

Know
Your
Bible
from A to Z

Jim George



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Introduction

Have you ever wondered about some background fact while you were reading a passage of Scripture? Or, while working a lesson for a Bible study, have you ever wanted to know more about some passing bit of information?

Well, those things happen to me a lot! I love digging into the behind-the-scenes facts of what I'm reading in the Bible. And that's part of the reason I wrote this book about the facts of the Bible—facts that I, too, am curious about knowing for my own spiritual growth!

Another reason for this book is to complement *The Bare Bone Bible® Handbook* and *10 Minutes to Knowing the Men and Women of the Bible*. When I finished writing those two books, it was suggested to me that these bare bones treatments of the *books* of the Bible and the *people* of the Bible could be supplemented by many interesting and helpful *facts* for anyone who desires to know more about the Bible.

That's why *Know Your Bible from A to Z* was written—to encourage you to expand your knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the Bible and its message. As you glance through this book you'll notice that the topics are laid out in alphabetical order from A to Z. This will allow you to use the book as a “quick reference” while you're reading and studying your Bible. And, because of the many “Life Lessons” and “Did you know...?” features throughout the book, you can also read it like an inspirational devotional. Either way, like reading your Bible, there's no wrong way to use this book.

Obviously, due to the intentionally brief treatment of each entry, some information has been omitted. This doesn't mean the excluded

material is unimportant. It just means that when you want to dig deeper on a given topic, you'll want to refer to more comprehensive works. Your desire to know more will fulfill my goal for you and me—the goal of getting more involved in understanding the Bible and God's many messages to us.

I'm praying for your growth in God's grace and in knowledge,

Jim George

Know Your Bible from A to Z

A

Aaron

Meet Aaron, the brother of Moses and the first high priest of Israel. God had Aaron serve as Moses' spokesman because Moses claimed he was slow of speech. Unfortunately, Aaron's behavior did not always honor God. In one instance, while Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments—one of which was to have no other gods before God—the people urged Aaron to make a god to worship.

What did Aaron do? He gave in. He collected gold from the people and made a golden calf. His excuse to Moses was that he couldn't resist the people's pressure. He claimed he took the gold from them, threw it into the fire, and out came a calf! Later, Aaron failed again when God told him and Moses to speak to a rock and water would flow from it. Moses, with apparent approval from Aaron, struck the rock instead of speaking to it. Because of this act of disobedience, Aaron died at Mt. Hor without entering the land of Canaan—the Promised Land.

No leader is perfect, but for the most part Aaron followed God and served Him by using the skills and abilities God gave him.¹

A Life Lesson from Aaron

Living in the Shadow

According to the custom of the day, Aaron, as the older brother, should have been the leader of Israel instead of his younger brother, Moses. But God chose Moses instead. The result? Aaron spent the rest of his days in the shadow of his younger brother. Aaron had his shortcomings, yet he shines as an example of a strong team player, co-laborer,

and assistant to the person God designated as the leader of His people. Are you a team player in the ministry of your church? Can you allow others to lead while you follow with a servant's heart? Do you delight in assisting those God has called to lead? God used both Aaron and Moses to lead His people. As He did with Aaron, God wants to use you to come alongside others to see that His work gets done.

Abel

The second son of Adam and Eve, Abel was the younger brother of Cain. When the brothers offered sacrifices to God, He was pleased with Abel's sacrifice but had no regard for Cain's offering. Out of jealousy, Cain murdered Abel in cold blood. Abel died for obediently offering to God what was acceptable and lives forever as an example of righteousness and faith (Hebrews 11:4). (For Abel's story, see Genesis 4:1-8.)

A Life Lesson from Abel

Offering What Is Acceptable

Our devotion for God is measured by the offerings we bring to Him, and the attitude behind the offerings. Abel possessed a heart of faith and a deep respect for God. Therefore he gladly offered God what was pleasing and acceptable. When you give—whether it's your time, your energy, your possessions, or your money—is it with a joyful heart? Do you give because you have to or because you want to? And do you give your best? No one can outgive God, so give God what is acceptable...and give it from your heart.

Abram/Abraham

Abraham (meaning "father of a multitude") is one of the most

important figures in the Bible. He was the first of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), the father of the Israelite nation, from which came the Jewish people. Known initially as Abram (“exalted father”), God told him to leave his own country and go to another land. God promised to bless Abraham, make him a great nation, and make him a blessing to all the families of the earth. How did Abraham respond to such an order? He took his wife, Sarah (initially named Sarai), and left all that he had known to follow God into the unknown. (See Genesis 11:26–17:5; 1 Chronicles 1:27; Nehemiah 9:7.)



The Travels of Abraham

God called Abraham to leave Ur and go to Canaan.
En route, Abraham stayed at Haran.

God made another important promise to Abraham, which was the promise of a son from his barren wife, Sarah—a son who would produce nations, kings, and peoples. In response to God’s promise, Abraham fell on his face and laughed, wondering how he and his wife—being as old as they were—could possibly have a child. For 25 years Abraham waited for the promised son. His time of waiting was a time of testing

and strengthening his faith and trust in God as he aged to 100 and Sarah, well past the age of childbearing, became 90. At last, through a miracle, Isaac—meaning “laughter”—was born! God, as always, faithfully fulfilled His promise. (See Genesis 17:15-19; 21:1-7.)

In the New Testament we also read about Abraham. Jesus mentioned Abraham in one of His parables, and Paul referred to Abraham in his discussion of justification by faith apart from works. (See Luke 16:19-31; Romans 4; Galatians 3:6-9.)

A Life Lesson from Abraham

Obedience Brings Blessing

Abraham was a man who obeyed God. Abraham was told by God to leave his country and go to Palestine. He was told where to go and what to do...and he did it. What is your level of obedience to God? How compliant are you to God's commands and instructions?

If you're having a problem with doing what God asks, expects, and requires, acknowledge your weakness. Act to exercise and strengthen the muscle of obedience in the little things. Then, when some seemingly impossible challenge comes along, you can respond like Abraham. You can quickly, quietly, and without question obey God.

God's blessing awaited Abraham on the other side of every act of obedience. And the same is true for you. Don't miss out on God's blessings by not following and obeying Him.

Adam

Adam was the first man. God formed Adam (from the Hebrew word *adam*, meaning “mankind”) from the dust of the ground and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. God also put trees in the garden—including the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He then told Adam he could eat freely from every

tree of the garden *except* the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He explained to Adam that if or when he ate of that tree, on that day he would die.

After Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate from the forbidden tree, God came to the rescue and salvaged their lives. He covered their sin by killing animals to make clothes for them. He sent them out of the garden so they wouldn't eat of the tree of life and experience perpetual death. He also pointed to a glorious future—a Savior who would help them (Genesis 3:15).

Adam's sin of disobeying God spread sin to all mankind (Romans 5:12). After Adam was expelled from Eden, he and his wife, Eve, had two sons named Cain and Abel, and at least one other child, a son they named Seth. Adam died when he was 930 years old. (See Genesis 2:15–5:5.)

The Named Sons of Adam and Eve

Cain, meaning “to acquire” or “to get,” was the first murderer.

Abel, meaning “fleeting breath” or “vapor,” was the first person to die.

Seth, meaning “restitution,” replaced Abel in the godly line of Messiah.

Adam had other sons and daughters, but their names are not revealed to us (Genesis 5:4).

A Life Lesson from Adam

A Picture of God's Grace

The life of Adam gives us a glimpse of what God originally intended for mankind—a perfect relationship with Him in a perfect environment

of health and peace. It also paints a picture of the disastrous effects of disobeying God. But, as if we were viewing scenes in a slide show, we are treated to a display of God's grace and hope: In His mercy, God stepped in and saved the day, spared Adam and Eve, and secured a future for His fallen people.

Are you experiencing God's grace through the "last Adam," Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:45)? If so, you are presently living in a perfect relationship with God that will one day be permanently realized in heaven—that perfect place where, once again, all things will be perfect.

Altar

An altar is a raised structure or place on which sacrifices are offered or incense is burned in worship. Throughout history, nations have built elaborate structures to offer sacrifices to their gods. Coming out of Egypt, the children of Israel were very familiar with pagan worship. In order not to pervert their worship of the one true God, Moses was immediately instructed while on Mount Sinai to build two altars:

- the altar of burnt offering (also called the bronze altar or the table of the Lord), upon which the morning and evening sacrifices were offered, and
- the altar of incense (also called the golden altar, which stood in the holy place of the tabernacle) upon which sweet spices were continually burned. The morning and evening services were commenced by the high priest offering incense on this altar.

Later, God allowed other altars to be used in places other than the tabernacle and later, the temple.²

Angel

The English term *angel* (from the Greek *angelos*) means “messenger.” Essentially, in Scripture, an angel is a messenger from God.

The Bible speaks of both good and bad angels. The most well-known bad angel is Lucifer, whose pride caused him to fall from heaven. He became known as Satan and the Devil. Other bad angels are referred to as demons and devils. Some of the well-known good angels are Michael (“the archangel”) and Gabriel.

As messengers, angels announced and heralded the birth of Christ. They also tended to Jesus Christ in the wilderness and in the garden of Gethsemane. They were present at the empty tomb of the resurrected Lord and at His ascension into heaven.³

Angel of the Lord

The angel of the Lord was a theophany, a self-manifestation of God to men. This particular angel is distinguished in Scripture from all others and is identified by several names, including...

- “the Angel of the LORD”
- “the Angel of God”
- “the Angel of His Presence”

He is clearly identified with the Lord Himself in His self-manifestation to men. (See Genesis 16:7; 21:17; 31:11-13; Judges 2:1; Isaiah 63:9.)

Appearances of the Angel of the Lord to Old Testament People

Hagar—received encouragement and instruction (Genesis 16:7; 21:17)

Abraham—received a visit and a promise (Genesis 18)

Moses—received his call to lead God's people (Exodus 3:2)

Balaam—was told to take a message to King Balak (Numbers 22:35)

Israelites—were given a message describing their disobedience (Judges 2)

Gideon—was called a mighty hero (Judges 6:11)

Manoah's wife—was promised a son (Judges 13:3)

Manoah—was reassured of the promised son (Judges 13:11)

Elijah—was encouraged and strengthened to continue his journey (1 Kings 19:7)

Animals of the Bible

The Bible is filled with references to animals. A sampling of the many animals mentioned in Scripture includes:

Bear. Bears were fearsome animals in the ancient Near East because of their strength, size, and unpredictable nature. In fact, when a group of young men made fun of the prophet Elisha's baldness, two bears came out of the woods and mauled 42 of them (2 Kings 2:23-24). David, the shepherd boy (and later the king of Israel), developed the skills necessary to defend his sheep from a lion and a bear. This skill possibly impressed King Saul enough that he let the young David fight the giant Goliath (1 Samuel 17:33-37).

Behemoth. There is much debate as to the identity of the “behemoth” mentioned in Job 40:15-24. Grammatically, it probably means “super beast.” What exactly was this super beast? Some think it was a hippopotamus. Others say it must have been a crocodile because a hippo doesn’t have a tail that swings like a cedar. Still others have suggested that it was a dinosaur. No one is sure.

Camel. These gangly creatures were typically used as beasts of burden. Camels have always been ideal for desert travel because of their ability to conserve water in their humps. There are two types of Middle Eastern camels—those with one hump and those with two humps. Their hides were also used for coverings. Both Elijah and John the Baptist were clothed in camel’s hair. Jesus referred to camels when illustrating His sermons, pointing out the absurdities of a camel passing through the eye of a needle and of a person attempting to swallow a camel. (See 2 Kings 1:8; Matthew 3:4; Matthew 19:24; 23:24.)

Donkey. Like camels, donkeys were used for travel in Bible times. Donkeys were considered a financial asset, for to own many donkeys and camels was considered a sign of great wealth.

In a delightful story, God gave the donkey who was carrying the false prophet, Balaam, a voice and enabled the animal to “see” the angel of the Lord (while the prophet did not) and to talk to the prophet. (Equally amazing is the fact that Balaam talked back to the donkey!) And more than 500 years before the birth of Christ, the Old Testament prophet Zechariah announced that the Messiah would come on a colt, the foal of a donkey. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy when He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey at the beginning of the week before His crucifixion. (See Numbers 22:22-31; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:1-11.)

Leviathan. The Bible describes Leviathan as a twisted serpent, a reptile in the sea whom God will punish, and a terrible beast whom no one but God can defeat. Scripture says that God easily crushes Leviathan’s

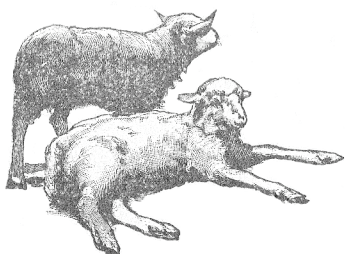
heads. Essentially, Leviathan is God's toy—this mighty, chaotic beast succumbs to the infinitely greater power of the King of kings.

What was Leviathan? An ancient dinosaur? A killer whale? A great white shark? Whatever it was, it is presented in the Bible as the ultimate killer beast, more fearsome than all the other sea creatures. And whatever it was, man was its toy. But this beast was no match for God. (See Isaiah 27:1; Job 41; Psalm 74:14; 104:26.)

Lion. Lions were powerful foes in the ancient world, and in the Middle East, they were considered royalty. The patriarch Jacob blessed his son Judah and compared him to a lion, saying that the scepter would not depart from his descendants. Scripture later refers to Jesus as “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.” (See Genesis 49:9; Revelation 5:5.)

Sheep. Sheep were extremely important animals to the people of Bible times; they were a form of wealth. Their hide and wool were used as clothing, and they provided food for people. Sheep were also used for sacrifices to God.

At the first Passover, while the Israelites were still in Egypt, lamb's blood was sprinkled on the doorposts of each dwelling to keep the angel of death from killing the firstborn of that house.



In the New Testament, John the Baptist called Jesus “the Lamb of God,” the ultimate sacrifice whose death would take away the sin of the world. (See Exodus 12; Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29.)

Snake. Because many snakes in the Middle East are poisonous, it's not hard to imagine why snakes are often seen as dangerous, crafty, and evil, creatures to be avoided at all costs. The Hebrew term for a snake (*nachash*) was probably derived from the sound of a serpent's hiss.

It was a serpent who tempted Eve to commit the first-ever sin on earth. That serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field

which God had made. The patriarch Jacob, in a very uncomplimentary prophecy, compared his son Dan to “a viper by the path, that bites the horse’s heels” so its rider is thrown off (Genesis 49:17).

Snake—or *viper* or *serpent*—is definitely not a positive term. John the Baptist called the religious leaders of Israel a brood of vipers, and the devil is referred to as the old serpent. (See Genesis 3:1; 49:17; Matthew 3:7; Revelation 12:9.)

A Life Lesson from Sheep

One of God’s Sheep

The Bible often refers to humans as sheep. But don’t get too excited. This isn’t a compliment! Sheep, generally known to be dumb animals, lack careful thinking and initiative. They are lazy, can easily be led astray, and frequently wander into danger. According to Isaiah 53:6, we are like sheep who fail to follow, who go our own way and do our own thing. The bad news is, this is our nature. But the good news is that God sent His Son Jesus to lead us and take care of us. He is the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep and calls them by name. He gave His life for those who believe in Him. (See John 10:7-18.)

Read through Psalm 23. Be sure and notice all that the Lord, the Good Shepherd, does and will do for you as His sheep. He truly can take care of your every need...if you follow Him. How closely are you following Him today?

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Anointed One

The expectation of *the* Anointed One—the Messiah—is found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. The term *Messiah* (Hebrew=*mashiach*, which means “anointed one”) appears in the Old Testament in Daniel 9:25-26. Many Old Testament prophets spoke of someone who would be born into this world, bring peace, rule all Israel, and save the people of Israel and the rest of the world from their sins. In fact, many interpreters have seen this as far back as Genesis 3:15, believing that verse to be a prophecy of the Messiah, the Anointed One. In the New Testament, the Greek word *christos*—Christ—is a translation of the Hebrew *mashiach*, or Messiah. As we now know, Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One. (See Daniel 9:25-26; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Isaiah 2; 11; 53; Micah 5:2.)

Some People and Objects Anointed in Scripture

High Priests—Exodus 29:7,29

Priests—Exodus 28:41

Saul—in 1 Samuel 9:16

David—1 Samuel 16:3,12

Solomon—1 Kings 1:39

Jehu—1 Kings 19:16

Hazael—1 Kings 19:15

Joash—2 Kings 11:12

Jehoahaz—2 Kings 23:30

Cyrus—referred to as anointed in Isaiah 45:1

Prophets—1 Kings 19:16

The tabernacle—Exodus 30:26

The altar in the tabernacle—Exodus 30:26-28

The vessels in the tabernacle—Exodus 30:27-28

Anointment

To anoint someone in Bible times was to take a flask of oil and pour it on him. Usually this was done to designate the person as set apart and consecrated by God for a holy purpose.

The Bible speaks of many “anointed” ones. The sons of Aaron were anointed priests. Samuel anointed Saul and David when they were appointed kings over Israel. Also, when David was running from Saul, he recognized Saul’s status as king and refused to kill him because Saul was “the LORD’s anointed.” Because he was used by God, King Cyrus of Persia was also called God’s “anointed.” (See Numbers 3:3; 1 Samuel 10:1; 16:13; 24:6,10; 26:9,11-23; Isaiah 45:1.)

Antichrist

The Greek term *antichristos* means “against Christ,” and the Antichrist is described as the “man of lawlessness” (NASB) who will come and desecrate the temple in the last days and declare himself God. Many biblical commentators have applied this term to the beast who rises from the sea in Revelation 13. During the end times, this beast will win the devotion and worship of people throughout the world. He will also control the global economy. Ultimately, however, Christ will conquer the beast—the Antichrist—and send him into the lake of fire. (See Daniel 7:20-21; 9:26-27; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1 John 2:18,22; 4:3; 2 John 7; Revelation 13:16-17; 19:20).

Apostle

An apostle (Greek=*apostolos*) was one who was sent. In the context of Christianity, this was one who was sent in a special way by Jesus to preach the good news. The term first appears when the 12 disciples were initially sent by Jesus to preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. The apostles were described as the foundation of the church, the body of Christ. Paul also considered himself an apostle of Christ Jesus and pointed out that men did not send him to preach the gospel—it was Jesus Himself. (See Matthew 10:2-5; Ephesians 1:1; 2:20; Galatians 1:1; Acts 9.)

Those Who Bear the Title *Apostle* in the New Testament

The Original 12

Simon, also called Peter

Andrew, Peter's brother

James, the son of Zebedee

John, James' brother and the son of Zebedee

Philip, the one who asked how Jesus would feed the 5000

Bartholomew, also known as Nathanael

Thomas, also known as the twin and one who doubted

Matthew, the tax collector

James, the son of Alphaeus

Thaddaeus, also known as Judas, the son of James

Simon, the Zealot

Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed Jesus

Others Who Were Called or Considered Apostles

Matthias, chosen later to take Judas' place

Saul, named Paul, chosen by Jesus to preach to Gentiles

Barnabas, Titus, Epaphroditus, and other missionaries

(See Matthew 10:1-4; Acts 1:26; Romans 1:1.)

A Life Lesson from the Apostles

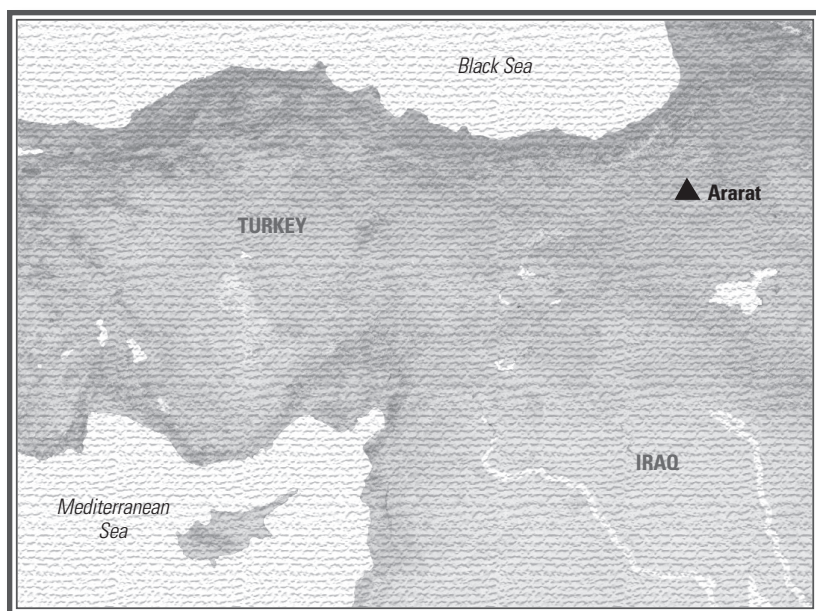
Messengers of the Good News

Here's something to think about: The first group of "good news messengers" were ordained by Jesus and called apostles. Their ministry ceased with the death of John, the last surviving apostle. The second group of messengers was made up of ordinary people—men like Barnabas, Titus, Epaphroditus, and others—who faithfully shared the gospel.

Who are God's messengers today? You are, if you are following in the footsteps of these groups and taking the message of Jesus Christ next door, around the block, to the workplace, and to the ends of the earth. Recall how you first heard the good news of the gospel of Christ. Whom did God "send" to you with the message of salvation? Now, whom do you know who needs to hear the good news from you?

Ararat, Mount

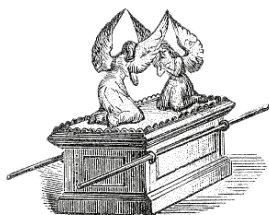
No one can dogmatically point to a precise location for a singular Mount Ararat. The mountains of Ararat are a craggy, rugged range of mountains in modern-day Armenia. The Bible says Noah's ark settled on a mountain in the "mountains of Ararat" when the floodwaters began to subside. For this reason, much speculation and several expeditions have stimulated interest in this remote area. But in general the term *Mount Ararat* is applied to a high and almost inaccessible mountain that rises majestically from the plain below. It has two peaks, about seven miles apart—one is 14,300 feet and the other is 10,300 feet above the level of the plain. The top 3000 feet of the higher peak is perpetually covered with snow. It is called Kuh-i-nuh ("Noah's mountain") by the Persians. Most of the searching for evidence of Noah's ark is concentrated there today. (See Genesis 8:4.)



Mount Ararat

Ark of the Covenant

The Ark of the Covenant was built by the people of Israel under God's instruction and placed in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle (and later, in Solomon's temple). It was made of acacia wood and was about three feet nine inches long, two feet three inches wide, and two feet three inches high. Four gold rings—two on each end—were fastened to it. Two poles were inserted through the rings—one pole on each side—so the ark could be lifted and moved. On the lid of the ark was the mercy seat, made of pure gold. On each side of the mercy seat were two golden cherubim facing one another with their wings outstretched. The two tablets with the Ten Commandments on them were kept inside the ark. Aaron's budded rod and a gold jar with manna in it were also inside the ark.



Once a year the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to make atonement for the whole nation of Israel. If he or anyone else entered at any other time, they would die. The ark was to be treated with great reverence because it depicted God's presence. Those who mishandled the Ark of the Covenant became sick or died. (See Exodus 25:10-22; 1 Kings 8:6-9; Hebrews 9:4,7; 2 Samuel 6:7.)

A Life Lesson from the Ark of the Covenant

Come Before God with Confidence

Take a minute and try to picture this: Situated in the Holy of Holies, the glory of God resided above the Ark of the Covenant. Only one person—the high priest—could enter this most sacred place, and only once a year, to sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat to atone for the sins of the people. This is a fearsome and scary scene! But thank God all this changed when He sent His Son, Jesus Christ. As the perfect and therefore the permanent sacrifice for sin, Jesus

atoned for the sins of all who put their faith and trust in Him. As a result...

- You and all believers today have free access to God...all the time.
- You are blessed to live in God's constant presence, knowing He is always with you.
- You can go boldly before God at any time, without fear and with full confidence.
- You can approach God and receive His mercy when you fail.
- You can find spiritual strength and grace anytime you need it (Hebrews 4:16).

Come before Him now. Give thanks for the freedom you enjoy as you worship and walk with Him, a freedom Jesus Christ secured for you at a high cost.

Ark of Noah

God told Noah to build a ship (Hebrew=*tevah*, which means “ark” or “box”) to protect him, his family, and two of every kind of animal from the world's first-ever and largest-ever flood. The ark was commissioned by God to preserve Noah and his family and one male-female set of each species of animals for a yearlong boat ride. What size “boat” was needed to house more than 100,000 animals and their food...for a year? This oblong floating house was made of gopherwood, covered with pitch, and was

- 450 feet long,
- 75 feet wide,
- 45 feet high with
- 3 levels, each 15 feet high.

The ark had a door on the side and a window on the roof. That was some kind of boat—so awesome and complex that it took Noah 120 years to build. (See Genesis 6:1-22.)

A Life Lesson from Noah's Ark

How Big Is Your Faith?

Noah was commanded to build a gigantic boat—a boat the size of one-and-a-half football fields—for a phenomenon that had yet to occur since the creation of the world: rain. Yet Noah obeyed. Can you imagine the faith Noah exhibited as he worked on this project... for 120 years?!

Faith is described in the Bible as the assurance of things hoped for and a conviction of things we cannot see (Hebrews 11:1). Faith is trust. Noah trusted God to do what He said He would do in the future. And Noah believed in something no human had ever seen or heard of before. Therefore Noah carried out God's instructions.

How big is your faith? If it's small and faltering, start with small steps of trusting obedience. Then when something big comes along—like spending a lifetime building the world's largest lifeboat—you, like Noah, will be ready to start hammering away!

Did you know...?

The average size of land animals is less than the size of a sheep. Some 18,000 species are alive today, and even when that number is doubled, the ark was more than big enough to carry them all. It had the capacity to hold more than 100,000 animals the size of a sheep. The ark definitely had ample room for all the animals, fowl, reptiles, and insects, as well as food for all the creatures and Noah and his family for one year!

Armor of God

Christians are exhorted to put on specific pieces of armor or spiritual clothing provided by God as protection for the lifelong, daily battle against the devil and sin. (See Ephesians 6:11-17.)

- ▶ The waistband/belt of truth
- ▶ The breastplate/body armor of righteousness
- ▶ The shoes of the gospel of peace
- ▶ The shield of faith
- ▶ The helmet of salvation
- ▶ The sword of the Spirit

Checklist for Spiritual Victory

What can you do to equip yourself and prepare for battle today... and every day?

- ✓ Don't underestimate the power of your enemy, Satan.
- ✓ Don't neglect to put on the armor God provides.
- ✓ Don't forget to pray to stand strong in the power of God's might.
- ✓ Don't forget you are in a spiritual battle every minute of every day.

"Put on the whole armor of God,
that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"

(EPHESIANS 6:11).

Assyria

The Assyrians were the offspring of Asshur, a son of Shem (who was a son of Noah). The country of Assyria was located east of the Tigris River, and its capital was Nineveh. In 738 B.C., the Assyrians invaded Israel (the northern kingdom). The Assyrians were on their way to becoming a world power while the surrounding countries—Syria, Israel, and Judah—were declining.

In 722 B.C. the Assyrians took all the people of Samaria and the kingdom of Israel into captivity. They continued to build their empire until Nineveh—the powerful capital city—was sacked by the Babylonians in 612 B.C. (See Genesis 10:22; 2 Kings 15:19; 17–18.)

Augustus (Caesar)

Augustus (also known as Octavius) was born in 63 B.C. He was the grandnephew of Julius Caesar and was adopted as the son of Julius Caesar. He became the first Roman emperor when he won the battle of Actium in 31 B.C. Palestine was under his rule when Jesus Christ was born. Because Caesar Augustus issued a decree that all citizens of the empire had to return to their cities of birth for a census, Jesus ended up being born in Bethlehem instead of his parents' hometown of Nazareth. This fulfilled a prophecy God had foretold 500 years earlier through the prophet Micah.

Roman rulers were considered gods. And yet the tiny baby born in an animal stall in a town under the rule of this “god” was the true God, God in flesh, the One who would rule all heaven and earth. Augustus died in A.D. 14; Jesus lives forever. (See Luke 2:1; Micah 5:2).