

Every Day with Jesus

ONE YEAR
BIBLE

THE BIBLE IN 365 READINGS
WITH DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS
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NIVTM

January 1

— GENESIS 1:1–2:25

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light ‘day’, and the darkness he called ‘night’. And there was evening, and there was morning – the first day.

⁶And God said, ‘Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.’

⁷So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸God called the vault ‘sky’. And there was evening, and there was morning – the second day.

⁹And God said, ‘Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.’ And it was so.

¹⁰God called the dry ground ‘land’, and the gathered waters he called ‘seas’. And God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, ‘Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.’ And it was so. ¹²The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening, and there was morning – the third day.

¹⁴And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the

vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.’ And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights – the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening, and there was morning – the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, ‘Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.’

²¹So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²²God blessed them and said, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.’ ²³And there was evening, and there was morning – the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, ‘Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.’ And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to

their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’

²⁷So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’

²⁹Then God said, ‘I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food.’ And it was so.

³¹God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning – the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

²By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

⁴This is the account of the heavens and the

earth when they were created, when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

⁵Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, ⁶but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. ⁷Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

⁸Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground – trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. ¹¹The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) ¹³The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.’

¹⁸The LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’

¹⁹Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the

birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. ²²Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³The man said,

‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called “woman”, for she was taken out of man.’

²⁴That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

²⁵Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

— PSALM 1:1-6

¹Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, ²but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. ³That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers.

⁴Not so the wicked! They are like chaff

that the wind blows away.

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

— PROVERBS 1:1-4

1 The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

²for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; ³for receiving instruction in prudent behaviour, doing what is right and just and fair; ⁴for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young –

— MATTHEW 1:1-25

1 This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

²Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, ⁵Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose

mother was Ruth,
Obed the father of Jesse,
⁶and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose
mother had been Uriah's wife,
⁷Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
Abijah the father of Asa,
⁸Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,
Jehoram the father of Uzziah,
⁹Uzziah the father of Jotham,
Jotham the father of Ahaz,
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,
¹⁰Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah,
¹¹and Josiah the father of Jeconiah
and his brothers at the time of the
exile to Babylon.

¹²After the exile to Babylon:
Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,
¹³Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,
Abihud the father of Eliakim,
Eliakim the father of Azor,
¹⁴Azor the father of Zadok,
Zadok the father of Akim,
Akim the father of Elihud,
¹⁵Elihud the father of Eleazar,
Eleazar the father of Matthan,
Matthan the father of Jacob,
¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph, the
husband of Mary, and Mary was

the mother of Jesus who is called
the Messiah.

¹⁷Thus there were fourteen generations in
all from Abraham to David, fourteen from
David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen
from the exile to the Messiah.

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus the Mes-
siah came about: his mother Mary was
pledged to be married to Joseph, but be-
fore they came together, she was found to
be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Be-
cause Joseph her husband was faithful
to the law, and yet did not want to expose
her to public disgrace, he had in mind to
divorce her quietly.

²⁰But after he had considered this, an an-
gel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream
and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be
afraid to take Mary home as your wife, be-
cause what is conceived in her is from the
Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and
you are to give him the name Jesus, because
he will save his people from their sins.'

²²All this took place to fulfil what the
Lord had said through the prophet: ²³'The
virgin will conceive and give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel' (which
means 'God with us').

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the
angel of the Lord had commanded him and
took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he did
not consummate their marriage until she
gave birth to a son. And he gave him the
name Jesus.

The Primary Focus

'In the beginning God ...' **Genesis 1:1**

We focus on what is without doubt the most noble and loftiest of
themes: the nature and character of God. I have noticed that
Christians, generally speaking, seem to be preoccupied with knowing
more about themselves rather than knowing more about God. Ask any

Christian bookshop manager: 'What are the best-selling books?' Not those that unfold for us the nature of God, but those that direct us toward such things as how to get a better self-image, how to manage money, how to find inner healing, how to get more excitement out of life, and so on. Not that these subjects are unimportant, but they are explored in a self-absorbed way that gives the idea that the most important thing in life is knowing ourselves better. It isn't. The most important thing in life is knowing God better.

John Lancaster, a minister in Cardiff, South Wales, in an article entitled 'Where on Earth Is God?' asks the question: 'Given a choice between attending a seminar, say, on the "Glory of God in Isaiah" and one on "The Christian and Sex," to which would you go?' He makes the point also that although the Church often answers the questions that people are asking, the real problem may be that people are not asking the right questions. In today's Church we are far too man-centred and not God-centred.

It is not by accident, I believe, that the Bible opens with the thunderous acclaim: 'In the beginning God.' I tell you with all the conviction of which I am capable: if God is not our primary focus, then everything else will soon get out of focus.

PRAYER

O Father, from this day help me determine to make You my primary focus. And give me the grace and strength to maintain it, through all the changes and uncertainties of the days ahead. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY

John 1:1-5; Col. 1:15-20;
Heb. 12:2; Rev. 1:8

- What did the Lord declare to John?
- What did the apostle John declare?

January 2

— GENESIS 3:1-4:26

3 Now the snake was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden"?''

²The woman said to the snake, 'We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³but God did say, "You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die."''

⁴'You will not certainly die,' the snake said to the woman. ⁵'For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'

⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they

were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’

¹⁰He answered, ‘I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.’

¹¹And he said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?’

¹²The man said, ‘The woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.’

¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’

The woman said, ‘The snake deceived me, and I ate.’

¹⁴So the Lord God said to the snake, ‘Because you have done this,

‘Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals!
You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.

¹⁵And 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.’

¹⁶To the woman he said,

‘I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labour you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.’

¹⁷To Adam he said, ‘Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree

about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

‘Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.

¹⁸It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.’

²⁰Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

²¹The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

²²And the LORD God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live for ever.’ ²³So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

4 Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, ‘With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man.’ ²Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. ³In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. ⁴But Abel also brought an offering – fat portions from some of the first-born of his flock. The LORD looked with favour on Abel and his offering, ⁵but on Cain and his offering he did not look with

favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

⁶Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.’

⁸Now Cain said to his brother Abel, ‘Let’s go out to the field.’ While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

⁹Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Where is your brother Abel?’

‘I don’t know,’ he replied. ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’

¹⁰The LORD said, ‘What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground. ¹¹Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹²When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.’

¹³Cain said to the LORD, ‘My punishment is more than I can bear. ¹⁴Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.’

¹⁵But the LORD said to him, ‘Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over.’ Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. ¹⁶So Cain went out from the LORD’s presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

¹⁷Cain made love to his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch. ¹⁸To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.

¹⁹Lamech married two women, one

named Adah and the other Zillah. ²⁰Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. ²¹His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes. ²²Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain’s sister was Naamah.

²³Lamech said to his wives,

‘Adah and Zillah, listen to me;
wives of Lamech, hear my words.
I have killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for injuring me.

²⁴If Cain is avenged seven times,
then Lamech seventy-seven times.’

²⁵Adam made love to his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, ‘God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.’ ²⁶Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh.

At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD.

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■ **PSALM 2:1-6**

¹Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?

²The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,

³‘Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.’

⁴The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.

⁵He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,

⁶‘I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.’

— PROVERBS 1:5-6

⁵let the wise listen and add to their learning,
and let the discerning get guidance –
⁶for understanding proverbs and parables,
the sayings and riddles of the wise.

— MATTHEW 2:1-23

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.’

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵‘In Bethlehem in Judea,’ they replied, ‘for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.’

⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house,

they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

¹³When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. ‘Get up,’ he said, ‘take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.’

¹⁴So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’

¹⁶When Herod realised that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸‘A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more.’

¹⁹After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.’

²¹So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned

in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

God’s Great Intolerance

‘He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath ...’ **Psalm 2:5**

Wrath is not a defect in the divine character; rather, it would be a defect if wrath were absent *from* Him. Those who see God’s wrath as petulance or retaliation, inflicting punishment just for the sake of it or in return for some injury received, do not really understand it. Divine wrath is not vindictiveness; it is divine perfection, issuing forth from God because it is right.

Human beings tend to make God in their own image. He made us in His image, but we want to return the compliment, and it is there that so often we go wrong. Instead of reasoning from the divine down to the human, recognising that sin has marred the divine image within us, we reason from our fallen condition and project our own feelings and ideas onto God.

Thus, when thinking of the wrath of God, we tend to look at what happens in our own hearts when we get angry, and we imagine God to be the same. But divine anger must never be confused with human anger. Most of what goes on in our hearts whenever we are angry is a mixture of unpredictable petulance, retaliation, hostility and self-concern. God’s anger is always predictable, always steadfast and always set against sin. We must never forget that God’s nature is uncompromisingly set against sin. We may tolerate it; He never.

Sin has been defined as ‘God’s one great intolerance,’ and for that we ought to be eternally grateful. As His children we ought to rejoice that He will not tolerate anything that is harmful to us.

PRAYER

O Father, what a change comes over me when I realise that Your wrath is not so much directed at persons as at the sin that demeans and destroys them. You are not against me for my sin, but for me against my sin. I am deeply, deeply grateful. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY

Psa. 5:1-6; 11:5; Hab. 1:12-13; Zech. 8:16-17
• How did the psalmist express God’s great intolerance?
• What does the Lord hate?

January 3

— GENESIS 5:1-6:22

5 This is the written account of Adam's family line.

When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God. ²He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them 'Mankind' when they were created.

³When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. ⁴After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. ⁵Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, and then he died.

⁶When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh. ⁷After he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. ⁸Altogether, Seth lived a total of 912 years, and then he died.

⁹When Enosh had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰After he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹¹Altogether, Enosh lived a total of 905 years, and then he died.

¹²When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³After he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁴Altogether, Kenan lived a total of 910 years, and then he died.

¹⁵When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶After he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷Altogether, Mahalalel lived a total of 895 years, and then he died.

¹⁸When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁰Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years, and then he died.

²¹When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. ²²After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. ²³Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. ²⁴Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

²⁵When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁷Altogether, Methuselah lived a total of 969 years, and then he died.

²⁸When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. ²⁹He named him Noah and said, 'He will comfort us in the labour and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.' ³⁰After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. ³¹Altogether, Lamech lived a total of 777 years, and then he died.

³²After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

6 When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, ²the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. ³Then the LORD said, 'My Spirit will not contend with humans for ever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.'

⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those

days – and also afterwards – when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

⁵The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. ⁶The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. ⁷So the LORD said, 'I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created – and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground – for I regret that I have made them.' ⁸But Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD.

⁹This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. ¹⁰Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

¹¹Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. ¹²God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. ¹³So God said to Noah, 'I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.' ¹⁴So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. ¹⁵This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. ¹⁶Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit high all around. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. ¹⁷I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. ¹⁸But I will establish my covenant with you, and

you will enter the ark – you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. ²⁰Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. ²¹You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.'

²²Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

— PSALM 2:7-12

⁷I will proclaim the LORD's decree:

He said to me, 'You are my son; today I have become your father.

⁸Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance,

the ends of the earth your possession.

⁹You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.'

¹⁰Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.

¹¹Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.

¹²Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction,

for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

— PROVERBS 1:7

⁷The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

— MATTHEW 3:1-17

3 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

‘A voice of one calling in the wilderness, “Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.”’

⁴John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt round his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶Confessing their sins, they were baptised by him in the River Jordan.

⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptising, he said to them: ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹And do not think you can say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father.” I tell you that out of these stones God

can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰The axe has been laid to the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹‘I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.’

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. ¹⁴But John tried to deter him, saying, ‘I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?’

¹⁵Jesus replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.’ Then John consented.

¹⁶As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’

as being involved in the act of creation or as being on the same level as God. Read Colossians 1:16 and it will become clear to whom God was speaking.

Other examples of the Trinity being mentioned in the Old Testament include these: ‘The man has now become like one of us’ (Gen. 3:22) and in Isaiah 6:8 God says: ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’

‘Go to the Jordan,’ wrote Augustine, ‘and you find the Trinity. There at the baptism of Jesus, the three Persons in the Godhead are simultaneously in evidence. The Father is heard speaking directly from heaven, the Son is seen being immersed in the river, and John the Baptist beholds the Spirit descending upon the Christ.’ Three in One and One in Three. On this truth we must stand, though we may not fully understand.

PRAYER

Blessed Trinity, Three in One and One in Three, my spirit joins with Your Spirit this day to worship You in spirit and in truth. Though sometimes darkness to my intellect, Your truth is nevertheless sunshine to my heart. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY

Matt. 28:16-20;
John 14:26-27; 15:26-27
• How were the disciples to baptise new converts?
• How did Jesus confirm the truth of the Trinity?

January 4

— GENESIS 7:1-9:7

7 The LORD then said to Noah, ‘Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation. ²Take with you seven pairs of every kind of clean animal, a male and its mate, and one pair of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate, ³and also seven pairs of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. ⁴Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made.’

⁵And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him.

⁶Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. ⁷And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’

wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. ⁸Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, ⁹male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth.

¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month – on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. ¹²And rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

¹³On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. ¹⁴They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according

On This Truth We Stand

‘[Jesus] saw the Spirit of God descending ... And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love ...”

Matthew 3:16-17

Those who accept Scripture’s teaching concerning God must be prepared to say that He is not only personal, but that He is a plurality of Persons - a Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity, that God is one yet three separate Persons, is not easy to understand, but it is clear in Scripture. The term ‘Trinity’ nowhere appears in the Bible (it was first used by Tertullian around AD 210), but its roots are deeply embedded in the Word of God. It is mainly a revelation of the New Testament, but there are glimpses of the truth to be seen in the Old Testament also.

‘Let us make mankind in our image’ (Gen. 1:26). To whom was God speaking? Some say the angels, but nowhere in Scripture are angels seen

to its kind and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings. ¹⁵Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark. ¹⁶The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut him in.

¹⁷For forty days the flood kept coming on the earth, and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth. ¹⁸The waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. ¹⁹They rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. ²⁰The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than fifteen cubits. ²¹Every living thing that moved on land perished – birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. ²²Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. ²³Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.

²⁴The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days.

8 But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded. ²Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky. ³The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, ⁴and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵The waters continued to recede until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible.

⁶After forty days Noah opened a window he had made in the ark ⁷and sent out

a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth.

⁸Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground.

⁹But the dove could find nowhere to perch because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark. ¹⁰He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. ¹¹When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth. ¹²He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

¹³By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. ¹⁴By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry.

¹⁵Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶'Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. ¹⁷Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you – the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground – so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.'

¹⁸So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. ¹⁹All the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds – everything that moves on land – came out of the ark, one kind after another.

²⁰Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. ²¹The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: 'Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never

again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.

²²'As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.'

9 Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. ²The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. ³Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

⁴But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. ⁵And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being.

⁶'Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind.

⁷As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it.'

— **PSALM 3:1-8**

¹LORD, how many are my foes!
How many rise up against me!
²Many are saying of me,
'God will not deliver him.'

³But you, LORD, are a shield around me,

my glory, the One who lifts my head high.

⁴I call out to the LORD,
and he answers me from his holy mountain.

⁵I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.

⁶I will not fear though tens of thousands assail me on every side.

⁷Arise, LORD!
Deliver me, my God!
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;
break the teeth of the wicked.

⁸From the LORD comes deliverance.
May your blessing be on your people.

— **PROVERBS 1:8-9**

⁸Listen, my son, to your father's instruction
and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

⁹They are a garland to grace your head
and a chain to adorn your neck.

— **MATTHEW 4:1-20**

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.'

⁴Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."'

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the highest point of the temple. ⁶'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down. For it is written:

“He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

⁷Jesus answered him, ‘It is also written: “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”’

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. ⁹‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me.’

¹⁰Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written: “Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.”’

¹¹Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee.

¹³Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the

area of Zebulun and Naphtali – ¹⁴to fulfil what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵‘Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles –

¹⁶the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.’

¹⁷From that time on Jesus began to preach, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’

¹⁸As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹‘Come, follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people.’ ²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him.

Influence or Intelligence?

‘Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written ...”’ **Matthew 4:10**

Some of the names given to the devil in Scripture show him to be a real personality. In the passage that is before us today, Jesus is seen in direct confrontation with the devil, even engaging in conversation with him. Some liberal theologians explain this in these terms: Christ was having a conversation with the dark thoughts that arose within his nature, so any ‘devil’ that was present was subjective, not objective.

If we allow the notion that Christ had dark thoughts within His nature, then the whole scheme of redemption tumbles like a pack of cards, for a Saviour who is not perfect could never fully atone for our sins. As Dr Handley Moule puts it: ‘A Saviour who is not perfect is like a bridge broken at one end and is not a reliable passage of access.’ Once we try to get around Scripture, we create endless difficulties for ourselves and finish up looking foolish. Far better to accept the Bible as it stands and believe its testimony on everything.

It is actually to Satan’s advantage to get us to believe that he is not a personal being, for if there is no personal devil, there can be no personal resistance. Don’t allow yourself to be deceived into thinking that the term

devil is a synonym for the evil influence that is in the world. The devil is more than an evil influence; he is an evil intelligence. Only when we recognise this fact will we be motivated to take effective steps to resist him.

PRAYER

Father, help me see that the first step in spiritual warfare is to ‘know the enemy.’ For until I know and understand my enemy, I will not be able to defeat him. Deepen my knowledge of these important truths, I pray. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY

1 John 3:1-8; Heb. 2:14;

John 12:30-31

- Why did the Son of God appear?

- What did He declare?

January 5

— GENESIS 9:8-10:32

⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: ⁹‘I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you ¹⁰and with every living creature that was with you – the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you – every living creature on earth. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.’

¹²And God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: ¹³I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. ¹⁶Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of

every kind on the earth.’

¹⁷So God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.’

¹⁸The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) ¹⁹These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth.

²⁰Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. ²¹When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. ²²Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside. ²³But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backwards and covered their father’s naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked.

²⁴When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵he said,

‘Cursed be Canaan!

The lowest of slaves

will he be to his brothers.’

²⁶He also said,

‘Praise be to the LORD, the God of Shem!
May Canaan be the slave of Shem.

²⁷May God extend Japheth’s territory;
may Japheth live in the tents of Shem,
and may Canaan be the slave of
Japheth.’

²⁸After the flood Noah lived 350 years.

²⁹Noah lived a total of 950 years, and then
he died.

10 This is the account of Shem, Ham
and Japheth, Noah’s sons, who
themselves had sons after the flood.

²The sons of Japheth:

Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal,
Meshek and Tiras.

³The sons of Gomer:

Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah.

⁴The sons of Javan:

Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites and
the Rodanites. ⁵(From these the
maritime peoples spread out into
their territories by their clans with-
in their nations, each with its own
language.)

⁶The sons of Ham:

Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan.

⁷The sons of Cush:

Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and
Sabteka.

The sons of Raamah:

Sheba and Dedan.

⁸Cush was the father of Nimrod, who be-
came a mighty warrior on the earth. ⁹He
was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that
is why it is said, ‘Like Nimrod, a mighty
hunter before the LORD.’ ¹⁰The first centres
of his kingdom were Babylon, Uruk, Akkad
and Kalneh, in Shinar. ¹¹From that land he
went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh,
Rehoboth Ir, Calah ¹²and Resen, which is
between Nineveh and Calah – which is the
great city.

¹³Egypt was the father of
the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites,
Naphtuhites, ¹⁴Pathrusites, Kaslu-
hites (from whom the Philistines
came) and Caphtorites.

¹⁵Canaan was the father of
Sidon his firstborn, and of the
Hittites, ¹⁶Jebusites, Amorites,
Girgashites, ¹⁷Hivites, Arkites,
Sinites, ¹⁸Arvadites, Zemarites and
Hamathites.

Later the Canaanite clans scattered ¹⁹and
the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon
towards Gerar as far as Gaza, and then
towards Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and
Zeboyim, as far as Lasha.

²⁰These are the sons of Ham by their
clans and languages, in their territories and
nations.

²¹Sons were also born to Shem, whose
elder brother was Japheth; Shem was the
ancestor of all the sons of Eber.

²²The sons of Shem:

Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud and
Aram.

²³The sons of Aram:

Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshek.

²⁴Arphaxad was the father of Shelah,
and Shelah the father of Eber.

²⁵Two sons were born to Eber:

One was named Peleg, because in
his time the earth was divided; his
brother was named Joktan.

²⁶Joktan was the father of
Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth,
Jerah, ²⁷Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,
²⁸Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹Ophir,
Havilah and Jobab. All these were
sons of Joktan.

³⁰The region where they lived stretched
from Mesha towards Sephar, in the eastern
hill country.

³¹These are the sons of Shem by their

clans and languages, in their territories and
nations.

³²These are the clans of Noah’s sons,
according to their lines of descent, within
their nations. From these the nations
spread out over the earth after the flood.

— **PSALM 4:1-8**

¹Answer me when I call to you,
my righteous God.

Give me relief from my distress;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

²How long will you people turn my glory
into shame?

How long will you love delusions and
seek false gods?

³Know that the LORD has set apart his
faithful servant for himself;
the LORD hears when I call to him.

⁴Tremble and do not sin;
when you are on your beds,
search your hearts and be silent.

⁵Offer the sacrifices of the righteous
and trust in the LORD.

⁶Many, LORD, are asking, ‘Who will bring
us prosperity?’

Let the light of your face shine on us.

⁷Fill my heart with joy
when their grain and new wine abound.

⁸In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, LORD,
make me dwell in safety.

— **PROVERBS 1:10-14**

¹⁰My son, if sinful men entice you,
do not give in to them.

¹¹If they say, ‘Come along with us;

let’s lie in wait for innocent blood,
let’s ambush some harmless soul;

¹²let’s swallow them alive, like the grave,
and whole, like those who go down to
the pit;

¹³we will get all sorts of valuable things
and fill our houses with plunder;

¹⁴cast lots with us;
we will all share the loot’ –

— **MATTHEW 4:21-5:12**

²¹Going on from there, he saw two other
brothers, James son of Zebedee and his
brother John. They were in a boat with their
father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus
called them, ²²and immediately they left
the boat and their father and followed him.

²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teach-
ing in their synagogues, proclaiming the
good news of the kingdom, and healing ev-
ery disease and illness among the people.

²⁴News about him spread all over Syria, and
people brought to him all who were ill with
various diseases, those suffering severe
pain, the demon-possessed, those having
seizures, and the paralysed; and he healed
them. ²⁵Large crowds from Galilee, the De-
capolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region
across the Jordan followed him.

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he
went up on a mountainside and sat
down. His disciples came to him, ²and he
began to teach them.

He said:

³‘Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted
because of righteousness,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹'Blessed are you when people insult you,
persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil
against you because of me. ¹²Rejoice and be
glad, because great is your reward in heav-
en, for in the same way they persecuted the
prophets who were before you.

False Accusation

'Blessed are you when people ... falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.' **Matthew 5:11**

Today we examine a hurt that often arises within the human heart - false accusation. Has someone accused you of a wrong for which you were not responsible, and though you try to explain or defend yourself, no one seems to believe you? It hurts, doesn't it? I have known many Christians who, when faced with the hurt of false accusation, turned away from the Christian life altogether. How sad! I have a friend who was falsely accused by fellow Christians in a church, and although I and many others knew the accusation was not true and passionately defended him, he broke down and was placed in a mental institution.

People (even Christians) have their own ways of trying to cope with the feelings that arise when they are falsely accused. Some turn to alcohol. They want to dull the pain inside them, and so they take what seems to them to be an easy way to that end. But it doesn't work, for there is always the morning after.

Some turn to books. That was the advice Edmund Gosse gave to his friend Robert Ross when he became involved in the Oscar Wilde scandal at the end of the nineteenth century. 'Turn for consolation to books,' he said. But it didn't work. Others might turn to nature, to art, or to music.

There is, however, a better way. If you are a Christian, and your heart is heavy because of a false accusation, then I assure you that the blessed Comforter is alongside you even now. Offer the hurt to Him. He delights to heal.

PRAYER

Blessed Lord Jesus, You who knew the hurt of being falsely accused, draw near in the power of Your Spirit and heal me now. I take - and You undertake. Thank You, Saviour. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY

James 3; 1 Pet. 3:16; 2:1;
Luke 6:7

- What is the hardest thing to tame?
- For what should we use our tongues?

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