

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.