

Everyday FAITH Family Page

Old Testament 1

Law/Gospel

God requires that I believe that He is the only true God, the Creator and Sustainer of the world.

God gives me faith to believe that He created the earth and heavens, and He continues to provide me with all that I need to sustain this body and life, including forgiveness for my sins, through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Bible Words

By [Christ] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.

Colossians 1:16

Dig Deeper

To read more about creation and science, consider these resources:

- *In the Beginning, God: Creation from God's Perspective* by Joel Heck, © 2011 Concordia Publishing House
- *What Your Atheist Professor Doesn't Know (But Should)* by Stephen Joseph Williams, © 2009–14 RFH
- *The Cell's Design: How Chemistry Reveals the Creator's Artistry*, Fazale Rana, © 2008 Reasons to Believe; published by Baker Books

God Creates the World

Genesis 1:1–2:3

Observations about Genesis 1:1–2:3

In the beginning, God created the universe out of nothing (Latin: *ex nihilo*). Consider these observations about the Genesis account.

- The oldest copies of Genesis are written in Hebrew. The Hebrew verb for “create” is used in the Bible only to describe God’s work, never human’s, affirming that only God truly creates out of nothing.
- The plural noun translated as “us” in Genesis 1:26 (“Let Us make man in Our image”) points to our triune God’s involvement in creation, as affirmed in other Bible verses (John 1:1–3; Colossians 1:16; Genesis 1:2).
- God first created light on the first day and separated light from darkness.
- The order that God created creatures closely matches scientific suggestions: water creatures, birds; livestock, creeping things, beasts, humans.
- Genesis shows God’s organized, orderly work, not chaos, as some theorize. Nature maintains rhythms and patterns. Our cells use elaborate systems, intricate sequences, and complex combinations of proteins, bacteria, and other substances. Our world, its creatures and its systems, are too complex and interrelated to erupt or evolve by accident.
- Roger Penrose, British mathematician and co-worker of Stephen Hawking, calculated the probability of an orderly universe coming out of the big bang as 1 in 10^{123} . However, probability theorists say anything less than 1 in 10^{50} is impossible. (Source: Williams, p. 126. See Dig Deeper.)
- The Holy Spirit leads us to believe God’s creation account in Genesis 1 as true. Christians believe it by faith (Hebrews 11:3) because God said it in His true Holy Word, the Bible, which is without errors.

Genesis 1 is a historical account, not a science textbook, myth, or poetry (as in creation imagery in Psalm 104:5–9). God’s creation shows a complex, finely tuned world, intricate physical bodies, and a vast universe (natural revelation). Based on God’s Word, we believe (conclude/trust) that God created the universe (special revelation).

Prayer

Creator God, thank You for creating a place of wonder and beauty for us to live in and for sustaining and caring for us every day.

Amen.

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God appoints me as a caretaker of His creation and expects me to take care of it for His glory and the good of others. **God provides me with all good things for this life and forgives me for Jesus' sake when I put myself above Him and His creation or when I misuse or neglect my vocation to rule the earth properly.**

Bible Words

I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Psalm 139:14

Just Joking

Where is the first math problem in the Bible?
When God told Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28).

God Creates Adam and Eve

Genesis 1:26–2:25

This second creation account overlaps the big picture in Genesis 1, offering details about Day 6, when God created people in His image.

God made Adam from dust wet by a mist, or mud. *Yatsar*, the Hebrew word for "to be formed" is related to the word for "potter," a person who shapes wet clay into useful items. The Lord breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and man became a living creature.

Not wanting Adam to be alone, God made a helper for him. He caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs, and made a woman. The two became one flesh. The first woman came from man, but every person since has come from a woman.

What Is the Image of God?

The Hebrew word *tselem*, translated as "image," means more than physical resemblance. God made people to reflect His character and virtues as His representatives in the world and stewards of the earth.

The first people reflected God's qualities, such as perfection, sinlessness, creativity, and contentedness. They did not fear death because they ate from the tree of life. Most of all, God gave them the will and knowledge to please Him, which was lost when sin came into the world.

Since then, we can know the Lord only as the Spirit works through God's Word and Sacraments to give us faith.

God's image is being restored in Christians. As the Spirit works in us through God's Word, we become more like Jesus, the image of God. On this side of heaven, we will always fight our sinful nature and won't be fully remade into the image of Christ until we are perfectly renewed in the resurrection.

Prayer

Holy Spirit, work through Your Word and Sacraments to give us faith in Christ our Savior and renew Your image in us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



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Because I sin, I will die. **God sent His Son, Jesus, to crush sin, death, and the devil, and through Him, God forgives my sins and gives me eternal life.**

Bible Words

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

1 Timothy 1:15

Fun Facts

We do not know the exact location of the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2 says a river flowing out of Eden divided into four rivers: Tigris, Euphrates, Pishon, and Gihon. Today, Iraq and Turkey have rivers called the Tigris and the Euphrates, but we cannot know for certain that these are the same rivers from Genesis 2. River locations may have changed significantly.

Still, some scholars locate the garden near the place where the two rivers meet before flowing into the Persian Gulf. The Bible usually calls this region Babylon.

Just Joking

To what question could Eve never say yes?

When Adam asked, "Did you hear this joke from anyone else?"

Sin Enters the World

Genesis 3

God filled the Garden of Eden with "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food" (Genesis 2:9); He planted two unusual trees in the center: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Both trees grew fruit, but the Bible does not say what kind.

Adam and Eve ate fruit from the tree of life and received its benefits. But the Lord said, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17).

At the invitation of the crafty serpent, Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord, sinned, and ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As God said, they knew evil and eventually died. Sin and death resulted for all the people who lived after them.

To prevent Adam and Eve from eating from the tree of life and struggling with sin forever, God expelled them from the garden. He placed a cherubim and a flaming sword to guard the way to this special tree.

But God did not leave His people without hope. He promised to send an offspring of Eve who would defeat the devil (Genesis 3:15). This is the first promise of the Messiah, who would save God's people and set them free from sin and death.

Jesus is that promised Messiah. The cross where Jesus died became our tree of life. Through Jesus' death on the cross, God grants us forgiveness of sin, new life, and salvation. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Prayer

Jesus our Savior, give us faith to believe in You and trust You for all things, especially forgiveness of sin and eternal life, gifts we receive only from You. In Your name we pray. Amen.

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I sin when I trust myself or my own deeds to please God. **God loves me and sent His Son, Jesus, to be the perfect sacrifice for my sin. Through faith in Him, I am marked as God's child and receive His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.**

Bible Words

God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance.
Romans 2:4

Just Joking

Where does the Bible talk about baseball?

The Bible tells about "the big inning" (Genesis 1:1). Eve stole first; Adam stole second (Genesis 3:6). Cain struck out Abel (Genesis 4:8). The Prodigal Son came home (Luke 15:20). The Giant lost (1 Samuel 17:4, 50). The Angels announced the end result (Luke 2:13-14).

Prayer

Lord God, keep us in Your grace in Christ Jesus, now and forever. In His name we pray. Amen.

Cain and Abel

Genesis 4:1-16

Cain and Abel's conflict shows the original sibling rivalry, but it also shows the tragic result of sin in the world: murder and death. Since Adam and Eve sinned, all people are born in sin and all die.

Adam and Eve probably taught their children to worship God, but conflict began when Cain and Abel brought offerings to the Lord. Cain brought some of the harvest from his work as a farmer. Abel brought the firstborn from his flock. The offerings eventually became known as "firstfruits."

The Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but not for Cain. Hebrews 11:4 explains, "By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts."

Cain became angry and took it out on his brother, killing him in a field. Still, God cared for Cain. Although He made Cain leave the family and wander the earth, God put a mark on him to protect him.

Sadly, Cain "went away from the presence of the LORD" (Genesis 4:16).

Thankfully, the Holy Spirit gives us life in God's presence, the grace of Christ our Savior, and forgiveness of sins through His Word and Sacraments (Ephesians 2:18-22).

Firstfruit Offerings

Firstfruits refer to the first and best portion of the many gifts the Lord gives us. By offering firstfruits to the Lord, worshipers acknowledge that everything we have belongs to the Lord. He gives us His gifts to use and take care of. In thanks, we return the firstfruits to Him.

Yet, the gifts do not make offerings worthy in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord judges the heart of the person bringing the offering; the offering demonstrates the faith in God of the person who brings it.

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God used water in a flood to drown sinful mankind. **In Baptism, God uses water to drown my sins, granting me eternal life through His Son, Jesus.**

Bible Words

In the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few . . . were brought safely through water. Baptism . . . now saves you . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 3:20–21

Fun Facts

Made to float, not necessarily to sail, Noah's ark had three decks, many rooms, a roof, and a door in one side. Made of gopher wood covered with pitch, it measured 300 × 50 × 30 cubits or 450 × 75 × 45 feet. (A cubit is about 18 inches, the length from the inside of the elbow to the wrist.) People probably wondered about the intentions of such a large, odd-looking creation.

Just Joking

Did you know Noah took money on the ark?

Noah took a buck and doe, a duck with a bill, a frog with a green back, and a skunk with a scent.

Noah and the Flood

Genesis 6:1–9:17

Genesis 6 reports a distorted view of life that developed because of sin. God-believing sons of Adam's tribe married women from Cain's tribe, valuing physical attractiveness and strength over faith in God. This showed their children that physical aspects mattered most and gave the impression that faith was optional.

The Lord saw the resulting wickedness, evil intentions, corruption, and violence; it grieved His heart. Regretting He made humans, the Lord decided to wipe out all living creatures. Only Noah walked with the Lord (6:8–9).

By faith, Noah, his wife, three sons, and their wives built the ark as God said. Later, God brought animals and birds to the ark, to keep them alive and safe while God destroyed the world through the flood.

Seven days after they entered the ark, rain began to fall; it fell for forty days. In addition, "fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened" (7:11–12). Over twenty feet of water covered the highest mountains. Everything with the breath of life died except those in the ark. After forty days, the torrent stopped.

God sent wind to dry out the land, and the water subsided. After 150 days, the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat, but it took more than 100 more days to see the mountains. Just shy of a year after the flood started, Noah opened the door and saw dry ground. The next month, God told Noah to leave the ark with his family and animals.

With thanksgiving, Noah built an altar and sacrificed to the Lord. God promised to sustain the seasons and never again use a flood to destroy the earth. He made a covenant with Noah that included the rainbow as a sign of His promise.

Prayer

Lord God, Creator and Sustainer of life, keep us in Your grace in Christ our Savior today and forever. In His name we pray. Amen.

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In my sin, I doubt that God can do what He promises and do not trust Him. **God in His mercy carries out His promises and gives me faith in and through Jesus to trust Him.**

Bible Words

[The Lord said,] I have called you by name, you are Mine.
Isaiah 43:1

Quotable

Righteous describes “a person in a right relationship with God, trusting God’s promised salvation and living by the covenant promise” (*The Lutheran Study Bible*, p. 843).

Just Joking

How do we know that Abraham was smart?
Because he knew a Lot.
(His nephew was named Lot.)

God’s Covenant with Abram

Genesis 12:1–9; 15:1–6; 17

God plucked Abram and his family out of idolatry, calling them to follow Him spiritually and physically. Originally from Ur of the Chaldeans in ancient Babylonia, Abraham’s father Terah worshiped other gods (Joshua 24:2). Terah set out to move to the land of Canaan with his family. Instead, they settled in Haran, a town on the way.

From there, God called Abram to follow Him when Abram was seventy-five years old. The Lord led him to Canaan.

In Genesis 12:2–3, God made seven promises to Abram: “[1] I will make of you a great nation, [2] and I will bless you [3] and make your name great, [4] so that you will be a blessing. [5] I will bless those who bless you, [6] and him who dishonors you I will curse, and [7] in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Abram “believed the LORD, and He counted it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6).

God began to fulfill these promises during Abram’s life and ultimately fulfilled them in the Messiah, Jesus our Savior, first promised to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15).

God promised Abram he would become a great nation. Imagine what this meant to an old man with no children! Only God could make and keep this promise. God blessed Abram with the birth of a son; later, God’s Son, Jesus, was born from his family.

The name of Abram, our spiritual father, became great. He blessed many as he trusted God’s promises to bring the Savior into the world through him and his descendants. God blesses us all through Abram, because his descendant Jesus came to save us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. “If you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise” (Galatians 3:29).

Prayer

Thank You, Lord, for keeping Your promises to Abram and to us, His children and Yours through Baptism into Your family. Amen.

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I sin by doubting God's Word and promises, thinking He cannot do what He says. **As God's child, I have nothing to fear because God is faithful and His Word is true. He has kept His promise to send His Son, Jesus, to be my Savior, and through Him, He gives me the joy of His salvation.**

Bible Words

Is anything too hard for the LORD?
Genesis 18:14

Fun Fact

After leaving Abraham and Sarah, the two angels went to Sodom, where they rescued Abraham's nephew Lot and his family before God destroyed that city with fire.

Connections

In the New Testament, scholars translate the Greek word *Kyrios* as "Lord." From this Greek word we take the title of the Kyrie, a portion of the liturgy in which we say or sing, "Lord, have mercy upon us."

Abraham's Visitors from Heaven

Genesis 18:1–15; 21:1–7

Three visitors suddenly appeared to Abraham as he sat at his tent door in the heat of the day. The Bible identifies one visitor as "the LORD" (Yahweh) and the other two as angels (18:1; 19:1).

The visitors came to affirm God's earlier promise to give Abraham and Sarah a son. The day of the earlier promise, ninety-nine-year-old Abram laughed at the prospect of his eighty-nine-year-old wife giving birth. This day, it was Sarah's turn to laugh. The Lord reaffirmed His promise, even though Abraham and Sarah thought their age ruled them out.

Because of these reactions, the Lord told the couple to name their baby Isaac, which means "laughter." They did so when their son was born the next year, a true miracle baby of people past their childbearing years.

"The LORD" in Flesh

In Scripture, the words "the Lord" refer to God. Because Hebrew and Greek use several different words to refer to "God," Bible translators use different English words as well. God's name Yahweh (or YHWH), is shown as "the LORD" with small capitals instead of lowercase letters.

In God's Old Testament appearances to His people, the writers use the words "the LORD" to identify God appearing as a human. This foreshadows the time when God sent His Son to earth, not just looking like a man, but born as a true man to live among His people.

In addition, context around the phrase "the angel of the LORD" sometimes refers to God Himself (e.g., Genesis 16:7–11; Genesis 22:11–12). Some Bible scholars believe that "the angel of the LORD" appearances were actually the Logos, the Word—Jesus Christ—appearing to God's people in His godly state before He took on flesh as a baby in the womb of Mary.

Prayer

Christ our Lord, thank You for taking on flesh and becoming human. Thank You for paying for our sins by dying on the cross and giving new life by rising from the dead. Keep us in this new life You give and help us follow You every day. In Your name we pray. Amen.

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God requires a payment for my sin. **God sent His own Son, Jesus, to be sacrificed in payment for my sin.**

Bible Words

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Connections

Altars occupy a central position in the sanctuary of churches today. An altar serves three purposes in Christian worship. (1) It reminds us that Jesus, the Lamb of God who died on the altar of the cross, is God's sacrifice to save us from our sins. (2) It symbolizes God's presence as the pastor and people offer prayers and praise to Him. (3) It serves as a table to celebrate and receive the Lord's Supper.

In the Lord's Supper, also called the Sacrament of the Altar, we receive Christ's body and blood with the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins.

We find the Lord and His gifts where His Word is preached and where we receive His Sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Abraham and Isaac

Genesis 21:1–7; 22:1–19

As promised, God gave Abraham and Sarah a baby. Abraham was one hundred years old; Sarah was ninety. How they must have loved this son whom God had first promised to give them long ago!

God tested Abraham's love in a way He never asked of anyone else. The Lord commanded Abraham to offer Isaac as a burnt offering on a nearby mountain. Not questioning how God would keep His other promises to give many descendants through Isaac, Abraham trusted God.

Hebrews 11:17–19 explains, "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, 'Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.' He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back."

Speaking this faith to Isaac, Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb" (Genesis 22:8). And so He did. After tying up Isaac, Abraham raised a knife to kill him, but the angel of the Lord called out, saying, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me" (22:12).

This event points to God's only Son coming to earth to be "the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). God gave up His only Son, Jesus, to *atone* for our sins on the cross and make us "at one" with God. Jesus died to set us free from sin. He rose from the dead to declare victory over death and the devil. In Jesus, God gives us "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7)

Prayer

O Christ, the Lamb of God, have mercy on us. Give us Your peace. Amen.

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God wants me to trust Him for all that I need. **God provides all that I need and gives me forgiveness, life, and salvation through His Son.**

Bible Words

The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Psalm 145:15–16

Fun Facts

- Camels can drink up to twenty gallons of water at a time!
- Baby camels are born without humps.
- Camel mothers kick their babies soon after birth to make them get up. In the wild, this protects them from predators.
- Babies can run within hours of birth.
- Camels live in social groups that travel the deserts together in search of food and water.
- Camels played such an important role in Arabian culture that there are over 160 words for “camel” in the Arabic language.
- Asian camels have two humps. Arabian camels have only one.

Isaac and Rebekah

Genesis 24

After Sarah died, Abraham did not want their son Isaac to marry a local girl, a likely idolater. When Isaac was forty years old, Abraham sent his most trusted servant to their previous home to find a wife for Isaac.

With Abraham’s assurance that God would make his mission succeed, the trusted one set out to find a wife from among Abraham’s relatives. In faith, while standing by a well in Haran, the servant asked God to show him the right woman by having her offer him a drink and also offer to water his camels. Before he finished speaking, Rebekah approached the servant and did these things.

Kind, hospitable, strong, hardworking, and friendly, Rebekah became even more perfect when the servant realized she was related to Abraham. She was the granddaughter of his brother Nahor.

Hearing the servant’s story and receiving the gifts Abraham sent, her family and Rebekah herself consented to marry Isaac without delay. Rebekah probably never saw her family again, but she and Isaac built a good life together.

From these people, as promised, God brought His only Son, Jesus, into the world to become our Savior. Jesus gave Himself up for God’s family, cleansing us by the waters of Holy Baptism and making us holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:25–27).

Marriage Customs

Most marriages in Bible times were arranged by parents. This time, although Rebekah’s father and brother consented to her marriage, they also asked if she agreed.

Rebekah took “her young women” (Genesis 24: 61), probably servants and her childhood nurse Deborah (35:8). Isaac loved her, and she comforted him after his mother’s death.

Prayer

*Lord God, lead our family and show us how to serve You with joy.
In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.*

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God does not want me to lie and deceive others, but to trust Him and follow His way. **Because of His Son, Jesus, God forgives all my sins and promises to work all things together for my good.**

Bible Words

We know that for those who love God all things work together for good.
Romans 8:28

From the Catechism

In the Third Petition of the Lord's Prayer, we pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

What does this mean? The good and gracious will of God is done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

How is God's will done? God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

Luther's Small Catechism, The Lord's Prayer.

Jacob and Esau

Genesis 25:19–34; 27:1–40

Scripture reports that the contentious relationship of Rebekah and Isaac's twins began in the womb. Esau was born first, but Jacob grasped his heel and was born soon after.

Common ground was hard to find. Esau became a skillful hunter who enjoyed being outdoors. Jacob, a quiet man, preferred staying close to home. Esau became Isaac's favorite, while Rebekah favored Jacob.

A pot of lentil stew showed their ongoing conflict. Arriving home hungry and exhausted, Esau asked Jacob for some stew he had made. Jacob agreed, but only if Esau sold him his birthright, which included the first-born's right to a double inheritance, family leadership, and the blessing to carry God's covenant promises.

Can you imagine selling such a valuable gift for a bowl of soup? Esau did. His actions show careless disrespect for his family and God's covenant.

Later, Rebekah and Jacob conspired to steal the firstborn blessing Isaac intended for Esau. Esau wept when he discovered their treachery. He received a lesser blessing and hated his brother Jacob. Rebekah talked Isaac into sending Jacob to her brother Laban's house in Haran.

This account demonstrates that people in the Bible struggled with sin and its destruction just as we do. Yet, from this family of sinners, God brought His Son, Jesus, into the world to save us from sin's devastation.

Paying for our sins through His death on the cross, Jesus reconnects us to our loving and merciful heavenly Father. God offers forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all who believe in Jesus our Savior.

Prayer

Lord God, keep us in the one true faith in Christ our Savior, and empower us to trust You to bring good from everything that happens in our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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I sin when I think God does not care for me or has left me alone.

God promises in His Word never to leave me. His gracious love for me, revealed through His Son, Jesus, moves my heart to worship and praise Him.

Bible Words

[God says,] "I am with you and will keep you wherever you go."
Genesis 28:15

Fun Facts: Angels

- *Angel* means "messenger" and describes what angels do. God sends angels to serve His people and do His perfect and holy will (Hebrews 1:14).
- Angels are spirits without physical bodies. Scripture often reports that they appear in human, or at least recognizable, form.
- Angels are not human. And people do not become angels when they die.
- Although angels are powerful and intelligent, they are not divine, all-knowing, or all-powerful. Only God is, and we pray only to Him, not to angels.
- God sends angels to protect believers (Psalm 91:11–12).
- Jesus said angels do not marry (Matthew 22:30). They do not die.

Jacob's Dream

Genesis 27:41–28:22

The Lord God cares for His children even when we experience the consequences of sin, as we see in this account about Jacob. Escaping the ire of Esau, his twin, Jacob traveled to Haran to take shelter in the home of his mother's brother Laban.

Stopping to sleep, God appeared to Jacob in a dream. Jacob saw a ladder set up on earth with its top in heaven. Angels ascended and descended on the ladder.

At the top of the ladder, the Lord Himself appeared and reaffirmed the promises first made to Abraham: He will give the land of Canaan to Jacob and his offspring and bless all the families of earth through Jacob's offspring. God also promised to watch over Jacob and bring him back home to this land.

When he woke, Jacob felt awestruck. He marked the place with a pillar and called it Bethel, which means "house of God." With thankfulness, He vowed to trust the Lord as His God and rely on Him to care for him.

Jesus referenced Jacob's dream when speaking to Nathanael. He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man" (John 1:51).

The ladder in Jacob's dream showed a bridge between heaven and earth. Jesus, as true God and true man, is the bridge between God and humankind. By His suffering, death, and resurrection, Jesus reconnected sinners to God. He provides eternal blessings for all who trust in Him.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, be with us wherever we go. Help us keep our eyes on You, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before You endured the cross. In Your name we pray. Amen (Hebrews 12:2).

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I sin when I lie or deceive others.

In spite of my sin, God blesses me with my family and all that I need and forgives me for the sake of His own Son, Jesus.

Bible Words

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.
Jeremiah 29:11

Fun Facts

Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel, but with some variations.

- A listing of the twelve tribes generally omits two sons.
- Jacob blessed Joseph's sons as his own, making Manasseh and Ephraim into tribes, but Joseph was not counted as a separate tribe.
- God set apart the tribe of Levi as priests and temple workers. They lived among all the tribes, not in their own separate group.
- The twelve tribes were Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, Manasseh, and Ephraim.

Jacob's Family

Genesis 29:1–30:24

God kept Jacob in His grace and continued to bless him. Jacob safely arrived at his Uncle Laban's house, where he quickly fell in love with Laban's daughter Rachel.

Jacob agreed to work for Laban for seven years as a bride-price for Rachel. Jacob prospered and so did Laban. When the wedding day arrived, however, Laban tricked Jacob and married him to his older daughter Leah. Incensed, Jacob confronted Laban, who said it was customary for the older daughter to marry first. Laban agreed to give Rachel to Jacob as a wife in a week if he worked another seven years for her bride-price.

And so began a twisted tale of sister rivalry that resulted in at least thirteen children. When the sisters could not conceive, they gave their maids to Jacob to have children in their names. The result? Twelve sons and a daughter named Dinah.

As Jacob had vowed, he trusted the Lord, and God surely blessed him and his work. Jacob prospered. Both he and Laban became rich men. Twenty years passed before Jacob decided to go home to his family in Canaan.

Through these children, God grew Jacob's family into a large nation. Through this family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God brought His Son, Jesus, into the world.

"In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Galatians 3:26–29).

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for making us members of Your family through Baptism and faith so that we may be heirs of all the promises you made to Abraham. In Your name we pray. Amen.

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Everyday FAITH Family Page

Old Testament 1

Law/Gospel

Broken families and failed friendships are the result of sin. **Jesus' forgiveness restores my broken relationship with God and can heal my broken earthly relationships as well.**

Bible Words

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.
Ephesians 4:32

From the Catechism

In the Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, we pray, "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

What does this mean? We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

Luther's Small Catechism, Part 3, The Lord's Prayer

Esau Forgives Jacob

Genesis 31:3; 32-33

After twenty years, Jacob came home, bringing his wives, children, servants, and animals.

Jacob sent messengers to Esau, hoping to find favor with his brother. When the messengers returned with word that Esau and four hundred men were coming to meet them, Jacob felt very afraid. He turned to the Lord in prayer, asking Him to remember His covenant with His people and spare Jacob and his family from Esau's fury.

Jacob sent gifts of sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys for Esau ahead of his family, hoping to appease him. How surprised Jacob must have been when Esau ran to meet him, hugged and kissed him, and welcomed him home. Both brothers wept. What a welcome! What a joyful reunion!

Esau refused the gifts Jacob offered, saying he had enough. But Jacob insisted, saying, "If I have found favor in your sight, accept these presents. Seeing your face is like seeing the face of God, and you accepted me." Although the Bible does not record Esau's words of forgiveness, his actions show that he forgave Jacob. What a remarkable outcome for the brothers!

Perhaps you have experienced conflicts with friends or family members and struggle with forgiving others. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught us to ask God to forgive us. Forgiveness is a gift God gives us in His mercy and because of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross for sinners. And the Bible says we should forgive others as the Lord forgives us (Colossians 3:13).

If you struggle with forgiving others, ask the Lord to change your attitude, give you gratitude for His forgiveness, and give you the ability to forgive. Jesus promised that God will always give these kinds of good gifts of the Holy Spirit to us (Luke 11:13).

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for forgiving our sins by Your grace. Fill us with kindness and the ability to forgive others as You forgive us, freely and with great joy. In Your name we pray. Amen.

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