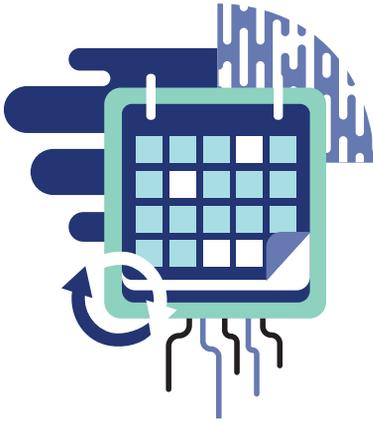


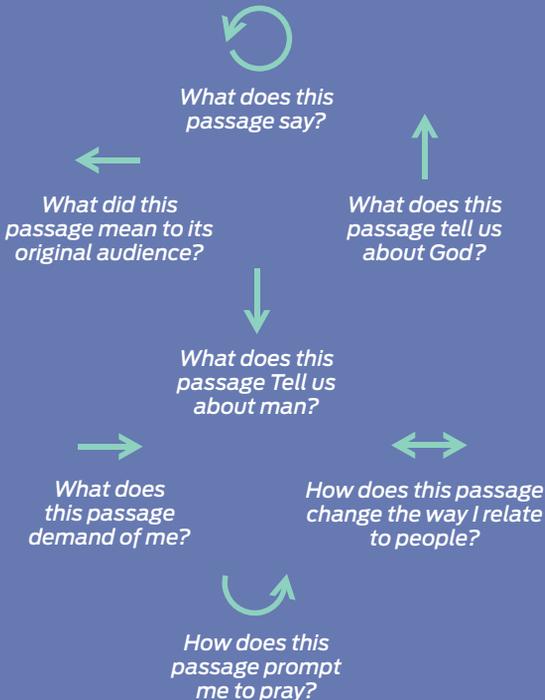
Daily Devotions



Day 1

Jeremiah 2:12-13

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



The fall shows that sin is rebellion against our loving and gracious Creator—the One who made us in His image and likeness. And yet, Adam and Eve chose to be their own authority instead of following the authority and wisdom of our loving Father. The world changed drastically from that decision forward.

Jeremiah talked about another aspect of sin in this chapter, similar to Genesis 3. These verses are essentially saying Israel sinned in two ways: They turned away from God—the One who rescued them and poured out His grace and blessing upon them—and they sought joy and fulfillment in other things.

List some things Israel pursued other than God. What does the text say about these other things Israel pursued?

What are some things you are currently pursuing above joy and fulfillment in God?

The text is clear that these other pursuits failed Israel. They didn't deliver on their promise to satisfy the Israelites' thirst and fulfillment, because only God can do that.

Genesis 4:1-16

The story of Cain and Abel follows the account of Adam and Eve's fall into sin. This story displays the depths of depravity within the human heart that resulted from the first act of rebellion.

Imagine Adam and Eve's mindset during this tragic event. Sure, they already knew all too well the consequences of their actions in the garden—they suddenly knew shame, relational conflict with each other and with the world around them, separation from God, and so on. But then, they witnessed one of their sons murder his own brother.

Reread Genesis 3. What are some common themes that come up between chapters 3 and 4:1-16?

How do these stories reflect your own battle with temptation?

Genesis 4:1-6; Hebrews 11:4

Maybe you're wondering, "Why weren't Cain and his offering accepted?" Throughout the Bible, grain sacrifices were considered acceptable sacrifices, so it wasn't due to the type of sacrifice Cain offered. The problem doesn't seem to be with amount he offered either, rather something about Cain himself. We know this because of what the Bible says.

First of all, God approached Cain and asked, "If you do what is right, won't you be accepted?" (Gen. 4:7). Then, the author of Hebrews explained that Abel's offering was accepted by God because he offered it in faith, unlike Cain (11:4).

What happens when you only focus only on the behavioral aspect of sin and not on what takes place within the heart?

Cain's sin began internally—with jealousy and anger—and eventually he acted on those internal desires when he murdered his brother. If we only focus on sinful behavior and never address our broken hearts—where the sinful actions begin—nothing changes. We can easily become like the Pharisees who tried to look good on the outside but were dead on the inside.

Genesis 4:1-16

If we rushed through this story, we might miss the beauty of God's intervention. We might think humanity was a lost cause even then, but that's not what God is like. God is not indifferent to sin, because God is not indifferent to humanity. Love intervenes, which is why God approached Cain to warn him and offer him a way of escape from temptation.

How does God warn Cain and communicate His love and grace to sinful humanity?

Have you ever sensed God offering you a way out of temptation?

The God who shows mercy is the God who will keep His promises. God promised a son who would crush the serpent's head. With Cain in rebellion and Abel dead, the situation seemed dire.

God gave Adam and Eve a son named Seth. Through Seth's lineage, Eve's promised Son would be born four thousand years later. At the cross, blood would be shed once again, not by sin; instead, Jesus' blood was shed for sin.

Genesis 5

Like Adam and Eve in Eden, we doubt God's goodness and His provision in our lives. We are afraid we will miss out unless we take control of our situation. We have made our happiness, pleasure, and freedom most important. And just like Adam and Eve, our sin exposes our desperate need of salvation from sin and ourselves, and shows our need for God's grace. We see this need in Adam and Eve. We see it in Cain. We see it in Lamech (Gen. 4:23-24). We see it in generation after generation that died as a result of sin (Gen. 5). Only when we look to God as the ultimate source of security and significance can we be freed to live as we were meant to.

What do you spend your first and best on? What gets priority when it comes to your time, talents, possessions, and money?