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MOSES

GENESIS

The first five books of the Bible are called "the books of Moses." Moses may have written Genesis while the people of Israel wandered in the wilderness.

You'll meet some of the Bible's most famous characters in Genesis: Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Joseph, and more. They may seem like heroes, but they started out as ordinary people. They weren't always brave. They had doubts and fears, just like everyone. Sometimes they messed up. Genesis is proof that God can do amazing things through ordinary people.

PEOPLE IN ACTION

GOD IN ACTION

In the beginning, there was nothing ... except God.

That's where the story begins. The first book of the Bible tells how God made the world—and how we made a mess of it.

God made a garden paradise for the first people, Adam and Eve. But the devil disguised himself as a talking snake and tricked Adam and Eve into breaking God's one rule. That's when the story took a very dark turn. Evil invaded the world. Adam and Eve had to leave the garden.

God didn't turn His back on creation, though. He promised He would defeat the devil with a crushing blow (Genesis 3:15; see Romans 16:20). But things would get worse before they got better. Soon, the world was so evil that God covered everything with a flood. He started over with one man, Noah, and his family. Many years later, God chose another person, Abraham, and promised to make him into a great nation. God said He would use that nation to bless all the other peoples of the earth (Genesis 12:3).

God was there for Abraham's family every step of the way. He gave Abraham a son, Isaac. He watched over his grandson Jacob. He made sure Abraham's great-grandson Joseph was in the right place at the right time to save the rest of the family from starvation.

By the end of Genesis, Abraham's family was the size of a small nation. God had kept His promise. But the growing family wasn't living in the land that God had promised them, the land where they could fully be God's intended light to the world. That's where the next book, Exodus, picks up.

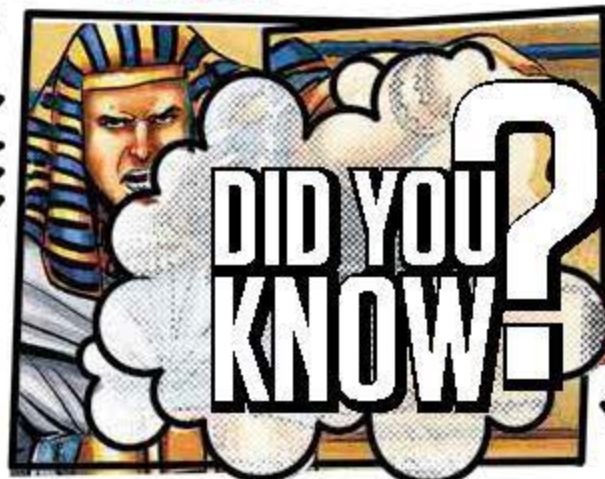
WORDS TO WATCH

Key Words
in This Book

FORGIVENESS LEADERSHIP AWE POWER
OBEDIENCE CONFRONT SIN TRUST

DID YOU KNOW?

Genesis covers a longer period of history than the other 65 books of the Bible combined!



The Creation of the World

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be an expanse¹ in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷And God made² the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. ⁸And God called the expanse Heaven.³ And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth,⁴ and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

¹¹And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants⁵ yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,⁶ and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds⁷ fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” ²¹So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which

the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. ²⁵And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man⁸ in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

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



So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
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Genesis 1:27

²⁸And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹And God

¹Or a canopy; also verses 7, 8, 14, 15, 17, 20 ²Or fashioned; also verse 16 ³Or Sky; also verses 9, 14, 15, 17, 20, 26, 28, 30; 2:1 ⁴Or Land; also verses 11, 12, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30; 2:1 ⁵Or small plants; also verses 12, 29 ⁶Or appointed times ⁷Or flying things; see Leviticus 11:19–20 ⁸The Hebrew word for man (*adam*) is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam*

saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

The Seventh Day, God Rests

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ²And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

The Creation of Man and Woman

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

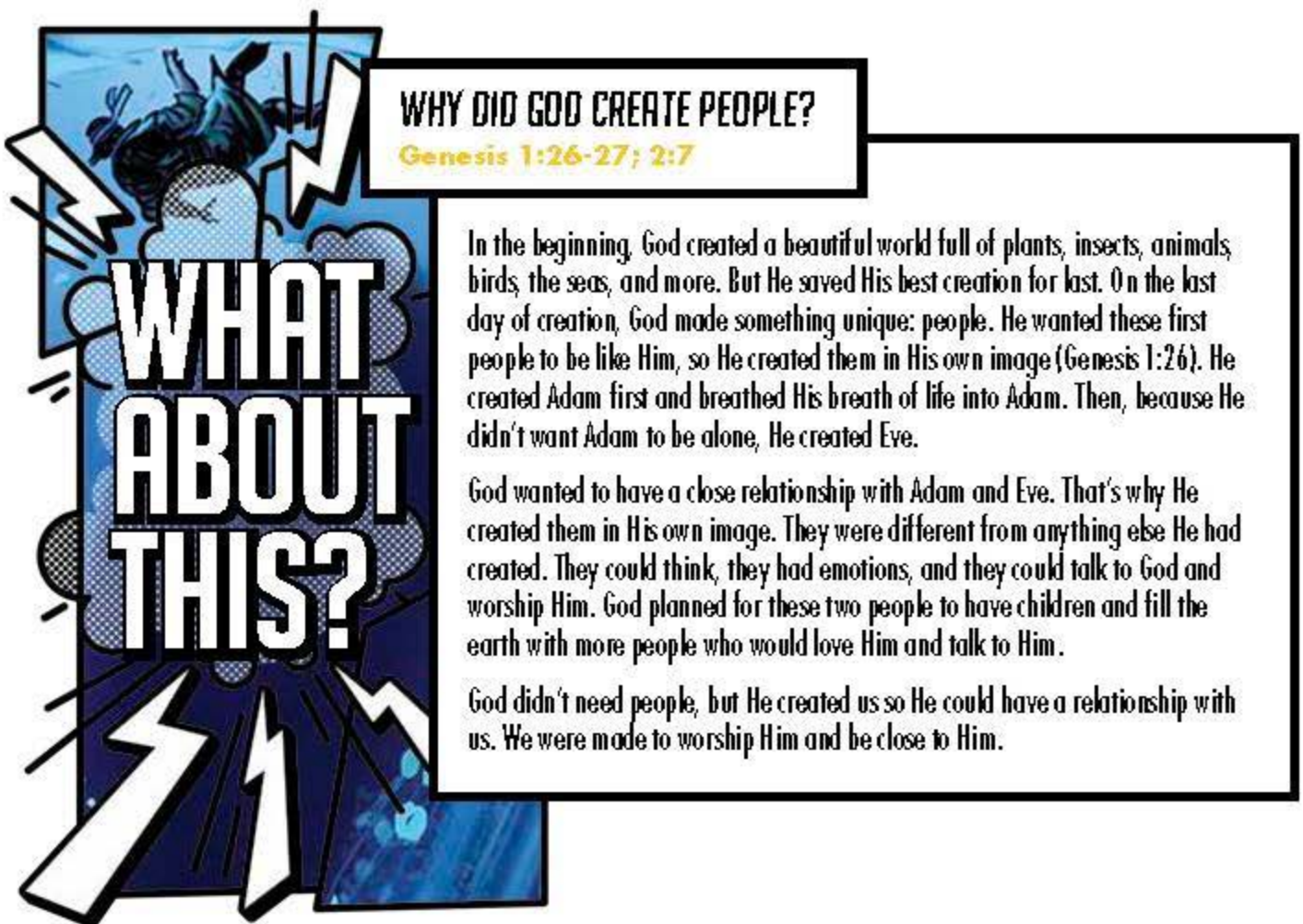
⁵When no bush of the field¹ was yet in the land² and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground,⁶ and a mist³ was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—⁷then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man

became a living creature. ⁸And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat⁴ of it you shall surely die.”

¹⁸Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for⁵ him.” ¹⁹Now out of the ground the



WHAT ABOUT THIS?

WHY DID GOD CREATE PEOPLE?
Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7

In the beginning, God created a beautiful world full of plants, insects, animals, birds, the seas, and more. But He saved His best creation for last. On the last day of creation, God made something unique: people. He wanted these first people to be like Him, so He created them in His own image (Genesis 1:26). He created Adam first and breathed His breath of life into Adam. Then, because He didn't want Adam to be alone, He created Eve.

God wanted to have a close relationship with Adam and Eve. That's why He created them in His own image. They were different from anything else He had created. They could think, they had emotions, and they could talk to God and worship Him. God planned for these two people to have children and fill the earth with more people who would love Him and talk to Him.

God didn't need people, but He created us so He could have a relationship with us. We were made to worship Him and be close to Him.

¹ Or open country ² Or earth; also verse 6 ³ Or spring ⁴ Or when you eat ⁵ Or corresponding to; also verse 20



GOD CREATED WITH LOVE

Genesis 1:26–2:25

Sometimes when you look in a mirror, you may not see what you'd like. We somehow zero in on our flaws—our crooked teeth, our feet that seem bigger than an elephant's. Yet the Bible says that you are made in the image of God.

We'll have to wait for heaven to fully see God, but for now, read Genesis 1:27. God made you to be like Himself! Not just your body but your inner spirit and character, too. You can think, make choices, and love others. God included the smallest of details. Look at a dime. Did you know your body's smallest bone is the size of the letter *D* on a coin? It's in your ear, and without it you couldn't hear. You are precisely and wonderfully made and the only one ever created just like you!

God declares His creations are "very good" (Genesis 1:31). He doesn't compare you to others' looks, grades, or friends. You aren't a mistake. What does this tell you about God's love?

When you look in the mirror this week, say out loud, "I am loved. God approves of me with 'Very good.' Thank You, God!"

LORD God had formed¹ every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.²⁰ The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam² there was not found a helper fit for him.²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made³ into a woman and brought her to the man.²³ Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man."⁴

²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You⁵ shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,³ but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise,⁶ she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

⁸And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool⁷ of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"⁸ ¹⁰And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"¹² The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹ Or *And out of the ground the Lord God formed* ² Or *the man* ³ Hebrew *built* ⁴ The Hebrew words for *woman* (*ishshah*) and *man* (*ish*) sound alike ⁵ In Hebrew *you* is plural in verses 1–5 ⁶ Or *to give insight* ⁷ Hebrew *wind* ⁸ In Hebrew *you* is singular in verses 9 and 11

take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, ⁴but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac.” ⁵The servant said to him, “Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?” ⁶Abraham said to him, “See to it that you do not take my son back there. ⁷The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and swore to me, ‘To your offspring I will give this land,’ he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. ⁸But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine; only you must not take my son back there.” ⁹So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him concerning this matter.

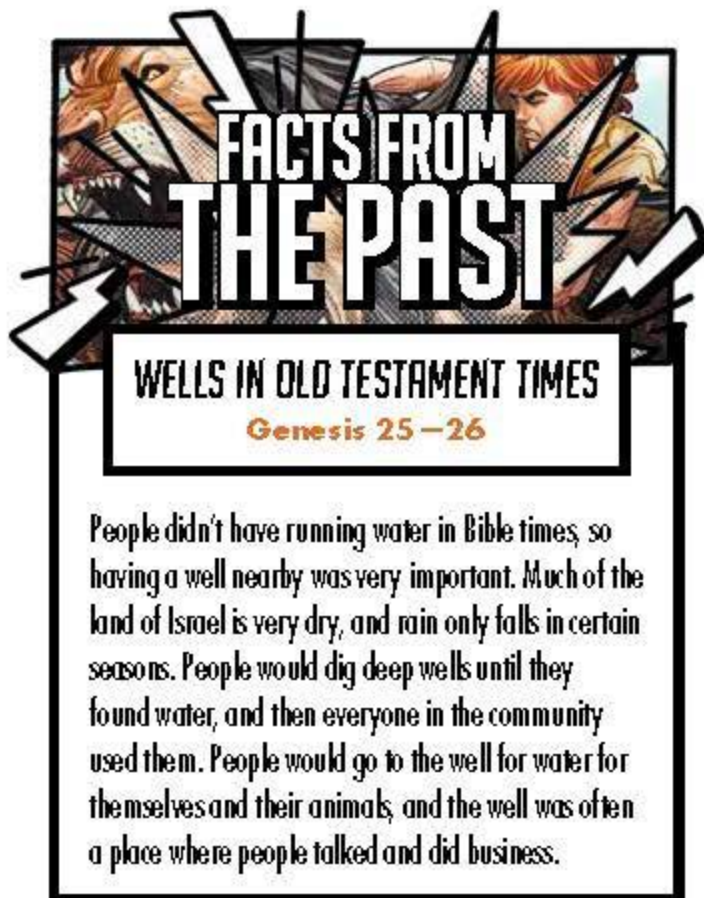
¹⁰Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia¹ to the city of Nahor. ¹¹And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time when women go out to draw water. ¹²And he said, “O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. ¹³Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴Let the young woman to whom I shall say, ‘Please let

down your jar that I may drink,’ and who shall say, ‘Drink, and I will water your camels’—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this² I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master.”

¹⁵Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder. ¹⁶The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden³ whom no man had known. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. ¹⁷Then the servant ran to meet her and said, “Please give me a little water to drink from your jar.” ¹⁸She said, “Drink, my lord.” And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. ¹⁹When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” ²⁰So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water; and she drew for all his camels. ²¹The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether the LORD had prospered his journey or not.

²²When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half shekel,⁴ and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels, ²³and said, “Please tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father’s house for us to spend the night?” ²⁴She said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.” ²⁵She added, “We have plenty of both straw and fodder, and room to spend the night.” ²⁶The man bowed his head and worshiped the LORD ²⁷and said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the LORD has led me in the way to the house of my master’s kinsmen.” ²⁸Then the young woman ran and told her mother’s household about these things.

²⁹Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban ran out toward the man, to the spring. ³⁰As soon as he saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister’s arms, and heard the words of Rebekah his sister, “Thus the man spoke to me,” he went to the man. And behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. ³¹He said, “Come in, O blessed of the LORD. Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house and a place for the camels.” ³²So the man came to the house and unharnessed the camels, and gave straw and fodder to the camels, and there was water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. ³³Then food was set before him to eat. But he said, “I will not eat until I have said what I have to say.” He said, “Speak on.”



¹ Hebrew *Aram-naharaim* ² Or *By her* ³ Or *a woman of marriageable age* ⁴ A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

15 I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring¹ and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

16 To the woman he said,

“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be for² your husband,
and he shall rule over you.”

17 And to Adam he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife
and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you,
‘You shall not eat of it,’
cursed is the ground because of you;
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

²⁰ The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.³ ²¹ And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

²² Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Cain and Abel

4 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten⁴ a man with the help of the LORD.” ² And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. ³ In

MORE TO THE STORY

WHERE WAS THE GARDEN OF EDEN?
Genesis 3:23-24

No one knows exactly where the garden of Eden was, but Genesis 2 gives us a clue. It mentions four rivers flowing from the garden. Two of them, the Pishon and the Gihon, are a mystery, their locations unknown. The other two are the Euphrates and the Tigris. We know where they are today. If these modern-day rivers are the same ones mentioned in Genesis (and not just different rivers with the same names), then that puts the garden of Eden somewhere in what is now Iraq or Turkey.

the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground,⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering,⁵ but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. ⁶ The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted?⁵ And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for⁶ you, but you must rule over it.”

⁸ Cain spoke to Abel his brother.⁷ And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” ¹⁰ And the LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. ¹¹ And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹² When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.” ¹³ Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear.⁸ ¹⁴ Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” ¹⁵ Then the

¹ Hebrew seed, so throughout Genesis ² Or against ³ Eve sounds like the Hebrew for life-giver and resembles the word for living ⁴ Cain sounds like the Hebrew for gotten ⁵ Hebrew will there not be a lifting up [of your face]? ⁶ Or against ⁷ Hebrew; Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate add Let us go out to the field ⁸ Or My guilt is too great to bear