– 1 –

God gave Pharaoh a message from heaven about the near future.

God does not keep us in the dark.

(v. 1-7)

– 2 –

No one from Pharaoh's kingdom could interpret his dreams. Therefore, God gave Pharaoh someone gifted in dream interpretation who could tell him their meanings.

(v. 8)

– 3 –

Joseph was called on to speak the interpretation to Pharaoh. Joseph gave all the glory to God before Pharaoh, then he was ready to speak God's message.

(v. 9-14)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God has told us how to interpret what is happening and why, in this hour. The question is do we listen to Him? The Bible is God's Word which speaks to us today. We should read it and make it a part of our daily consumption. We should listen to God.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I NEED TO TAKE MY BIBLE, YOUR WORD, AND READ IT EVERY DAY.

The Dream Realized

GENESIS 44-46

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The dream Joseph had in his youth so many years ago had finally come to fruition. But the dream did not play out at all like Joseph initially thought. In his youth he was arrogant, but God humbled him in order to establish him as the leader he was called to be. I'm sure this was an overwhelming and mind-blowing experience, since the interpretation of his own dream was so different than what actually happened. How amazing that God used him to interpret the Pharaoh's dream! God truly works in mysterious ways. Even so, Joseph lived two completely different lives: one as a slave and another as the highest official in the kingdom. This is a parallel to our calling as followers of Christ. Even though there are difficulties and persecutions and injustices that happen to us, just like what happened to Christ, we will ultimately be princes in God's heavenly Kingdom to come. What a beautiful image of our hope! The story of Joseph is one of the greatest stories in the Bible because it is so relevant to us now.

DISCOVERING GOD – GENESIS 45:1-11

– 1 –

No one knew what was happening except God and Joseph. The LORD brings us to His truth. He shows us how things really are.

(v. 1-2)

– 2 –

Everything that happened to Joseph was by the will of God. His brothers could not understand how they had been directed by the LORD.

(v. 3-7)

– 3 –

God had provided for Jacob and his family. When it seems like everything is lost, hold on to the LORD, He is our provision.

(v. 8-11)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God consistently provides for His people. This life has much loss, but our eternal life with God has no loss. Heaven is about gaining, not losing. Let's praise God for all He has done and is doing every day. Praise the LORD!

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAISE YOUR
NAME FOR ALL YOU HAVE
DONE AND ARE DOING!**

Joseph's Family in Egypt

GENESIS 47-50

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The final phases of Joseph's dreams have made their way to reality. He never expected the dream to unfold the way it did. Joseph's father Jacob was brought to Egypt, along with his whole family and their livestock. They were given the best land in Egypt and rewarded because God loved them! This is the reason God helps us and gives us all that we need: He loves us. We don't have to do something for God for Him to love us, we are His creation. That is the reason Jesus Christ came to earth and willingly gave His life to pay the cost of our sin, then rose from the dead in the flesh to give us the gift of eternal life. He loved us while we were yet sinners, and wanted to make a way for us to be with Him (JOHN 14:1-2). The family of Jacob came to Egypt and grew into a nation—the promised plan God had given to Abraham years before. They would be in the land of Egypt for over 400 years before they would come out as the nation Israel.

DISCOVERING GOD — GENESIS 47:1-12

— 1 —

The brothers of Joseph were shepherds so Pharaoh gave them the best of the land. Pharaoh was pleased to let Joseph's family settle in the land of Goshen. God provides for all His children.

(v. 1-6)

— 2 —

Jacob and Pharaoh met each other and became friends. God knows what we need and when we need it; God always knows best.

(v. 7-10)

— 3 —

The family of Jacob was well-situated so that they had all they needed in Egypt. God is faithful to lead us and provide all our needs, as we love and serve Him.

(v. 11-12)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

As Christians, we understand that our lives are directed by the LORD as we allow Him to faithfully lead us. We must go when God says "go" and stay when God says "stay". The LORD has assignments for us as we work to build His Kingdom.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO ALWAYS HEAR AND OBEY YOUR CALL.

God's Wondrous Works

PSALMS 7-9

DISCOVERING THE WORD

There is no question that the works of man are marvelous. The technological developments have been remarkable and stunning. Just in the last sixty years what we have done outside the earth's atmosphere is outstanding! And yet when we compare that to the works of God, they are nothing. The work and development of mankind is interesting, but the work of God is wondrous and overwhelming! The construction of organic life, and the laws of nature, and the fine-tuning of the universe are on a whole other level of amazing. All the things that we depend on daily, like air to breath, is handmade by God. He is amazing! Psalm 8 reminds us of how exceptional God really is. In fact, His very name is spectacular! This is a work written to the Chief Musician to the tune of music for the instrument of Gath. It is a Psalm of David. We don't have any specific melodies to this ancient music, but we do have the lyrics. This is great for us to pray and meditate on in our devotions to God.

DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 8:1-9

— 1 —

God's glory is beyond the universe and His strength is proclaimed from the mouth of babes.

God's glory even shines out of the frailest of humanity with their inarticulate speech to silence His enemies. (v. 1-2)

— 2 —

Mankind is a remarkable invention of God.

The LORD has plans for everyone. We should follow Jesus Christ as our LORD.

(v. 3-5)

— 3 —

God has given us responsibility for His animals and the planet.

We should listen to the LORD, and follow His call on our life.

(v. 6-9)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The way we live and do things tells a story of who our God is, to all of those around us. The best way to share the good news of Jesus Christ is to make Him the center of all that we do. Sometimes people do things and expect God to follow them, but that's backwards. We should follow God!

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO ALWAYS HEAR AND FOLLOW YOU.

The Holy Mountain

EXODUS 1-3

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Mt. Horeb is the place where Moses encountered the one true God of heaven and earth, when the LORD called Moses to take the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt. It was Joseph who brought his family into Egypt, and now it is Moses, Joseph's relative, who is called by God to bring them out. At the time when Moses was born, the Pharaoh who would eventually become his father had called his army to kill all the baby boys of Israel. Moses' life was a rare exception—God saved him through his mother's creativity. She built a small ark and set the boy afloat by the banks of the River Nile near the home of Pharaoh's daughter. The daughter of Pharaoh discovered the baby boy and took him in as her child. Moses was raised in the ways of the ancient Egyptians. When he was older, Moses saw an Egyptian soldier beating a Hebrew, so Moses killed him in defense. The next day, when Moses tried to settle a fight between two Hebrews, he realized his secret about murdering the Egyptian had been discovered, and he had to flee for his life to Midian. Moses thought that his life was over, but then God showed up and the world would never be the same.

DISCOVERING GOD — EXODUS 3:1-12

— 1 —

God established the place where Moses was standing as holy ground. Only the LORD can make us holy.

(v. 1-5)

— 2 —

God established Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The LORD has no time limit; He remains relevant to every generation.

(v. 6)

— 3 —

God always responds to His people. The LORD has responded to us here and now. We need to follow Him.

(v. 7-12)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Moses learned that God never forgets. There is nothing that is too old or lost to the LORD. His mind does not work like ours. God is perfect in all His ways and sees everything, no matter when or where it happens. We should come to God in repentance today.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR GREAT MERCY. FORGIVE ME AND HELP ME TODAY.

The Test of Moses

EXODUS 4-7

DISCOVERING THE WORD

We often hear it said that “God works in mysterious ways”. This old adage is certainly true. Many times, as a Christian, I do not understand why God chooses to move the way He does. What I have learned along my walk with Him is to trust Him in all things and listen to God’s Word. This is why at Bible Discovery we read the Bible from cover to cover every year. The more we take the time to hear how and what God does, the more we learn to understand the way He works. As our lives move on, we become better and better acquainted with Him. Exodus 7 explains how Moses was commanded by God to confront the power structure of his day. God had specific ways and instructions Moses needed to obey. While Moses was a man used mightily by God to save the Israelites, later, someone even greater than Moses would arise to save both Jew and Gentile—Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God.

DISCOVERING GOD — EXODUS 7:1-13

— 1 —

God told Moses that he would become the resistance to Pharaoh.

Sometimes the work of the LORD is met with unwilling people, but we are His and follow Him. (v. 1-3)

— 2 —

God said the path that Moses and Aaron were on would not be peaceful because of Pharaoh’s heart.

God prepares us for the journey He calls us to in His name. (v. 4-7)

— 3 —

Aaron’s staff swallowed up the staffs of Pharaoh’s sorcerers and wise men.

The occult practices or wise thinking of men are no threat to the mighty power of God. (v. 8-13)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There are some Christians who fear sorcery. But God is never afraid. We must remember that as Christians we are the temple of the LORD in which He places Himself to show the world who He is. We must never be fearful of sorcery, but faithful in God.

TODAY’S PRAYER

LORD, I BELIEVE YOU ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN ANYONE, ANYWHERE. HELP ME TO TRUST YOU IN ALL THINGS.

Pride

EXODUS 8-10

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Pharaoh was a man of deep pride. He did not think of himself as a man but as a god. After all, he believed that he was the son of Amun-Ra, the ancient Egyptian god associated with the sun and air, who held great power and popularity in Egypt. The extremely bright light was how the Egyptians explained his creation power. But the LORD was confronting Pharaoh's hard heart with the reality of who the One True God was, the Creator of Pharaoh and all the things that he thought were his to command. God is the LORD who created everything! He is the God of the universe and all that they contain, including the sun and the light. But with Pharaoh's pride so built up in his mind, it is easy to see and understand why he was so hardhearted. There are procedures to Pharaoh's humiliation that the God of the universe used to ultimately break him. In Exodus 10, we begin to see the waning and cracking of his deep and darkened pride. God uses the measures of the ten plagues of Egypt to break down the pride of Pharaoh.

DISCOVERING GOD – EXODUS 10:1-11

– 1 –

The plagues of Egypt were not just for Pharaoh but for all the people to witness the power of God. We must

see and know God for who He is: the LORD.

(v. 1-2)

– 2 –

The plague of locusts would show the power of God, with their consumption and destruction. Pride brings

destruction, but God brings life and provision to the humble heart. (v. 3-6)

– 3 –

Pharaoh was breaking down in his pride.

There are some who respond to the LORD slowly because of their pride.

(v. 7-11)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Personal pride is always a problem. The Bible tells us that pride comes before destruction (PROVERBS 16:18). One way we can guarantee failure is to dedicate ourselves to pride and showing off. The LORD knows who we are and what we think. Come to Christ today.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO FOLLOW YOU AND NOT SURRENDER TO PRIDE.

Commands

EXODUS 11-13

DISCOVERING THE WORD

God gave the Israelites special seasons and times to serve as reminders of His work on their behalf. The Passover Feast and Festival of Unleavened Bread are just two examples of the LORD's commanding Israel to remember when He brought them out of Egypt and what He did for them. Israel left Egypt and came out into the desert. There was no fertile ground, no water, and no way to stay alive except through the power of the living God. In future years, the Israelites were to reenact certain events of the exodus. These celebrations still happen today in Jewish communities and reflect on God's provision. There is a reason that they are included in the Bible. If we pay attention, we too can see how the LORD has built into our lives ways that He has changed us and the way we live. And we are commanded by God to keep these things in the center of our thinking. God showed Moses that the people of Israel would forget, if given the opportunity, so by celebrating the feasts they would remember and memorialize what the LORD had done for them.

DISCOVERING GOD – EXODUS 13:1-10

– 1 –

The people were to remember how God had brought them out of bondage. We must remember how God has saved and protected us through the LORD Jesus Christ. (v. 1-3)

– 2 –

The Israelites were to observe and do all of the rituals God had outlined for them. God has provided salvation for us through Jesus Christ. Let us never forget all the LORD has done for us! (v. 4-8)

– 3 –

God commanded that the Israelites would receive, meditate on, and do what the LORD instructed, year by year. Our lives should always be focused on the LORD Jesus Christ, to follow Him. (v. 9-10)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

As followers of God, we are to be people who remember the important things that the LORD has done for us. We are to remember the many times God has protected and provided for us. These are things that add up throughout our lives as a testimony of God's grace.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO REMEMBER YOUR GOODNESS AND GRACE.

Complaints

EXODUS 14-17

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Mankind has always been an expert on ways to complain about things that have gone wrong. For example, when we sinned, we did not follow what the LORD had told us and we ended up complaining, even though we were the ones who sinned. We are great at complaining! But the Bible tells us that God hears us even when we complain. It is wrong to build our lives by complaining. There is no ministry of complaints in God's Kingdom! This complaining and ungrateful attitude was becoming longer and more hostile and was something that the LORD brought to the front with the people of Israel early on. Exodus 16 explains that the people were complaining, even after God had miraculously shifted and changed their circumstances in the desert. Think about this: there were more than a million people who moved out of Egypt from under the provisions they had there, to the desert where there were no provisions. Yet God provided for them!

DISCOVERING GOD — EXODUS 16:1-8

— 1 —

The people of Israel began to believe they were led into the wilderness to die.

Remember that we are often called to new locations for good reasons.

(v. 1-3)

— 2 —

God was ready to prepare food for the people to live.

Serving God is always good for us.

(v. 4-6)

— 3 —

The provision for the people came from God alone. It is God who answers and supplies our needs, when we call out to Him.

(v. 7-8)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Too many times we depend on the government or some other human source to help us out of our problems and troubles. But it is God who answers and provides for those who call on Him, wherever we are and whatever we are doing.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I PRAY FOR YOUR HELP. MAY YOUR HOLY SPIRIT TEACH AND GUIDE ME THROUGH YOUR WORD.

The Ten Commandments

EXODUS 18-21

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Have you ever noticed that what is written in the Ten Commandments is one of the most forgotten passages of Scripture in the Bible? Yet almost everyone has heard or knows about the Ten Commandments. Most people know the Ten Commandments by name, but if you ask them to list them in order they cannot. The Ten Commandments are actually recorded twice in the Bible: 1) in Exodus 20, at the beginning of Israel's wilderness wanderings, and 2) in Deuteronomy 5, at the end of that time, just before they arrived into the Promised Land. In today's assigned reading, we will highlight the Ten Commandments as they first show up in the Bible. These are God's rules. They are not commanding as much as they are prevention. These commandments are the real reasons that worshipping God is so different than typical religion. It's not so much what we cannot do, but about what God empowers us to do as we worship Jesus Christ.

DISCOVERING GOD – EXODUS 20:1-17

– 1 –

The first two commandments identify the LORD God and why we are to worship Him only.

We must acknowledge who the true God is and worship Him only.

(v. 1-6)

– 2 –

God explains the best way to live our lives. We must respect and serve God with our time and our words.

(v. 7-11)

– 3 –

God tells us how to treat each other. We must learn how to treat each other as God's creation.

(v. 12-17)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When we are rude and harsh with people for the wrong reason, it is a poor reflection of God who commands us to love our neighbor. But when we consider that all people are created by God in His image, our hearts and minds can change with His help to love and respect them.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I NEED TO THINK DIFFERENTLY. HELP ME TO HEAR YOUR WORD, WHEN I READ IT.

Justice

PSALMS 10–13

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Everyone wants justice! Governments put legal statutes in place to encourage justice in society. Businesses have philosophies to take care of their employees, but it is relevant to the kind of business you are in. It is the same with governments, too—depending on the kind of government, getting justice can be a waste of time. Nevertheless, there is a way to gain true and real justice with a perfect Judge who does not make mistakes, and knows the problems and pain that we all face in this world. God is justice. Today we receive a beautiful reminder of God's provision for perfect justice. The eighteen verses of Psalm 10 are more than a song of confidence in God's victory over evil, they are also a prayer. True and real justice always comes from the LORD God of the universe.

DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 10:1–18

– 1 –

There are times when God seems to hide from evil and evil appears to succeed. But this is not true. We must be steadfast, for He is faithful.

(v. 1–7)

– 2 –

Evil seems to get away with its activities.

But God is always there, no matter how we feel.

(v. 8–11)

– 3 –

The LORD is King! He is the perfect Judge who will correct all evil. Ultimately, evil will not win.

(v. 12–18)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

In our lives, there are many things that are done to us, and that we do to others, which are unjust and wrong. Anyone who does not admit to their human failure is not centered in Biblical truth. God is the only one who can truly justify you, so we must repent to the LORD through Jesus Christ.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME NOT TO THINK SO HIGHLY OF MYSELF. I REALIZE THAT PRIDE IS NOT GOOD.

Responsible

EXODUS 22–25

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Those who follow Christ are reminded from the Word of God that we are responsible for what we say and what we do. In other words, how we live speaks to everyone around us, it tells them who we serve—God or man. Jesus Christ told us to spread the good news of who He is and what He has done for us. So often our actions speak louder than our words. But these days our words are many and our actions are few. Faithfulness seems to be fading away. That is because to have pure and honest actions it requires the law of God to be written on our hearts. So, let us remember that God's law comes from the heart of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is a reason why Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man, came to pay the cost of our sin with His own life. That by raising Himself from the dead three days later, to defeat death and give all who receive Him the gift of eternal life, He proved to the world He has the authority to give you a new heart after His own heart.

DISCOVERING GOD — EXODUS 22:1–6

– 1 –

We are responsible for our actions, do not steal.

As followers of Christ, we must not steal anything from anyone.

(v. 1–4)

– 2 –

Followers of Christ are responsible for how we do what we do.

Deception in any form is wrong.

(v. 5)

– 3 –

We are responsible, even in our mistakes.

As followers of Christ, let's take care in all that we do or say.

(v. 6)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

As Christians and students of the Bible, we must take our involvement with the people around us seriously. We must never simply go through life doing whatever we want, paying no attention to how our words or actions affect others. We do not live alone, but in a community of people.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO BE CAREFUL AND THINK BEFORE I ACT, AS I REPRESENT YOU IN THIS WORLD.

The Altar & Courtyard

EXODUS 26-29

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The altar was a place where sacrifices were brought and made to the LORD. As you could imagine, this was a very busy place. Many activities happened here. It is where animals were burned in offering to the LORD God as a show of admiration, honour, and worship to Him. The LORD spoke to Moses and gave him the details of the elements which would become the outside courtyard of the Tabernacle of God. The Tabernacle was to be at the center of the camp of Israel. It was from here that the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day would direct the people of Israel where they would travel. The details of the altar of sacrifices and the courtyard are presented for everyone to see and read. Exodus 27 gives us the same message that Moses gave to God's people. As we study and read this passage, let us remember that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, where the presence of God reigns.

DISCOVERING GOD – EXODUS 27:1-11

– 1 –

The details of the altar are important for us to take note of. We should pay attention to God's details for us in our daily lives.
(v. 1-6)

– 2 –

God showed Moses the details of how to construct and carry the altar. As followers of Christ, the LORD has instructed us how to live every day.
(v. 7-8)

– 3 –

God instructs Moses how to construct the courtyard for the tabernacle. Our lives as Christians should be a reflection of Him to those around us.
(v. 9-11)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

As followers of Christ, our lives are not our own but the LORD's. We must be willing to allow Him to act in and through us. That sacrifice is serious and important for us to remember, as we live and breathe. May God help us to live for Him.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO LIVE MY LIFE FOR YOU.

The People Stray

EXODUS 30-32

DISCOVERING THE WORD

There is no other way to say it than to tell the truth, the ugly truth, that the people of God strayed away from worshipping the LORD and offered their sacred worship to an idol. It was, perhaps, a predictable outcome from the people of the new nation of Israel, since they had spent the last four hundred years in the culture of ancient Egypt with their many gods and cult worship practices. It appeared, from the people's point of view, that Moses had been delayed on the mountain and, the assumption made, that he and God had abandoned them. So Aaron made them a new god in the form of a golden calf—a symbol of strength and fertility in the Egyptian and Canaanite worship practices. But their assumption about Moses and God was wrong. The truth is Moses was receiving instructions from God on their behalf and for their benefit.

DISCOVERING GOD — EXODUS 32:1-10

— 1 —

Impatience was the trouble embedded into the souls of the people. Impatience is a problem in our lives, we should learn to listen and wait for Christ.

(v. 1)

— 2 —

Worshipping another god was Israel's first problem. We are to worship only God.

(v. 2-4)

— 3 —

Aaron was weak as a spiritual leader and had much to learn. We must be careful of weak leaders who follow people, instead of following God.

(v. 5-10)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

In the world today, there is a glut of weak leaders. As followers of Jesus Christ, we need to remember that our LORD is the one who we follow. Christ is the Head of the Church. We need not devote ourselves to Church doctrine or man's ideas. We worship the LORD Jesus Christ.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I WORSHIP YOU ALONE. YOU ARE THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH, AND I GIVE MY LIFE TO FOLLOW YOU.

The Offering

EXODUS 33–36

DISCOVERING THE WORD

What an amazing miracle that unfolds as we read about Israel and how they developed and built the Tabernacle in the wilderness. We need to keep in mind that the greatest miracle comes when the people are desperate for change. It looked as though the children of Israel would die in the land of Egypt, but God responded to their cry and they were delivered from the establishment of Egypt into the desert wilderness. They left everything and transitioned into nothing. There was a problem of slavery and abuse they had endured in Egypt, and their cry reached up to heaven. The LORD sees everything that happens to us and through us, but when we begin to pray the LORD moves. God has chosen prayer and communication with Him, and to Him, to motivate God to move in divine ways.

DISCOVERING GOD — EXODUS 36:1–7

— 1 —

God gifted Bezalel from the tribe of Judah, and Aholiab from the tribe of Dan to build the Tabernacle. God has gifted each of us to build His Kingdom.
(v. 1)

— 2 —

The Tabernacle was created through freewill offerings. God uses the offerings given by His people to build His Kingdom.
(v. 2–3)

— 3 —

They had more than enough in offerings to accomplish what God had instructed. The LORD will achieve His work one way or another—giving is a privilege.
(v. 4–7)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Giving to God's Kingdom is a privilege. When we spend our money only on ourselves, we will grow in selfish ways. But when we give to God, to build His Kingdom, the LORD grows our spirits and our souls. God loves a cheerful giver.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I WANT TO BUILD YOUR KINGDOM. HELP ME TO FIND A WAY TO GIVE.

Setting Up the Tabernacle

EXODUS 37–40

DISCOVERING THE WORD

It was the wilderness, a desolate wasteland. No one was around except the people of Israel. This is how God chose to anoint the Tabernacle. Moses and the people had built and designed it according to everything the LORD had instructed them. Keep this in mind, Israel was in the wilderness, they were defining themselves as a nation outside of Egypt. They had been preoccupied with surviving, and the LORD had given them everything to survive. Now Israel was commanded to build and set up a Tabernacle for God. Remember the way God had provided for them with water and food was a true miracle. It was amazing! Aaron and his sons, the priests, were also required to be dedicated and anointed for service to the LORD. Exodus 40 gives the directions and instructions of how they erected and arranged the Tabernacle of the LORD in the wilderness.

DISCOVERING GOD — EXODUS 40:1–16

— 1 —

God instructs the way the Tabernacle is to be set up and structured for worship.

The LORD rearranges our lives for worship.

(v. 1–8)

— 2 —

Every part of the Tabernacle was anointed. Our lives are set apart by God to use in His anointed service.

(v. 9–11)

— 3 —

The priests were dedicated and anointed to serve God

When we commit our lives to follow Christ, we are set apart to serve the LORD Jesus Christ.

(v. 12–16)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The anointing of God is dedication for service—set apart for the work of the LORD. When we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ, we are set apart for service to Him. In God's Word, Jesus told us to serve Him by demonstrating to others how God has changed us.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I DEDICATE MY LIFE TO FOLLOW YOU WITH ALL MY HEART, SOUL, MIND, AND STRENGTH.

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