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Introduction

Do You Want to See Jesus in the Old Testament?

Welcome to *Discovering Jesus in the Old Testament*. This is a 12-week study designed to help you learn from God's Word, apply what you've learned, and rejoice in God's amazing plan for us.

The Old Testament reveals that God created humans to dwell with him. But something happened to separate people from God. Through the ages, God revealed his plan to reunite people with himself so that they could again dwell with him.

The New Testament reveals that Jesus “was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times” (1 Peter 1:20). That amazes me! (Jean) love looking at the Old Testament from the vantage point of how God revealed his eternal plan. His great love, care, and patience are on display, along with his compassion for those who suffer, his righteous anger with those who mistreat others, and his mercy toward those who seek forgiveness.

As we see God's plan unveil, we'll also discover lessons we can apply to our lives. The Old Testament abounds in examples of how to walk with God. After all, these are the Scriptures from which Jesus and the New Testament writers taught.

Many of God's revelations about Jesus occur in the prophetic books. The New Testament explains how Jesus fulfilled numerous prophecies in his first coming. It teaches that he'll fulfill the rest in his second coming. We'll concentrate on the former and touch on the latter. Conservative Christian scholars differ in their interpretations of passages about his second coming, so we'll not take a position on those. After all, the main things are the plain things, and the plain things are the main things. The important thing is Jesus is coming to take us to our eternal dwelling place with the Lord our God.

**Why We Wrote this Discovery Book for You**

Pam, Karla, and I (Jean), with our different paths and gifts, have connected over our love for interacting with God's Word and encouraging others to experience the hope of his promises and faithfulness.

All of us grew up without a Christian influence in the home and know what it's like to encounter the Old Testament for the first time when older. Many women tell us they would love to know more about the Old Testament. Others have expressed confusion over atheist claims that “the God of the Old Testament” is not a God of love. Our hearts break when we hear this because nothing could be farther from the truth! God never changes (James 1:17). God is love, and he has always been love (1 John 4:8). Just like us, he's angry when people intentionally wrong others and commit horrific crimes. But unlike us, he's quick to offer mercy and a way to be washed clean from sins, no matter how bad. His plan to save is also a plan to end evil.

With love,

Jean, Pam, & Karla
The Treasures in Each Chapter
We collaborated on this book to inspire you. Here’s what you’ll find in every chapter.

Daily Lessons—Jean
You’ll hear from me throughout this journey. In each chapter, I share an introduction to one key hope that the Old Testament reveals about Jesus. The chapters have five daily lessons that will take 20–25 minutes to finish. Each Day 5 lesson concludes by guiding you in a private time of worship and prayer. The lessons use these icons:

❤️ This is a personal question designed to help you apply what you’re learning to your life and to possibly spark a rich discussion with others.

🗣 This activity guides you in prayer and worship.

✍️ An activity marked with this has further instructions on www.DiscoveringTheBibleSeries.com.

The Little Details—Jean
Along the way, you’ll see sidebars titled The Little Details. These are extra insights for both seasoned Christians and seekers who thrive on details.

A Walk with Christ—Pam
Pam’s A Walk with Christ devotionals invite you to rest in God’s strength and love. She shares some of her go-to ways for remembering and holding on to the promises of Jesus. She’ll take you forward with faith and hope.

The Heart and Art of Worship—Karla
You’ll hear from Karla at the end of each chapter. She’ll encourage you to connect creatively with God and others as you delight in God’s eternal plan throughout this study.

Illustrations—Karla
The bookmarks and coloring pages will help you connect with God’s Word as you spend time coloring and meditating on each verse. You can also slip designs under a page in your Bible, sketchbook, or journal for tracing.

Creative Ideas—All of Us
The Creative Ideas appendix offers fresh ways to express, experience, and meditate on passages. Discover your favorites! What a gift it is to have God’s eternal plan to save us etched on your mind, heart, and spirit.

Discover More on www.DiscoveringTheBibleSeries.com
Here are the extras you’ll find on our website.

• Instructions for how to use this discovery book for both small groups and individual study
• A small group leader’s guide
• Timelines
• Action steps from this book summarized and illustrated for you to download and color
• Links to worship music to go with each chapter
• Links to Karla’s art instructions
• Links to articles that go deeper into chapter topics
• More inspiring ideas
Chapter 1

Genesis 3
Jesus the Serpent Crusher
The hope of evil’s end

Day 1

How It All Began

For my seventeenth birthday, my then-boyfriend Clay gave me (Jean) a white leather Bible containing both the Old and New Testaments. Until then, I'd had only a paperback New Testament. Not having been raised in a Christian home, I was excited to finally be able to read the rest of the Bible and see what it said.

As I read through Genesis, I thought, *So that’s what happened! God created people good, and that was Plan A. But they blew it and disobeyed, so God had to go with Plan B, a flood.* Later, I read about God calling Israel to be a nation and giving them commandments. But the Israelites blew it and disobeyed God too. I thought, *Israel was Plan C, and Jesus was Plan D! God had to keep starting over because people kept messing up his plans.*

I was wrong.

I had missed the significance of 1 Peter 1:20, which says Jesus “was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times.” Revelation 13:8 (niv) reads similarly: Jesus is “the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.” And there’s 2 Timothy 1:8-10, which reads, “God...saved us and called us...because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus.”

In other words, God knew before he created the world and the first humans that Jesus would one day die for the sins of the world. He knew Satan would deceive Adam and Eve, and he had a plan in place to rescue humankind. There was always just one plan. This book will show how he revealed that plan over time, beginning in Eve’s lifetime.

The Reveal

**Eve’s Day**

“In the beginning, God.” Those are the first four words of the Bible. They introduce the story of how God created the heavens and the earth and then populated the earth with birds, fish, and animals.

**God’s Word to Us**

👉 Take a moment to pray for insight as you read God’s Word.
1. Read Genesis 1:26-31; 2:5-17; and all of chapter 3. What stands out to you from your initial reading of these passages? Why?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the passages</td>
<td>quite a story, isn't it? Let's look at some of the pertinent details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. (a) When God looked over his creation, what did he see it was (Genesis 1:25)? (b) In whose image did he create the man and woman (verse 27)? (c) What blessing did he give them (verse 28)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The man and woman were God's image-bearers.</td>
<td>The man and woman were God's image-bearers. God blessed them and told them to fill the earth with more image-bearers, subduing the earth and ruling over all its creatures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. When God looked over his creation, what did he see it was (Genesis 1:31)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God placed them in a garden with a river and fruit trees. God walked with them and talked with them. The garden was a sanctuary where he could dwell with his people. He created the first couple not just to rule, but to fellowship with him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. (a) What two special trees were in the middle of the garden (Genesis 2:9)? (b) What did God command the man not to eat (verses 16-17)? (c) What would happen if they ate (verse 17)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And that's where things go wrong.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Describe a time you learned the hard way that a prohibition was in your best interest. Or describe a time your children learned the hard way that something you told them not to do was in their best interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Little Details</td>
<td>The Little Details</td>
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</table>

**Genesis**

Genesis is a book of beginnings: the beginning of creation, of humans, of sin on earth, and of the reveal of God's plan to bring people back into relationship with him. It's the first book of the Bible and the first of the five books of Moses. Together the five books are called the Pentateuch. Professor Albert H. Baylis writes that Moses knew the people were going to a land whose inhabitants worshiped gods that were “like most people—and worse! They play and drink, and drink too much. They fight, deceive, and engage in licentious behavior.” Since “people become like the gods they worship,” Moses's challenge was to show in Genesis what the true God was like. In Genesis 1, Moses shows that “God is the transcendent, sovereign ruler of the creation. He is in complete control. He is not a part of it. Nor does it control him. It came into existence at his command... The surrounding gods are nonentities.” People thought humanity’s purpose was to serve the pagan gods, but the true God created humankind for fellowship.
A Walk with Christ—Kick Satan to the Curb

Has the unwelcome, unwanted, unbearable, and unbelievably difficult entered your life? Maybe you said a little prayer when you picked up this book, hoping this study would help you become stronger, braver, and wiser. It is human to feel overwhelmed, exhausted, and undone. We all have those “desert days.” I have been to this desert described in Matthew 4:1-11, where Christ walked. It is hot, rugged, rocky, and desolate.

Jesus went to the desert to fast, pray, and commune with God. When he was weary and hungry, Satan tried to trip him up so the triumph of the cross would not happen. Three times, Satan tempted Jesus. Three times, Christ answered by quoting the Word out loud. At the end of the 40 desert days then on through the cross and resurrection, the victory was secured by Christ! How did Jesus defeat Satan? Truth! God’s Word is the power to overcome.

Dr. Tim Muehlhoff, author of Defending Your Marriage: The Reality of Spiritual Battle shares that 25 percent of what Christ talked about in the Bible is about the battle we are in.

Satan uses the same devious tactics on us as he did on Christ. And to conquer him, God has equipped us with armor, described in Ephesians 6:13-17:

Put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (niv).

The power is in the Word.

Satan cannot read our minds; only God knows our thoughts. A solid defense against the attacks of Satan is to do what Jesus did: Speak out the truths of Scripture aloud over your life—and live like you believe in the victory God faithfully executes over evil. James 4:7 reminds us, “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (niv).” If I gave you a backstage pass to my life, you would hear me proclaim something like this:

Dear Lord Jesus, I proclaim your victory on the cross through your blood shed to redeem and rescue. I acknowledge your power to take back territory and move me from darkness to light. Satan has no power here to discourage, disrupt, disillusion, or depress me in any way. God, I stand in Your power, provision, peace, and protection affirming Romans 16:20 (niv): “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.”

God’s crushing of Satan is a complete shattering into dust. Sometimes, I symbolically stomp my spiked high heel or beat my flip-flop on the ground as evidence God has kicked the evil out. Give it a try sometime. It is a power moment of trust and faith. This study will teach you more about Christ and the power of specific scriptures in the living Word to vanquish the devil.

Go to www.DiscoveringTheBibleSeries.com for resources to help you walk closer with Christ, including an In the Savior’s Sandals devotional for each chapter based on places Christ walked in the Holy Land.
The Promise to Eve

The opening pages of Genesis—the first book of the Bible—give us our first glimpses of Jesus in the Old Testament. Some hint at what later revelations expand upon. But there’s also a promise of his coming that we don’t want to miss. Let’s dig in.

The Garden

In the last lesson, we read that God commanded the man and woman to rule over the creatures of the earth. But when a serpent entered the garden, that’s not what happened. This serpent “was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made” (Genesis 3:1 niv). The New Testament links the serpent to Satan (Revelation 12:9). Albert Baylis, in his book From Creation to the Cross, notes that in the garden came an “already fallen intelligence” (see sidebar).

Here’s what God commanded: “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but 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 2:16-17).

6. Compare Genesis 2:16-17 above with Genesis 3:1. How did the serpent’s representation of God’s command differ from God’s actual command?

When the serpent asked, “Did God actually say?” it may have been the first time Eve had experienced a creature doubting God. The serpent exaggerated the Lord’s command and emphasized the only thing the couple had been denied in the abundance of the garden.

7. (a) In what way did the serpent say God had lied (Genesis 3:4)? (b) What did the serpent say was God’s true motivation for denying the fruit (3:5)?

The woman had a choice: She could believe God, or she could believe the serpent. God had never given her reason to doubt his character or his word, but now the serpent told her God was denying her something that would benefit her. In other words, God wasn’t acting in her best interest. Suddenly, the fruit was attractive. It looked good, would taste good, and would make her wise like God (Genesis 3:6). The desire to be like God, to be his equal even, enticed her, and she believed the serpent.

She reached out her hand, seized the fruit, ate, and gave some to her husband. Then their eyes opened, and the couple who had never known shame for the first time ever felt humiliation and guilt. They knew that they were naked and wanted to hide.

They tried to cover up their nakedness with fig leaves. When they heard God walking in the garden, they hid. This divine manifestation is called a theophany (see sidebar). When God called out, “Where are you?” the man replied, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself” (Genesis 3:10). Fellowship was broken.
God asked the man if he had eaten the forbidden fruit. God knew the answer but gave him a chance to confess.

8. (a) What two beings did the man blame for his transgression (Genesis 3:12)? (b) Whom did the woman blame (Genesis 3:13)? (c) Does blaming others remove guilt? Why or why not?

Shifting blame started in the garden and continues today.

9. (a) How does focusing on what we can’t have instead of on what we do have affect our relationship with God? (b) Why is it important to remember God’s intentions for us are good when we’re tempted to disobey his commands?

Hope Within Judgment

God judged the three beings, but in the judgment, he gave the man and woman hope. When he cursed the serpent, he said, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:15 NIV).

He pronounced judgment, but he didn’t curse the couple. Instead, he promised a serpent crusher would one day come. The serpent would bruise his heel, but the woman’s offspring—literally her seed—would deal him a mortal blow. Genesis 3:15 is called the Protoevangelium because it is the first announcement of the gospel: the good news that a seed of the woman will crush the serpent. The serpent will cause that seed to suffer, but the suffering seed will destroy the serpent.

God’s judgment on the woman was that through painful labor she would bring forth children. Within the judgment lived the hope of bearing life. God’s judgment on the man was that through painful toil he would bring forth food. Within the judgment lived the hope of sustaining life. Though they would eventually die, humans would continue.

God cursed the ground: It would bear thorns and thistles and was bound to decay (Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 8:21). Professor Clay Jones says, “Natural evil entered the world because God cursed the earth in response to Adam’s sin. In fact, what pestilence—mold, decay, cancer, and so on—can’t have ensued from God looking at planet Earth and saying, ‘I curse you?’”

When the man heard God’s judgment coupled with hope, he in faith “named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living” (Genesis 3:20 NIV). Eve sounds like the Hebrew word for living. The man continued to be called by the Hebrew word for man, ‘ādām or Adam. In compassion, God clothed Adam and Eve, covering their nakedness and protecting them from the elements.
10. (a) What would humans now know (Genesis 3:22)? (b) Why did God banish them from the Garden of Eden (3:22-24)?

11. (a) Why wouldn’t God want creatures who had chosen to rebel to be able to live forever? (b) What hope did God give in letting people know a tree of life exists?

God placed cherubim (winged heavenly creatures) on the east side of the garden to block the way to the tree of life. Without access to this tree, Adam, Eve, and their offspring would eventually die.

By eating the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve plunged humankind into knowing evil, but also into knowing good. Evil lets virtues such as self-sacrifice, courage, and mercy arise. None of these are humanly possible without the risk of personal loss or harm. The greater the loss or harm, the more heroic is the virtue that counters it.

12. God had commanded Adam and Eve to fill the earth and subdue it. With what did they fill the earth (Genesis 6:11)?

The story has just begun. In the next chapter we meet the family through which the seed of the serpent crusher will be traced.

Day 3

God’s Plan Unfolds

Let’s summarize how the Lord God dwelt with people in Eve’s day and then look at God’s continuing revelation about how he’ll fulfill his promise to Eve.

God with Us Then

At first, Eve lived in a flourishing garden with Adam. They enjoyed God’s company. He told them to subdue and rule the earth and to fill it with descendants. But when Eve took of the forbidden fruit and shared it with Adam, everything changed. God expelled them from the garden.

The Bible describes God briefly visiting certain people outside the garden. It looked like the serpent had defeated God’s goal of an earth filled with people with whom he could dwell. But God’s promise that a seed of the woman would crush the serpent remained.