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BIBLE**

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<b>Title</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>ISBN</b>
ESV Youth Bible	ESVxxx	978-0-564-03307-2

Typesetting and production management by Bible Society Resources Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of The British and Foreign Bible Society

BSR/2015/xxxM

Printed in China

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# HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

*Reading the Bible is different from reading any other book. So it helps to have a few suggestions on how to get started. The most important thing is to open your heart by faith and to understand that these are God's words to you. Believe that God's truth is contained in his book, and you'll discover that it has the power to transform your life.*

Getting started is the most important step, and to help you get started we've provided a 31-day Bible reading plan, as shown on page 15. This plan provides a good way to get an overview of the Bible by reading some of its best-loved key passages. Another good way to get started is to read through some of the key books in the Bible. For example, you could set aside 20 or 30 minutes a day to read through the following books, either in this order or in your own order:

*The Gospel of John* (page xxx)

*Genesis* (page xxx)

*Romans* (page xxx)



# ABOUT THE BIBLE

*In the Bible God has gone “on record” to say how much he loves us and wants us to know him. He has spoken to us about the people of Israel and about Jesus Christ.*

*We can find in the Bible answers to many of today’s questions: how can we find love and purpose, how can we best live together in society, what hope can we have for the future?*

*The Bible offers us guidance and the possibility of a new start. It is God’s written message to us.*

## HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

In the Bible God is speaking to us. He wants to draw us into relationship with himself.

## WHAT IS GOD SAYING?

The message of much of the Bible is so dear that we don’t have to worry about misunderstanding it. Take, for example, the following instruction from Micah 6:8:

*He has told you, O man, what is good;  
and what does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?*

## WHY DOES THE STYLE OF WRITING CHANGE IN DIFFERENT PLACES IN THE BIBLE?

*The Bible is a collection of many different individual books which were gathered together over a long period of time. Broadly speaking, the Bible contains six different types of literature:*

### STORY

*(for example, the Gospels, the history books, and Genesis and Exodus in the books of the Law)*

Books written in this form often give information about a specific period in the life of God's people, seen through the eyes of the writer. The detail of the story is important, but there may also be a second level of meaning underneath.

John's Gospel has many examples. For instance, when he tells of the healing of a blind man (chapter 9), John is making a point about the spiritual blindness of Jerusalem's religious leaders.

It helps to know something about the writer, the time in which he lived, and any social or political background.



### PROPHECY

*(for example, the books of the prophets, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, and the book of Revelation)*

Books written in this form often turn their attention to the political and religious concerns of their day. They are not straightforward "news reports". Instead, they often use poetic images and striking picture language.

It helps to know something of the historical and political background (for example, much of Jeremiah can be understood against the background of 2 Kings). Often, the prophets were writing when God's people were being oppressed or were in exile, and they use strange, coded language to describe those who are ill-treating them (e.g. Revelation and Daniel).

# HOW CAN I KNOW HOW EVERYTHING FITS TOGETHER?

*A story-line of the Bible will help.*

## 1 A PERFECT WORLD

The Bible opens with God's creation of the universe. Every part was made according to plan and was good. God made human beings to be like himself, to look after the world and develop it for him. They saw and talked to God in the "garden" where he placed them.

## 2 A SPOILED WORLD

God gave Adam and Eve, the first human beings, everything they needed. He placed only one restriction on them, that they were not to eat from the tree "for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Tragically, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command.

This sent shock waves through the whole creation.

First, it damaged the relationship of human beings with God, and between people. Previously, Adam and Eve had walked with God in the garden. Now they hid from him. Not long after this, Adam and Eve's son Cain murdered his brother Abel, and wrongdoing spread among the earth's growing population.

Secondly, suffering and hardship—caused both by other people and by the natural world—began to affect the creation.

## DAY 1

### A PERFECT WORLD

#### ***Genesis 1:1–2:25; Psalm 8:1–9***

Genesis 1:1–2:4a tells the story of creation. It reaches its high point when God makes human beings (1:26–28) and appoints them to manage the world on his behalf. Genesis 2:4b–25 looks at a range of human relationships: with the environment (2:15), with the animals (20:19–20), with one another (20:18–25), and with God (2:7–8, 15–18). Psalm 8 celebrates the greatness of God and the honour humans have as rulers over everything God made.

## DAY 2

### A SPOILED WORLD

#### ***Genesis 3:1–4:26***

Genesis 3 tells how Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command and how God judged them. Their eviction from the Garden of Eden and the first murder (Genesis 4) are signs of the breakdown of relationships.

## DAY 3

### JUDGMENT, RESCUE, AND REBELLION: NOAH

#### ***Genesis 6:5–9:17; 11:1–9***

The spread of sin became so serious that God decided to destroy every living creature through a flood (Genesis 6). But God told Noah to build a large boat to save his family and representatives of all animals (Genesis 7). After the flood (Genesis 8), God peopled the earth with men and women descended from Noah and his sons. But sin continued and reached a climax in the building of the tower of Babel (Genesis 11).

## DAY 4

### RECOVERY PLAN FOR CREATION: ABRAHAM

#### ***Genesis 12:1–20; 15:1–21; 17:1–27***

God's answer to the waywardness that has infected people ever since Adam and Eve's sin is Abraham (we first meet him as Abram). Through him God will eventually carry out his plans for all nations. These chapters tell the promises God made to him.



# FINDING HELP: WHO AM I?

Part of growing up is finding answers to questions like: what is important to me? What do I value? What makes me tick, and what leaves me cold? How am I different from my parents, siblings or friends? What is it that makes me “me”? And what is expected of me? The Bible gives us a helpful framework within which we can look at these questions without fear.

One of the first biblical statements is that God created us. What’s more, human beings reflect God in a way that lions and water lilies, Mount Everest and Saturn’s rings do not. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, puts it this way: ‘Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”’ (Genesis 1:26).

In other words, we don’t need to try to give meaning to our existence. It’s already there: God wanted us. And if indeed we were made in God’s image, questions like “Who am I?” or “What am I going to do with my life?” will tie in with becoming more fully what we were always meant to be: people whose lives and character reflect something of the divine.

Following on from Genesis 1:26, the Bible tells story after story about people, often ordinary people, who heard God’s call. They usually ended up taking on a special task: daunting, more often than not, and one that took their life to a whole new level. Each time the starting point was not the person’s abilities, but the voice of vocation, and their response.

Few of us will ever make history like some of the biblical characters did, but God is calling us, nonetheless. So, as you look at life ahead of you, the Bible invites you to trust that your value won’t lie in your future achievements but in the fact that God made you who you are; and the question of how you might reach your full potential will become an on-going discovery of God’s call, and how his image, placed in you, might take shape and come to life.

## OTHER HELPFUL PASSAGES:

Genesis 1; Genesis 12:1–9;  
Exodus 3:1–4:17; Ruth 1:1–18;  
1 Kings 19; Mark 2:13–17;  
Luke 5:1–11; Romans 8:26–30.

This book tells about a number of “beginnings”—the creation of the world and of the first man and woman. It also tells how God made a special covenant (agreement) with Abraham and promised to bless him and his descendants. Genesis also includes a number of stories about two of Abraham’s descendants: his grandson Jacob, who was also known as Israel, and Abraham’s great-grandson Joseph who became an important administrator and court official for the king of Egypt.



### The Creation of the World

**1** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The 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.

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

<sup>6</sup>And God said, “Let there be an expanse <sup>7</sup>in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” <sup>7</sup>And God made <sup>2</sup>the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. <sup>8</sup>And God called the expanse Heaven. <sup>3</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

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

<sup>11</sup>And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants <sup>5</sup>yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The 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. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

<sup>14</sup>And 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 sea-

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

<sup>20</sup>And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds <sup>7</sup>fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” <sup>21</sup>So 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. <sup>22</sup>And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” <sup>23</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>And 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. <sup>25</sup>And 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.

**1** Or a canopy; also verses 7, 8, 14, 15, 17, 20 **2** Or fashioned; also verse 16 **3** Or Sky; also verses 9, 14, 15, 17, 20, 26, 28, 30; 2:1 **4** Or Land; also verses 11, 12, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30; 2:1 **5** Or small plants; also verses 12, 29 **6** Or appointed times **7** Or flying things; see Leviticus 11:19–20

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man<sup>7</sup> 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.”

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

<sup>28</sup> And 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.”

<sup>29</sup> And 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.<sup>30</sup> And 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.<sup>31</sup> And God 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.<sup>2</sup> And 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.<sup>3</sup> So 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

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> When no bush of the field<sup>2</sup> was yet in the land<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>6</sup> and a mist<sup>4</sup> was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—<sup>7</sup> then 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.<sup>8</sup> And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.<sup>9</sup> And 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.

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

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,<sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat<sup>5</sup> of it you shall surely die.”

<sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for<sup>6</sup> him.”<sup>19</sup> Now out of the ground the LORD God formed<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam<sup>8</sup> there was not found a helper fit for him.<sup>21</sup> 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.<sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made<sup>9</sup> into a woman and brought her to the man.<sup>23</sup> 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.”<sup>20</sup>

**1** The Hebrew word for *man* (*adam*) is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam* **2** Or *open country* **3** Or *earth*; also verse 6 **4** Or *spring* **5** Or *when you eat* **6** Or *corresponding to*; also verse 20 **7** Or *And out of the ground the LORD God formed* **8** Or *the man* **9** Hebrew *built* **10** The Hebrew words for *woman* (*ishshah*) and *man* (*ish*) sound alike

<sup>24</sup>Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup>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, 'You <sup>1</sup> shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"

<sup>2</sup>And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>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.'" <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup>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, <sup>7</sup>she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

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

<sup>14</sup>The 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.

<sup>15</sup> I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring <sup>5</sup>and her offspring;

he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel."

<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said,

"I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;  
in pain you shall bring forth children.

Your desire shall be for <sup>6</sup> your husband, and he shall rule over you."

<sup>17</sup>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;

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

<sup>19</sup> 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."

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

<sup>22</sup>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—"

<sup>23</sup>therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. <sup>24</sup>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.

**1** In Hebrew *you* is plural in verses 1–5 **2** Or to give insight **3** Hebrew *wind* **4** In Hebrew *you* is singular in verses 9 and 11 **5** Hebrew *seed*; so throughout Genesis **6** Or *against* **7** *Eve* sounds like the Hebrew for *life-giver* and resembles the word for *living*

## Cain and Abel

**4** Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have produced<sup>1</sup> a man with the help of the LORD."<sup>2</sup> And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground.<sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground,<sup>4</sup> 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,<sup>5</sup> but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.<sup>6</sup> The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?<sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted?<sup>2</sup> And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for<sup>3</sup> you, but you must rule over it."

<sup>8</sup> Cain spoke to Abel his brother.<sup>4</sup> And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?"<sup>10</sup> And the LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.<sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.<sup>12</sup> 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."<sup>13</sup> Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear."<sup>5</sup> <sup>14</sup> 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."<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold."<sup>7</sup> And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him.<sup>16</sup> Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod,<sup>6</sup> east of Eden.

<sup>17</sup> Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch.<sup>18</sup> To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and

Methushael fathered Lamech.<sup>19</sup> And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.<sup>20</sup> Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.<sup>21</sup> His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.<sup>22</sup> Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

<sup>23</sup> Lamech said to his wives:

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
you wives of Lamech, listen to what  
I say:  
I have killed a man for wounding me,  
a young man for striking me.

<sup>24</sup> If Cain's revenge is sevenfold,  
then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."

<sup>25</sup> And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed<sup>7</sup> for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him."<sup>26</sup> To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.

## Adam's Descendants to Noah

**5** This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.<sup>2</sup> Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man<sup>8</sup> when they were created.<sup>3</sup> When Adam had lived for 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.<sup>4</sup> The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters.<sup>5</sup> Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.

<sup>6</sup> When Seth had lived for 105 years, he fathered Enosh.<sup>7</sup> Seth lived after he fathered Enosh for 807 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>8</sup> Thus all the days of Seth were 912 years, and he died.

<sup>9</sup> When Enosh had lived for 90 years, he fathered Kenan.<sup>10</sup> Enosh lived after he fathered Kenan for 815 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>11</sup> Thus all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died.

<sup>12</sup> When Kenan had lived for 70 years, he fathered Mahalalel.<sup>13</sup> Kenan lived after he fathered Mahalalel for 840 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>14</sup> Thus all the days of Kenan were 910 years, and he died.

<sup>15</sup> When Mahalalel had lived for 65 years, he fathered Jared.<sup>16</sup> Mahalalel lived after he fathered Jared for 830 years and had other sons and

**1** Cain sounds like the Hebrew for *produced*

**2** Hebrew *will there not be a lifting up* [of your face]?

**3** Or *against* **4** Hebrew; Samaritan, Septuagint,

Syriac, Vulgate add *Let us go out to the field* **5** Or

*My guilt is too great to bear* **6** Nod means *wandering*

**7** Seth sounds like the Hebrew for *he appointed*

**8** Hebrew *adam*

daughters.<sup>17</sup> Thus all the days of Mahalalel were 895 years, and he died.

<sup>18</sup> When Jared had lived for 162 years he fathered Enoch.<sup>19</sup> Jared lived after he fathered Enoch for 800 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>20</sup> Thus all the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died.

<sup>21</sup> When Enoch had lived for 65 years, he fathered Methuselah.<sup>22</sup> Enoch walked with God<sup>7</sup> after he fathered Methuselah for 300 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>23</sup> Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years.<sup>24</sup> Enoch walked with God, and he was not,<sup>2</sup> for God took him.

<sup>25</sup> When Methuselah had lived for 187 years, he fathered Lamech.<sup>26</sup> Methuselah lived after he fathered Lamech for 782 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>27</sup> Thus all the days of Methuselah were 969 years, and he died.

<sup>28</sup> When Lamech had lived for 182 years, he fathered a son<sup>29</sup> and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed, this one shall bring us relief<sup>3</sup> from our work and from the painful toil of our hands."

<sup>30</sup> Lamech lived after he fathered Noah for 595 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>31</sup> Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, and he died.

<sup>32</sup> After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

### Increasing Corruption on Earth

**6** When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them,<sup>1</sup> the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.<sup>2</sup> Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in<sup>4</sup> man for ever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."<sup>3</sup> The Nephilim<sup>5</sup> were on the earth in those days, and also afterwards, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.<sup>6</sup> And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.<sup>7</sup> So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them."<sup>8</sup> But Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD.

### Noah and the Flood

<sup>9</sup> These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.<sup>10</sup> And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence.<sup>12</sup> And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

<sup>13</sup> And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh,<sup>6</sup> for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.<sup>14</sup> Make yourself an ark of gopher wood.<sup>7</sup> Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.<sup>15</sup> This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits,<sup>8</sup> its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits.<sup>16</sup> Make a roof<sup>9</sup> for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks.

<sup>17</sup> For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.<sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.<sup>19</sup> And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female.

<sup>20</sup> Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive.<sup>21</sup> Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them."<sup>22</sup> Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

**7** Then the LORD said to Noah,<sup>1</sup> "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation.<sup>2</sup> Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals,<sup>10</sup> the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate,<sup>3</sup> and seven pairs<sup>11</sup> of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their

**1** Septuagint *pleased God* **2** Septuagint *not found* **3** Noah sounds like the Hebrew for *rest* **4** Or *My Spirit shall not contend with* **5** Or *giants* **6** Hebrew *The end of all flesh has come before me* **7** An unknown kind of tree; transliterated from Hebrew **8** A cubit was about 18 inches or 45 centimetres **9** Or *skylight* **10** Or *seven of each kind of clean animal* **11** Or *seven of each kind*

offspring alive on the face of all the earth. <sup>4</sup>For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and every living thing <sup>7</sup>that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” <sup>5</sup>And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

<sup>6</sup>Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. <sup>7</sup>And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. <sup>8</sup>Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, <sup>9</sup>two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. <sup>10</sup>And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

<sup>11</sup>In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. <sup>12</sup>And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup>On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, <sup>14</sup>they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. <sup>15</sup>They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. <sup>16</sup>And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.

<sup>17</sup>The flood continued for forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. <sup>18</sup>The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. <sup>19</sup>And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. <sup>20</sup>The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits <sup>2</sup>deep. <sup>21</sup>And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. <sup>22</sup>Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. <sup>23</sup>He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted

out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. <sup>24</sup>And the waters prevailed on the earth for 150 days.

### The Flood Subsides

**8** But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. <sup>2</sup>The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, <sup>3</sup>and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, <sup>4</sup>and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup>And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

<sup>6</sup>At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made <sup>7</sup>and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. <sup>9</sup>But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. <sup>10</sup>He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. <sup>11</sup>And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. <sup>12</sup>Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him any more.

<sup>13</sup>In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. <sup>14</sup>In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. <sup>15</sup>Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup>“Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>17</sup>Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” <sup>18</sup>So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. <sup>19</sup>Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

<sup>1</sup> Hebrew *all existence*; also verse 23 <sup>2</sup> A cubit was about 18 inches or 45 centimetres