

**THE LIFE**  
**RECOVERY**<sup>®</sup>  
*SECOND EDITION* **BIBLE**



Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.  
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## THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

<i>The Old Testament</i>	847	Isaiah	1379	Acts	
3	Genesis	929	Jeremiah	1429	Romans
77	Exodus	1003	Lamentations	1455	1 Corinthians
133	Leviticus	1013	Ezekiel	1479	2 Corinthians
171	Numbers	1073	Daniel	1497	Galatians
221	Deuteronomy	1095	Hosea	1509	Ephesians
265	Joshua	1113	Joel	1519	Philippians
301	Judges	1119	Amos	1529	Colossians
335	Ruth	1131	Obadiah	1537	1 Thessalonians
343	1 Samuel	1135	Jonah	1543	2 Thessalonians
387	2 Samuel	1141	Micah	1549	1 Timothy
425	1 Kings	1151	Nahum	1559	2 Timothy
463	2 Kings	1157	Habakkuk	1567	Titus
503	1 Chronicles	1163	Zephaniah	1573	Philemon
541	2 Chronicles	1169	Haggai	1577	Hebrews
587	Ezra	1173	Zechariah	1599	James
601	Nehemiah	1187	Malachi	1609	1 Peter
623	Esther			1621	2 Peter
635	Job	<i>The New Testament</i>		1627	1 John
679	Psalms	1195	Matthew	1637	2 John
785	Proverbs	1249	Mark	1639	3 John
823	Ecclesiastes	1285	Luke	1643	Jude
837	Song of Songs	1339	John	1647	Revelation

## ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF BIBLE BOOKS

1379	Acts	1599	James	601	Nehemiah
1119	Amos	929	Jeremiah	171	Numbers
503	1 Chronicles	635	Job	1131	Obadiah
541	2 Chronicles	1113	Joel	1609	1 Peter
1529	Colossians	1339	John	1621	2 Peter
1455	1 Corinthians	1627	1 John	1573	Philemon
1479	2 Corinthians	1637	2 John	1519	Philippians
1073	Daniel	1639	3 John	785	Proverbs
221	Deuteronomy	1135	Jonah	679	Psalms
823	Ecclesiastes	265	Joshua	1647	Revelation
1509	Ephesians	1643	Jude	1429	Romans
623	Esther	301	Judges	335	Ruth
77	Exodus	425	1 Kings	343	1 Samuel
1013	Ezekiel	463	2 Kings	387	2 Samuel
587	Ezra	1003	Lamentations	837	Song of Songs
1497	Galatians	133	Leviticus	1537	1 Thessalonians
3	Genesis	1285	Luke	1543	2 Thessalonians
1157	Habakkuk	1187	Malachi	1549	1 Timothy
1169	Haggai	1249	Mark	1559	2 Timothy
1577	Hebrews	1195	Matthew	1567	Titus
1095	Hosea	1141	Micah	1173	Zechariah
847	Isaiah	1151	Nahum	1163	Zephaniah

## PREFACE

THE BIBLE is the greatest book on recovery ever written. In its pages we see God set out on a plan for the recovery of his broken people and creation. We meet numerous individuals who are able to take their lives back through the wisdom and power of God. And we meet the God who is waiting with arms outstretched for all to turn to him, seek his will, and experience his healing. Some of us come to the Bible with baggage. We may wonder whether God exists. Or even if we think he does exist, we may wonder whether he is good, or whether he cares about us. Our hope is that you will encounter the God of grace, love, and redemption in the pages of *The Life Recovery Bible*.

Many of us are just waking up to the fact that we need recovery. We might define recovery this way: It is the simple but challenging process of daily seeking God's will for our lives instead of demanding to go our own way. It involves letting God do for us what we cannot do for ourselves while also taking the steps necessary to draw closer to our creator and redeemer. It is allowing God to heal our wounded souls so we can help others in the process of their own healing. All of us need to take part in this process because no one is perfect. It's an inherent part of being human.

Let us set out together on the journey toward healing and newfound strength—not strength found within ourselves, but strength found through trusting God and allowing him to direct our decisions and plans. This journey will take us through the Twelve Steps and other materials designed to help us focus on the provisions our powerful God offers for recovery. *The Life Recovery Bible* will enrich our experience and expand our understanding of the God who loves us and sent his Son to die that we might be made whole.

Without God there is no recovery, only disappointing substitutions and repeated failure. We pray that the resources within these pages will help us all better understand who God is and how he wants to heal our brokenness and set us on a path toward wholeness.

### **A Willingness to Surrender**

The goal of this Bible is to help us move from wherever we are to a place closer to God, closer to those who love us, and closer to those who may have given up on us. It is likely that if you are reading this, you are aware you have some kind of problem. Being aware of our struggles is certainly better than remaining blind to them. It is the place where we start our journey toward recovery. Some of us become aware of our problems during a moment of quiet reflection. Some of us wake up through a confrontation with a friend brave enough to tell us the truth. Still others of us become aware of our brokenness through a tragic, life-changing event like incarceration, divorce, separation, or the death of a loved one. Although coming to this point of awareness is painful, it is essential to move us along toward

repair, resolution, and recovery. But awareness alone cannot produce lasting change.

In this Bible you will see examples of good things in our world, things created by God, who is the source of everything good. But you will also discover truth about the evil found in this world. The Bible introduces us to Satan and his plan for stealing, killing, and destroying the good in our lives. Satan has been working to plant destruction in God's good world from the beginning, and he's been doing the same to each of us. What Satan really wants is for us to become like him. He wants us to turn away from worshipping God and to begin to worship ourselves instead. He wants us to think of ourselves as all-knowing, all-powerful, and in control of our own lives. He wants us to think of ourselves as God.

If we think we are in control, it becomes hard for us to deal with the problems in our lives. First, we will likely be slow in even recognizing them. Then when things get so bad that we can't deny our problems, Satan's work intensifies, and he leads us to believe that we have what it takes to fix ourselves. So even if we're aware of our problems, we can still remain blind to the real solution. We can fall right in line with millions of others who are the "supreme beings" in their own lives. We hang on to the false belief that we have all we need to produce a healed, happy, and fulfilled life. So just being aware that we have a problem isn't enough. We must also become aware of our limitations. We need to become convinced that we need help from the outside. And we need to want help badly enough to swallow our pride and ask for it.

But even when we are aware of our problems and understand our limitations, we still need something more. We must have the desire and the courage to change what we see. We must be willing to change. The psalm writer rightly prays in Psalm 51:12, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you." Willingness is not easy or the psalm writer wouldn't have asked God to help him with it.

When we have a willing heart, then we no longer need to worry about whether or not we have the power to heal ourselves or transform our own hearts. We are in the best position to change when we have surrendered ourselves completely to God—that is, when we can finally admit that we have a problem we are powerless to change, and when we are willing for God to not only change the problem but to change our hearts along with it.

*The Life Recovery Bible* is the most powerful tool available to help with all phases of recovery: becoming aware of our problems and our need for help, developing the desire to change, and gaining the willingness to do whatever it takes.

### **Staying the Course in Life Recovery**

*The Life Recovery Bible* is a unique tool that brings Twelve Step recovery back to its original source—God's Word. The founders of Alcoholics Anonymous drew on the Bible's wisdom as the source for the Twelve Steps, especially the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7), the book of James, and the famous "love chapter" (1 Corinthians 13). There is nothing in the Twelve Steps that opposes truth found anywhere in Scripture. As we work through the Twelve Steps, it will become clear how these Steps reflect the path God has chosen and revealed in Scripture for the rescue and transformation of broken lives.

No matter where we are in the recovery process or how many defective plans we've tried in the past, if we stay the course on our Life Recovery

journey, there is hope. We can rely on the strength found by walking with others, entrusting our lives to God, and allowing him to direct our decisions and plans. If we stay the course, we will journey through the Twelve Steps and utilize other Life Recovery resources to help us focus on the provisions that our all-knowing and all-powerful God provides for recovery. *The Life Recovery Bible* is designed to enrich and expand our experience of this God who loves us so much that he provided a way for us to find an abundant life now and ultimately to spend eternity with him in heaven.

We are delighted that you have chosen this second edition of *The Life Recovery Bible* as a tool to help you discover what God wants for you or someone you care about. As you study God's Word and progress through the steps, please use our website to share your recovery progress and experiences ([www.liferecoverygroups.com](http://www.liferecoverygroups.com)). Or perhaps for you, this is your first step toward starting and leading a Life Recovery meeting or group. If so, look up the articles at the back of this Bible related to starting and leading a group. Also, log on to our website so we can interact with you more directly.



## A WORD ABOUT ADDICTIONS

SOMETIMES THE FIRST STEP toward overcoming an addiction is to learn something about it. There are two general categories of addictions. One category, chemical or substance addiction, results from someone ingesting alcohol or some other drug simply to feel different. Not everyone develops a chemical addiction to alcohol, but other highly addictive drugs can trap anyone who tries them.

Those who have begun to use alcohol to ease pain should watch for danger signs that indicate they are susceptible to addiction. People who develop serious alcohol issues often have the ability to “handle” their drinking (that is, they can drink a lot without it having much of an effect on them). Another danger sign is binge drinking, when a person consumes a lot of alcohol in an evening or a weekend but doesn’t drink again for several weeks. They point to their long stretches without alcohol as proof that they don’t have a dependency problem, but they do. Another danger sign is having others in the family tree who have been alcoholics. Heredity is a factor and indicates a much higher probability of becoming addicted to alcohol. Watch for these signs—they spell trouble.

Becoming addicted to a drug can start innocently. We may use drugs in order to fit in with friends, not knowing how powerfully addictive the drugs are. Sometimes, people get a legitimate prescription from a doctor. It may help for a while, but then its effects wear off, and soon more and more is needed. Some people may end up actually getting prescription medications on the street, as well as through a doctor. Others try to self-medicate by using illegal drugs. It begins as a way to escape the pain, but the need for more can easily become a compulsion and then an addiction. The user feels trapped and gradually gets loaded down with shame and guilt.

The other general category of addiction, process addiction, involves using less obvious methods to try to handle emotional pain. These compulsive behaviors are related to a process instead of a substance, like drugs or alcohol. These behaviors start out in small ways and are seemingly innocent. Some people may think they can control these behaviors, but when they try to stop, they realize the repetitive behavior controls them.

Gambling or compulsively spending money may be a way we try to deal with our problems. We may find that we are always short of money or are drawn to the excitement of gambling with its random rewards. Even video games may become our escape from a painful reality. Check it out. Decide to not play any video games, gamble online, or spend money for thirty days and see how uncomfortable it is. Each of these activities can become a process addiction.

Process addictions involving eating can be a big issue. Eating is one of the things we think we can always control, but there are three ways eating can be a problem. One problem, overeating, happens when people look at food

as a source of comfort. When they are in emotional pain, they turn to food in order to feel good again. Another eating problem involves binge eating and then having to purge what was eaten. And then there is the very serious problem of people not eating enough. Because they think they are fat, some people control their eating habits and chronically lose weight, leading to life-threatening physical problems.

Using the Internet can become a problem that leads to devastating addictions. Spending too much time searching the web, even too much interaction on social media, can keep us from living in the real world. Or our Internet use may involve pornography. Many think that viewing pornography is a problem limited to men, but it can be just as big a problem for women. Research says that the age group most commonly looking at pornography on the Internet is young people—as young as eleven years old. Habitually viewing pornography can affect the brain in the same ways as a chemical addiction and can have devastating effects on our relationships.

Sometimes, people inflict pain on themselves to distract them from their emotional pain. They usually do this by cutting themselves. The reasons for this behavior are complex, but basically it is a way to feel something different—physical pain instead of emotional pain—and it is a way for them to feel alive. If they bleed a little, they know they are still here and that they are not invisible. This can become a very serious addiction.

These are some of the ways we may attempt to handle life's problems. We can get caught up in one of these chemical or process addictions and then get angry with ourselves because we can't stop. We can begin recovery by recognizing that it's not all our fault, but then we also need to begin to take responsibility for the choices we make. What you do in response to these problems will determine the course of your life, whether you know it or not. You are in control of your choices right now. Look to the resources in this Bible and to others who understand you and love you. You should not—you cannot—walk this path of recovery alone.

## AN EARLY HISTORY OF LIFE RECOVERY

IN 1935 Bill W. and Dr. Bob, who were deeply involved with the Oxford Group movement, founded Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). They were seeking to live out the Oxford Group's Four Absolutes—absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love—as they helped others find the sobriety they were experiencing.

In those beginning days of the program, there were no Twelve Steps. Instead, they had six precepts relayed by Ebby T., who was Bill W.'s sponsor. Here are the six precepts:

- We admitted we were licked.
- We got honest with ourselves.
- We talked it over with another person.
- We made amends to those we had harmed.
- We tried to carry the message to others with no thought of reward.
- We prayed to whatever God we thought there was.

From these precepts, the Twelve Steps emerged. Dr. Bob, Bill W., and Dr. Samuel Shoemaker spent hours discussing as they studied portions of the Bible that aligned with their Oxford Group experiences and supported their own recovery journeys.

Three portions of Scripture were specifically identified as foundational in the development of the Twelve Steps: the Sermon on the Mount, which includes the Beatitudes (Matthew 5–7); the book of James, which focuses on several Twelve Step fundamentals; and “the love chapter” (1 Corinthians 13). All three of these portions of Scripture clearly established the Christian and biblical roots of AA and the Twelve Steps. Having come out of their study of the Bible, these early pioneers were careful to include nothing in the Steps that would counter any truth found in God's Word.

In the early days of AA, when conservative Christian values and truths were unapologetically used to help others in recovery, the success rate was quite amazing. The book *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers* tells how Dr. Bob called every newcomer to the first AA group to “say a prayer to God admitting you were powerless over alcohol and your life was unmanageable.” Nearly 93 percent of those surveyed in the Akron group never relapsed. For an addiction that had resulted in hopelessness and helplessness for centuries, this result was truly amazing.

We can only imagine what it was like to hear of alcoholics being “cured” (as the unknowing world called it) when anyone getting better from a real addiction to alcohol was considered the result of a divine miracle. We can

compare what was happening there to what people would think today if 93 percent of people with stage IV incurable and inoperable brain cancer who went to Akron, Ohio, miraculously found healing there. Every media outlet would send someone to discover what was going on. Back then, 93 percent of alcoholics getting better caused such a stir that the wealthy John D. Rockefeller Jr. sent his son to find out what was going on to produce this miracle. When he reported back, he told his dad that they all had experienced a conversion experience with God.

In order to remove any barriers to inclusion based on religious views, AA did not use explicitly Christian language in their literature. They referred to God mostly as “God as we understood Him” or as the “Power greater than ourselves,” allowing for a variety of religious perspectives. As time passed, most people forgot the strong connection between the Twelve Steps and the Bible, and recovery became a secular practice with many connections to medicine and psychology. In recent years it has been difficult to reestablish the connection between Christian values and successful recovery programs that use the Twelve Steps. We are honored to be part of a movement that brings the Twelve Steps back to Scripture through the publication of *The Life Recovery Bible*, the creation of additional Life Recovery resources, the formation of The Life Recovery Institute, and the establishment of Life Recovery groups around the world.

At a meeting in 1991, Tyndale House Publishers partnered with Stephen Arterburn and David Stoop to create *The Life Recovery Bible*, which includes traditional study Bible features along with devotionals to give fellow strugglers a meaningful connection to God’s Word. This Bible is designed for people involved in Twelve Step recovery programs who have longed for a tool that integrates the Twelve Steps with Scripture. Introducing them to the true Power greater than ourselves, the God of the Bible, *The Life Recovery Bible* provides a strong biblical foundation for recovery. And for people who know the Bible but are in need of recovery, it introduces them to the Twelve Steps in a Christ-centered recovery program.

Using this Bible as your primary tool in the context of Twelve Step meetings and working the Steps, your life can be transformed. You can become one of many people who have allowed God to take over what they could not control and now believe what they once found so hard to accept.

One of the first readers of *The Life Recovery Bible* was suicidal and addicted to crack cocaine. After six months with this Bible, her life was completely transformed by Jesus, and she quickly stepped forward to help other women find recovery. When asked what happened, she replied, “I stopped believing the lies of Satan and started believing the truths of Jesus Christ.” She was the first in the history of Life Recovery to experience a transformed life while using and applying the truths found in this Bible. History has since repeated itself with millions of others. The transforming truth in God’s word is now available to you. We pray that God’s truth in this Bible will provide the foundation for an amazing life of recovery and restoration.

*Steve A. and Dave S.*

## THE TWELVE STEPS OF LIFE RECOVERY

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our problems—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our wills and our lives over to the care of God.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

*The Twelve Steps used in the Twelve Steps devotional reading plan in this Bible have been adapted from the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.*

## THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

*The Twelve Steps are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that AA has reviewed or approved the contents of this publication, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism—use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.*

# THE TWELVE STEPS AND SCRIPTURE

The Twelve Steps have long been of great help to people in recovery. Much of their power comes from the fact that they capture principles clearly revealed in the Bible. The following page lists the Twelve Steps and connects them to corresponding Scriptures that support them. This will help readers familiar with the Twelve Steps to discover the true source of their wisdom—the very word of God.

**STEP 1:** We admitted that we were powerless over our problems—that our lives had become unmanageable.

*"I know that nothing good lives in me. . . . I want to do what is right, but I can't"* (Romans 7:18; see also John 8:31-36; Romans 7:14-25).

**STEP 2:** We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

*"God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him"* (Philippians 2:13; see also Romans 4:6-8; Ephesians 1:6-8; Colossians 1:21-22; Hebrews 11:1-10).

**STEP 3:** We made a decision to turn our wills and our lives over to the care of God.

*"Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable"* (Romans 12:1; see also Matthew 11:28-30; Mark 10:14-16; James 4:7-10).

**STEP 4:** We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

*"Let us test and examine our ways. Let us turn back to the LORD"* (Lamentations 3:40; see also Matthew 7:1-5; 2 Corinthians 7:8-10).

**STEP 5:** We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

*"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed"* (James 5:16; see also Psalms 32:1-5; 51:1-3; 1 John 1:2-6).

**STEP 6:** We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

*"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor"* (James 4:10; see also Romans 6:5-11; Philippians 3:12-14).

**STEP 7:** We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

*"If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness"* (1 John 1:9; see also Luke 18:9-14; 1 John 5:13-15).

**STEP 8:** We made a list of all the persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

*"Do to others as you would like them to do to you"* (Luke 6:31; see also Colossians 3:12-15; 1 John 3:10-20).

**STEP 9:** We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

*"If you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar. . . and. . . someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God"* (Matthew 5:23-24; see also Luke 19:1-10; 1 Peter 2:21-25).

**STEP 10:** We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

*"If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall"* (1 Corinthians 10:12; see also Romans 5:3-6; 2 Timothy 2:1-7; 1 John 1:8-10).

**STEP 11:** We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

*"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart"* (Colossians 4:2; see also Isaiah 40:28-31; 1 Timothy 4:7-8).

**STEP 12:** Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

*"Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself"* (Galatians 6:1; see also Isaiah 61:1-3; Titus 3:3-7; 1 Peter 4:1-5).

# USER'S GUIDE

THE *HOLY BIBLE* is a book about recovery. It records how the world began and how God created it to be good. Then it tells us about the beginning of sin—about the first time people decided to reject God's plan. And it spells out the fatal consequences that result from rejecting God's plan. But the Bible doesn't leave us in despair. It reveals a plan for recovery and the source of the power to accomplish it. It provides us with the only pathway to wholeness—God's program for reconciliation and healing. Each feature in *The Life Recovery Bible* leads readers to the powerful resources for recovery found in the Holy Scriptures.

In this second edition of *The Life Recovery Bible*, the content has been thoroughly edited and refreshed. A few new notes and articles have also been added. However, with this revision a page-perfect correspondence for all the feature content was maintained from the first edition to the second. This allows users of both editions to communicate easily with each other regarding the location of notes and other features.

OVERVIEW ARTICLES	This Bible includes a number of helpful overview articles at the front. These focus on giving individuals perspective as they begin their recovery journey. Preface (page A5) A Word about Addictions (page A9) An Early History of Life Recovery (page A11)
NEW ARTICLES IN THE SECOND EDITION	The articles new to the second edition of <i>The Life Recovery Bible</i> focus primarily on giving guidance to facilitators as they lead recovery groups and use the Bible in a group context. Life Recovery Facilitator's Guide (page 1679) Step-by-Step Life Recovery Meeting Guide (page 1681) Thriving in a Secular Recovery Group (page 1687) Life-Giving Recovery Groups in the Church (page 1693)
DEVOTIONAL READING PLANS	Each devotional is set near the Scripture it comments on and directs the reader to the next devotional in the reading chain. To get a bird's-eye view of each of these reading plans, turn to the indexes at the back of this Bible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>Twelve Step Devotional Reading Plan</b> includes eighty-four Bible-based devotionals built around the Twelve Steps. <i>To begin this reading plan, turn to page 25.</i></li><li>• The <b>Recovery Principle Devotional Reading Plan</b> is composed of fifty-six Bible-based devotionals shaped around principles important in the recovery process. <i>To begin this reading plan, turn to page 5.</i></li><li>• The <b>Serenity Prayer Devotional Reading Plan</b> is made up of twenty-nine Bible-based devotionals related to the Serenity Prayer. <i>To begin this reading plan, turn to page 27.</i></li></ul>
RECOVERY PROFILES	In this feature sixty individuals and relationships are profiled, and important recovery lessons are drawn from their lives. For a quick view of the profiles included, see the Index to Recovery Profiles on page 1738.
INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL FOR BIBLE BOOKS	Each book of the Bible is preceded by a number of helpful features. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Book Introductions</b> present the content and themes from the standpoint of recovery.</li><li>• <b>The Big Picture</b> gives a panoramic view of the book in outline form.</li><li>• <b>The Bottom Line</b> provides vital historical information for the book.</li><li>• <b>Recovery Themes</b> present and discuss important themes for people in recovery.</li></ul>

RECOVERY  
COMMENTARY  
NOTES

The Bible text is supported by numerous **Recovery Notes** that pinpoint passages and thoughts important to recovery. The notes appear at the foot of each page and are indexed in the Life Recovery Topical Index beginning on page 1695.

Additional commentary material is provided in the **Recovery Reflections** that follow many of the Bible books. The notes are arranged topically. The topics discussed in this feature are indexed in the Index to Recovery Reflections on page 1743.

## INDEXES

The **Life Recovery Topical Index** at the back guides the reader to the important notes, profiles, devotionals, and recovery themes related to more than a hundred terms important to issues in the recovery process.

- The **Index to Recovery Profiles** alphabetically lists and locates the sixty Recovery Profiles that appear in this Bible.
- The **Index to Twelve Step Devotionals** lists and locates the eighty-four Twelve Step devotionals.
- The **Index to Recovery Principle Devotionals** lists and locates the fifty-six Recovery Principle devotionals.
- The **Index to Serenity Prayer Devotionals** lists and locates the twenty-nine Serenity Prayer devotionals.

The **Index to Recovery Reflections** lists and locates the various topics discussed in the Reflections feature of this Bible.

The **Topical Bible Verse Finder** at the front of this Bible lists topics that concern people who are trying to live by God's wisdom and connects those topics to helpful Bible verses. It's a great tool for finding out what God has to say about your everyday concerns.

# OLD TESTAMENT



# GENESIS

## THE BIG PICTURE

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### A. GOD SETS THE STAGE

(1:1–11:32)

1. Formation of the Universe  
(1:1–2:25)

a. God creates matter, energy, and the natural order (1:1–2:3)

b. God prepares pristine surroundings for the first family (2:4–25)

2. Fall of the Human Race  
(3:1–24)

a. Commission of sin (3:1–8)

b. Curse on sin (3:9–24)

3. Failure of Society (4:1–9:29)

a. Failure of humankind  
(4:1–6:22)

b. Flood of judgment  
(7:1–9:29)

4. Folly of Rebellion

(10:1–11:32)

a. Dispersal of the people  
(10:1–32)

b. Disobedience of the people (11:1–32)

### B. GOD CHOOSES THE PLAYERS

(12:1–50:26)

1. Abraham (12:1–25:18)

2. Isaac (25:19–27:46)

3. Jacob (28:1–36:43)

4. Joseph (37:1–50:26)

The book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. It records how the world began and how God created it to be good. It tells us about the first people and how God made them to be excellent. But then it tells us about the beginning of sin—about the first time people decided to reject the program God had laid out for them. It records the first days of shame and of covering up. It records the beginning of our separation from God, each other, and the world God gave us.

We will see how people with perfect health, living in a perfect environment, rebelled against God. And we will see the consequences of their rebellion. We are given intimate glimpses of individuals dominated by hatred, drunkenness, lust, unhealthy family relationships, greed, cheating, irresponsibility, dishonesty, jealousy, violence, and other problems.

But the book of Genesis doesn't leave us in despair. It tells us of yet another beginning. It records how God chose a man named Abraham to father a special nation. And through this nation would come the solution for our separation from God, each other, and the world God gave us. Genesis begins the story of how God began his work of healing broken humanity—a healing to be expressed in the laws he would give his people and culminating in the coming of Jesus, the promised Messiah.

The book of Genesis reminds us of where all our problems began. It spells out the fatal consequences of rejecting God's program. But it also begins the age-long story of God's amazing love for the human race. Through this book we will discover that the only pathway to spiritual wholeness is found by following God's redemptive plan.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

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**PURPOSE:** To tell us about the beginning of things, including human opportunities and difficulties, and to demonstrate that God's solutions are the only ones that work. **AUTHOR:** Moses. **AUDIENCE:** The people of Israel. **DATE WRITTEN:** Chapters 1–11 deal with the undatable past; the events of chapters 12–50 are to be dated between about 2000 and 1800 B.C. The book was probably written shortly after 1445 B.C. **SETTING:** Mesopotamia, then Canaan, finally Egypt. **KEY VERSE:** "And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith" (15:6). **KEY EVENTS:** Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Tower of Babel. **KEY PEOPLE:** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph.

## RECOVERY THEMES

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**A Good Creation:** Everything about God's creation was described as being good except the fact that Adam was alone. In fact, Adam's isolation is the only thing in the first two chapters of Genesis that God considered to be a problem. When God created a partner for man, then God was pleased with everything in his creation. Because God was pleased with what he created, he stayed involved, even after Adam and Eve disobeyed him. In fact, ever since the Fall God has been seeking to make things right again. Our sinfulness always leads us away from God and distorts the way God created us to be. But recovery always involves growth toward God's original ideal for the human race. As we progress in recovery, we take part in God's re-creation of our fallen world.

**A Ruined World:** The disobedience of Adam and Eve affected all of God's creation. The idyllic world of the garden was gone forever, and life became a struggle. Our futile attempts to avoid the realities of a ruined world have led us into all kinds of destructive behaviors. Recovery begins when we squarely face the broken realities of our world—its daily struggles and hardships. Once we have done this, we have started down the road of recovery. We have entered the spiritual arena where battles are fought to regain what has been lost.

**Promises of Healing:** The book of Genesis presents us with a series of "new beginnings" that come out of the ruin of our sinfulness. In the original Fall, God promised hope and healing for us when he told the serpent that the offspring of the woman would crush the serpent's head. When people generally continued to disobey, God sent the Flood as judgment for their sinfulness. After the Flood, God again promised victory and confirmed that promise with a rainbow. Then the people rejected God again, building a great tower as a memorial of their pride. In response, God confused their languages, further fragmenting society. Then God chose a man named Abram and promised to bless all nations of the world through his offspring. Each time that human sin brought ruin, God promised victory and recovery in the face of it.

**Hope for Reconciliation:** As people began to experience the terrible consequences of their disobedience, God didn't leave them to figure out a plan for recovery all alone; nor did he leave a long list of principles or rules to follow that would repair their damaged relationships. Instead, God always worked with people on a very personal level in the recovery process. As we enter into the recovery process, we find it to be relational in nature. It requires us to seek reconciliation with people close to us, and this includes God. In Genesis, God modeled this pattern for us time and again. He chose certain individuals and worked patiently in their lives, reconciling them with himself and the people around them.

## CHAPTER 1

### *The Account of Creation*

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.\* <sup>2</sup>The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

<sup>3</sup>Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light "day" and the darkness "night."

And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

1:1 Or *In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, . . . Or When God began to create the heavens and the earth, . . .*

<sup>6</sup>Then God said, "Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth." <sup>7</sup>And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens.

<sup>8</sup>God called the space "sky."

And evening passed and morning came, marking the second day.

<sup>9</sup>Then God said, "Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear." And that is what happened. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground "land" and the waters "seas." And

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1:4 God was pleased with his creation. He declared that it was good. God stopped now and then to approve of what he had designed and created (1:4-5, 9-10, 11-12, 18, 21-22, 25, 31). Many of our problems and dependencies result from the misuse of God's good creation. Recovery sometimes involves discovering the good things that we have misused and learning how to enjoy them in the way God intended.

1:24 The phrase "And that is what happened" (also in 1:9-12, 14-15) shows us that God's creative activity was done in complete conformity to the specifications he had originally intended. God accomplishes his will with certainty and precision. It should reassure us to know that God's good desires for us can be accomplished with the same certainty.

## SELF-PERCEPTION

### READ GENESIS 1:26-31

If we have lived in bondage to our compulsive behaviors for a while, we probably see more bad than good inside us. Many of us tend to see life in terms of all or nothing. As a result, we probably think we are all bad. But in recovery, we need a balanced understanding of ourselves. We need to see that along with our bad points we have also been gifted with strengths. It's not an either/or proposition. A balanced view of ourselves will help us better understand our shortcomings while also giving us greater hope in our potential.

At the end of the fifth day of creation God had made everything except the first people. The Bible tells us that when he looked at what he had made so far, "God saw that it was good." Then God created the first man and woman. "So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; . . . Then God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.' . . . Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!" (Genesis 1:25, 27-31).

God distinguished between the human race and the rest of creation. He made us in his very image, with capacities far beyond those of mere animals. God was (and is) excited about us! He gave us abilities and responsibilities to reflect his own nature in all of creation. When he created us, he was proud of what he had made!

Although we have a sinful nature that came as a result of the Fall, we also must remember that we were created in the likeness of God. There is excellence and dignity inherent in being human that should cause us to ponder our potential for good as well as for bad. **Turn to page 31, Genesis 22.**

God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, "Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came." And that is what happened. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>13</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the third day.

<sup>14</sup>Then God said, "Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years. <sup>15</sup>Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth." And that is what happened. <sup>16</sup>God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, <sup>18</sup>to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>19</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>Then God said, "Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind." <sup>21</sup>So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>Then God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth."

<sup>23</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>Then God said, "Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals." And that is what happened. <sup>25</sup>God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let us make human beings\* in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the

1:26a Or man; Hebrew reads *adam*.

wild animals on the earth,\* and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created human beings\* in his own image.

In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

<sup>29</sup> Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. <sup>30</sup> And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened.

<sup>31</sup> Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

## CHAPTER 2

So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed.

<sup>2</sup> On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested\* from all his work. <sup>3</sup> And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

<sup>4</sup> This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

### *The Man and Woman in Eden*

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup> neither wild plants nor grains

1:26b As in Syriac version; Hebrew reads *all the earth*. 1:27 Or *the man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. 2:2 Or *ceased*; also in 2:3. 2:6 Or *mist*. 2:19 Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter.

were growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. <sup>6</sup> Instead, springs\* came up from the ground and watered all the land. <sup>7</sup> Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.

<sup>8</sup> Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made. <sup>9</sup> The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup> A river flowed from the land of Eden, watering the garden and then dividing into four branches. <sup>11</sup> The first branch, called the Pishon, flowed around the entire land of Havilah, where gold is found. <sup>12</sup> The gold of that land is exceptionally pure; aromatic resin and onyx stone are also found there. <sup>13</sup> The second branch, called the Gihon, flowed around the entire land of Cush. <sup>14</sup> The third branch, called the Tigris, flowed east of the land of Asshur. The fourth branch is called the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. <sup>16</sup> But the LORD God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—<sup>17</sup> except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.”

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” <sup>19</sup> So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man\* to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. <sup>20</sup> He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds

**2:2-3** This is the first mention of Sabbath rest—one day of rest in seven. By his example God encourages us to designate a portion of our lives to rest and spiritual rejuvenation. Without proper rest, it is very difficult to deal with the other matters in our lives, especially our progress in recovery.

**2:8-14** God provided a perfect environment for the first people. We often blame our outward circumstances for our difficulties. It is important to note here that in spite of their ideal surroundings, our first parents fell—they failed. Although the environments we live in can certainly add to our problems, they are never entirely at fault. We need to take responsibility for our own mistakes and failures.

**3:1-5** The account here pictures for us the process of temptation. The serpent offered something that had been forbidden by God as a very attractive option. The serpent also caused Eve to doubt God and the truth of his word. During the debate, Eve offered some halfhearted opposition, but her growing doubt in God weakened her resolve. In the end she gave in. Satan strengthened his temptation by weakening Eve’s faith in God. Staying close to God and maintaining our faith in him will weaken the power of temptation in our lives.



## ADAM & EVE

It was an ideal situation: a man and his wife living harmoniously together in a lush, beautiful garden that God had created for their pleasure. They each enjoyed a perfect relationship with God and with each other. But when Adam and Eve gave in to temptation, they overstepped their God-given boundaries and plunged the human race into sin. Harmony was broken. Shame and guilt penetrated their lives and created an invisible barrier between them and God. The consequences of their disobedience and lack of self-control are with us to this day.

Adam and Eve knew that they had gone against God's plan—a plan that was created with their best interests in mind. And the consequences of their sin followed immediately. Right away they became afraid of the God who loved them so much, and they hid from his presence. They also became ashamed of their nakedness and set out to cover themselves. The relationship between Adam and Eve began to show cracks and strains. Accusations were made. Blame was shifted. Neither of them wanted to be held accountable. Both of them refused to admit that they were wrong. Needless to say, their relationship was damaged. Their sin had separated them from each other and from God.

But the story doesn't end there. Adam and Eve stayed together in spite of the shame and guilt they felt. Their lives were marred by sin and scarred by wounds inflicted on one another. However, they faced the reality that life had to go on and began to build a new life together. And by love, commitment, and the grace of God, they persevered through life's trials.

The story of Adam and Eve is found in the opening chapters of Genesis. Adam and/or Eve are also mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:1; Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45-49; 2 Corinthians 11:3; and 1 Timothy 2:13-15.

### STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- They were the parents of the entire human race.
- They were committed to each other through the trials they faced.
- Their story provides us with the first illustration of God's grace.

### WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES:

- They were disobedient to the plan that God had revealed to them.
- They were not willing to take responsibility for their sin.
- They made excuses rather than admit the truth.
- Their actions brought sin into the world.

### LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES:

- A good marriage requires love and commitment even through tough times.
- Relationships that accept God's grace and forgiveness persevere through life's difficulties.
- Complacency is a breeding ground for temptation—be on guard against Satan's schemes.
- The mistakes of parents are often passed on to their descendants.

### KEY VERSES:

"Then God said, 'Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.' So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:26-27).

of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.

<sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs\* and closed up the opening. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup>"At last!" the man exclaimed.

"This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!  
She will be called 'woman,'  
because she was taken from 'man.'"

2:21 Or took a part of the man's side.

<sup>24</sup>This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

<sup>25</sup>Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

## CHAPTER 3

### *The Man and Woman Sin*

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

<sup>2</sup>"Of course we may eat fruit from the

trees in the garden,” the woman replied. <sup>3</sup>“It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’”

<sup>4</sup>“You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. <sup>5</sup>“God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup>The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. <sup>7</sup>At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

<sup>8</sup>When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man\* and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

<sup>10</sup>He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.”

<sup>11</sup>“Who told you that you were naked?” the LORD God asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?”

<sup>12</sup>The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God asked the woman, “What have you done?”

“The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.”

<sup>14</sup>Then the LORD God said to the serpent,

**3:8** Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter. **3:15** Or *bruise*; also in 3:15b. **3:16** Or *And though you will have desire for your husband, / he will rule over you.*

“Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild.

You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live.

<sup>15</sup> And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring.

He will strike\* your head, and you will strike his heel.”

<sup>16</sup>Then he said to the woman,

“I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.\*”

<sup>17</sup>And to the man he said,

“Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat,

the ground is cursed because of you.

All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it.

<sup>18</sup> It will grow thorns and thistles

for you, though you will eat of its grains.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat

**3:12-13** When Adam was questioned, notice that he blamed the woman for his problem. He even backhandedly blamed God by reminding God that he was the one who had given him the woman in the first place. Then Eve blamed the serpent for the problem. Passing the buck is a standard human response to guilt. But true recovery requires that we take a thorough inventory of our lives, accepting responsibility for everything we have done or failed to do.

**3:21** The very first death occurred on the same day as Adam’s and Eve’s sin; it was the death of an animal to provide a covering for their nakedness. God’s immediate provision for sin was the slaying of an innocent substitute to provide skins to clothe the guilty couple. The clothing they wore must have served as a reminder—engraving the sight of the dying animal in their minds—a picture of the terrible consequences of their sin. As we recognize the suffering we may have caused others, we also are reminded of the consequences of rejecting God’s plan for our lives.

**4:6-7** When God rejected Cain’s offering, Cain reacted with dejection and anger. God did not reject Cain for his strong feelings; he offered him an opportunity for a new start. How sad that Cain refused this second chance and instead went out to kill his brother. We need to be careful when we face obstacles to the recovery process. We need to carefully weigh the strong feelings we encounter within ourselves before acting on them. If we don’t, we may be passing up an excellent opportunity for a fresh start. God is not put off by our strong feelings. Recovery is based on God’s grace, which always offers us an opportunity to begin again.

until you return to the ground  
from which you were made.  
For you were made from dust,  
and to dust you will return.”

### **Paradise Lost: God's Judgment**

<sup>20</sup>Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live.\* <sup>21</sup>And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

<sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God said, “Look, the human beings\* have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!” <sup>23</sup>So the LORD God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made.

<sup>24</sup>After sending them out, the LORD God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Cain and Abel**

Now Adam\* had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to Cain, she said, “With the LORD’s help, I have produced\* a man!” <sup>2</sup>Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. <sup>3</sup>When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, <sup>5</sup>but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

<sup>6</sup>“Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? <sup>7</sup>You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

<sup>8</sup>One day Cain suggested to his brother, “Let’s go out into the fields.”\* And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him.

**3:20** Eve sounds like a Hebrew term that means “to give life.” **3:22** Or the man; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. **4:1a** Or the man; also in 4:25. **4:1b** Or I have acquired. Cain sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “produce” or “acquire.” **4:8** As in Samaritan Pentateuch, Greek and Syriac versions, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text lacks “Let’s go out into the fields.”

## **Coming Out of Hiding**

**BIBLE READING:** Genesis 3:6-13

### **We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

Many of us have spent our life in a state of hiding, ashamed of who we are inside. We may hide by living a double life, by using drugs or giving in to other addictions to make us feel like someone else, or by self-righteously setting ourselves above others. Step Four involves uncovering the things we have been hiding, even from ourselves.

After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, “they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. . . . Then the LORD God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’ He replied, ‘I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked’” (Genesis 3:7-10). Human beings have been covering up and hiding ever since!

Jesus consistently confronted the religious leaders about their hypocrisy. The word *hypocrite* describes a person who pretends to have virtues or qualities that he really doesn’t have. One time Jesus said to these leaders, “Hypocrites! For you are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and self-indulgence! . . . First wash the inside of the cup and the dish, and then the outside will become clean, too” (Matthew 23:25-26).

When the real person inside us comes out of hiding, we will have to deal with some dirt! Making this inventory is a good way to “wash the inside”; some of that washing may involve bathing our life with tears. It is only by uncovering the hidden parts of ourselves that we will be able to change the outer person, including our addictive/compulsive behaviors. **Turn to page 611, Nehemiah 8.**