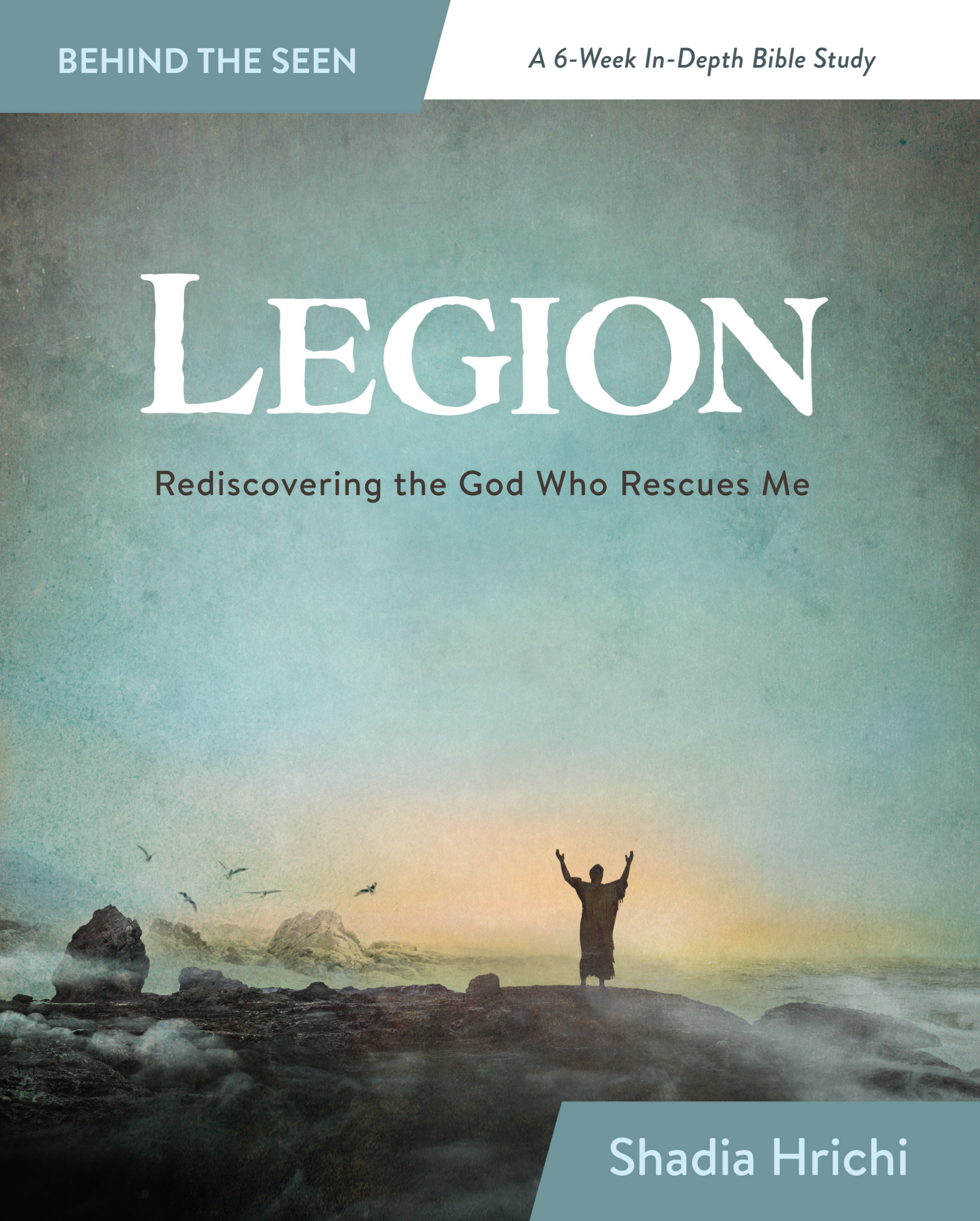


BEHIND THE SEEN

A 6-Week In-Depth Bible Study

LEGION

Rediscovering the God Who Rescues Me



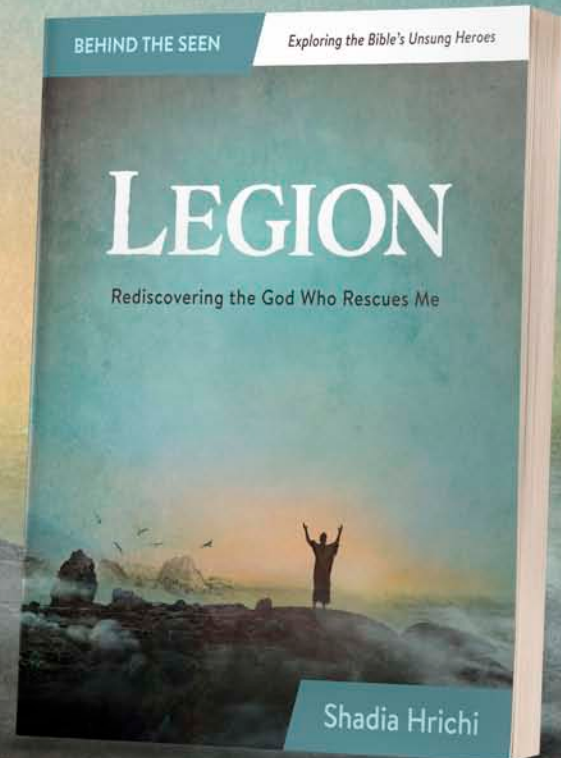
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About the Author

Shadia Hrichi is a passionate Bible teacher who has a heart for seeing lives transformed by the power of God's Word. She has received a master's in biblical and theological studies from Western Seminary, as well as a master's in criminal justice from the State University of New York. Shadia is the author of several Bible studies, including *Hagar* and *Worthy of Love*, and is often invited to speak at churches, conferences, and other events. Residing in northern California, Shadia is an active member of Venture Christian Church and loves to visit the ocean each week for "a date with Jesus."



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Praise for **Legion**

“Shadia has written another outstanding study. *Legion* is rich and in-depth. There were so many new insights; several brought tears to my eyes. Well written and well organized, this study is packed with valuable life lessons. I can’t wait to read the next one!”

—**Francine Rivers**, international best-selling author

“Shadia combines brilliant biblical insights with thought-provoking applications as she unfolds the stirring story of the man known as Legion. Though one of the more obscure individuals to experience Christ’s powerful rescuing love, this man’s life is destined to become a much-loved Bible story as Shadia leads you into his broken world. I highly recommend this stunning, thorough, unforgettable, hope-filled Bible study.”

—**Phyllis Bennett**, director of the Women’s Center for Ministry at Western Seminary

“When I opened the cover of *Legion*, I knew to expect something special. Shadia has proven again and again to be such a gifted, kind, patient, and wise Bible teacher. What I didn’t expect was such a wide-ranging study of who God is, how much he loves us, and what good things he offers. Exploring one of the most overlooked and misunderstood miracles of Jesus, this powerful study offers a step-by-step approach to understanding God and his work in a deeper way. If you want to get to know God better, Shadia is a wonderful guide.”

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“In this excellent, in-depth study, Shadia invites us on roads less-traveled to find the courage to face the deep struggles that often leave us feeling helpless and hopeless. Journeying through the biblical story of Legion while sharing parts of her own, Shadia comes alongside her readers with relevancy and compassion, revealing a holy, merciful God who desires to break through our toughest walls and rescue us. Powerful, personal, and life-changing!”

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—**Bruce W. Martin**, author of *Desperate for Hope*

BEHIND THE SEEN

Exploring the Bible's Unsung Heroes

LEGION

Rediscovering the God Who Rescues Me

Shadia Hrichi



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LEGION

Rediscovering the God Who Rescues Me



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EACH ONE OF US IS CREATED BY GOD FOR A PURPOSE.

However, in order for each of us to fulfill that purpose, we need each other. Scripture describes us as “one body” but “many parts.” I confess that there is not enough room here to recognize every person whom God, in His grace, has brought alongside me in some way as this ministry grows. Nevertheless, I wish to personally thank those who were involved in the development or support of this study.

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ongoing prayers, ministry support, and logistical help, along with your enduring love and friendship, bless me more than you can know.

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And to you, dear reader: How can I ever thank you enough for allowing me to serve you through this work? You have many choices, and I am deeply humbled that you would choose to read this study. May our heavenly Father bless you as you journey through His wonderful Word.

Most of all, my heart is overflowing with gratitude to my loving Lord and King. I am nothing apart from Him and have nothing to offer apart from His grace working in my life. Thank you, Jesus, for calling me out of the darkness and into Your glorious Light. To Your Name alone belongs all glory, honor, and praise!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



SHADIA HRICHI IS A PASSIONATE BIBLE

teacher, author, and speaker who has a heart for seeing lives transformed by the power of God's Word. Having experienced much heartache, such as a broken home, abortion, and divorce, Shadia captures the hearts of

her audience as she illustrates God's love, faithfulness, and power of redemption through her personal experience.

She has received a master's in biblical and theological studies from Western Seminary, as well as a master's in criminal justice from the State University of New York. Shadia is the author of several Bible studies, including *Hagar*, the first study in her Behind the Seen series, and *Worthy of Love*, a story-driven Bible study for post-abortion healing. In addition to teaching Bible studies, Shadia is often invited to speak at churches, conferences, and other events. Her insightful, witty, yet vulnerable teaching style reveals a compassion for the hurting, love for Jesus, and uncompromising commitment to the truth of God's Word.

Residing in northern California, Shadia is an active member of Venture Christian Church and loves visiting the ocean each week for "a date with Jesus." Be sure to visit www.shadiahrichi.com and sign up for updates. *Legion* is the second study in her new series, Behind the Seen: Exploring the Bible's Unsung Heroes. Be among the first to be notified of the next study!



ABOUT THE STUDY

WELCOME! I AM EXCITED THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO journey with me in *Rediscovering the God Who Rescues Me*. Truly, God's Word is like hidden treasure: sometimes you find the most powerful lessons in the most surprising places—such as in the story we are about to explore.

This book is divided into six weeks, each comprised of five days of personal study. Each day includes one or more questions suitable for group discussion. These questions are followed by a ☺. Be sure not to overlook these questions, even if you are working through the material on your own. There are also Pause to Ponder sections throughout the study. These are designed to provide you with a time of personal reflection. Use the space in the margins or the blank note pages (or, if you prefer, even a journal or notebook) to respond to these questions. For readers desiring to dig even deeper, I've prepared Extra questions, which are preceded by a ☺.

Each day of study will take approximately thirty to forty-five minutes. If you have time to go deeper, consider integrating the Extra questions into your study time. At the end of each day, there is a Your Turn section for personal application. These questions are very important. While studying the Bible can stir our hearts and open our eyes to wonderful truths, it's only when we apply what we have learned that it will have a lasting impact for God's kingdom.

During my exploration of this story, I often found myself fascinated by secondary topics related to the material. The Supplemental Readings I've included throughout the study are not essential, but you may find them enjoyable and informative. If you are doing the study as a group, one of the biggest challenges can be accommodating different time constraints among individual participants. For this purpose, I have included some group study tips, which you may find useful.



Before you begin, take a few moments to ask the Holy Spirit to guide you over the next six weeks and to bless your commitment to this study. Then, as you open your Bible and your heart, begin each day with an eager expectation of *Rediscovering the God Who Rescues Me*.



GROUP STUDY TIPS

BECAUSE ANY DEEP WORK OF GOD REQUIRES A SACRIFICE of time spent in His Word and in His presence, the volume of material in an in-depth study can be challenging for some participants. For this reason, several suggestions are provided to help you facilitate the study when participants have varying levels of time constraints.

Plan an Extended Schedule

Rather than meeting for six weeks, consider adding an extra week after Parts One, Two, and Three of the study, for a total of nine weeks; or if your schedule permits, allow two weeks for each chapter, for a total of twelve weeks. These modifications provide periodic opportunities for participants to “catch up” on anything they may have missed or to spend extra time on areas of the study they may wish to explore further.

Customized Commitments for a Six-Week Schedule

Based on a six-week format, the following are suggested assignments based on an individual's time constraints.

For All Participants

- Read through each day's material, including the assigned Bible passages.
- Optional: read the Supplemental Reading section as provided in various weeks.



Light (15 minutes a day)

- Complete the Your Turn personal application section at the end of each day.
- If you have time, complete the Group Discussion questions identified with a .

Moderate (30 minutes a day)

- Complete the various Pause to Ponder personal reflection sections as well as the Your Turn personal application section at the end of each day.
- Complete the Group Discussion questions identified with a .

In-Depth (45 minutes a day)

- Complete all questions except for the Extra questions identified with a .

All-In (60 minutes a day)

- Complete all questions, including the Extra questions identified with a .
- Read all the Supplemental Reading sections.

May the Lord bless you as you journey through this study!



A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

IF THERE IS ONE UNIVERSAL TRUTH, IT IS THAT EVERY human heart longs for paradise: a perfect world without death, pain, or sorrow. A world at peace, where each of us is secure, treasured, and loved. But the reality is that the world as we know it will never deliver; *it cannot*. Scripture tells us that “the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19).

As a result, you and I live in a broken world—a world that has been drifting off course ever since that slippery serpent enticed our first parents to reject God’s authority in that garden paradise so long ago. In that moment, they unwittingly handed over dominion of the earth to Satan on a silver platter. But this then begs the question: *Why was God willing to risk rebellion in the Garden? And why would God allow His perfect creation to fall victim to the enemy’s schemes? And if God is good, why does He allow evil to exist?*

Over the next six weeks, you and I will explore the answers to these questions and more as we step into the fascinating story of the man known only by the name of the demons that tormented him. To be honest, I don’t know why I am attracted to the hard stories in the Bible—the messy stories. I suspect it stems, in part, from my own broken past. I can relate much easier to the broken people—the ones who experienced times when they felt unseen, or unloved, or unwanted. At the same time, their stories captivate my heart because when God reveals what He is doing *behind the seen*, His power and glory are displayed in ways that make my spirit soar!

So I invite you to come with me as we climb into the boat with Jesus and head into enemy territory. We will witness Jesus’s power and passion as He battles violent storms and armies of demons in order to rescue . . . *one . . . lost . . . soul*.



Tormented, chained, and living in a graveyard, the man had no one to help him—no one to intercede for him. No one but Jesus. As a result of Jesus's pursuit:

- A demoniac becomes a disciple.
- A house of demons becomes a dwelling for the Living God.
- The chained becomes a champion of good news.

You and I live in a world crying out for rescue. And just as Jesus was willing to cross the sea and rescue one man from the enemy's chains, He crossed the heavens to rescue you and me from a fate even worse: *eternal chains*. But praise God that through His sacrifice for sin, Jesus conquered all the forces of evil and opened up the gates of paradise to all who embrace His mercy. So come with me; let's rediscover the God Who Rescues Me!

Your sister in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shadia".

“For He rescued us from the domain of darkness,
and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.”

—Colossians 1:13 NASB

PART I

THE BONDAGE



REFLECTING ON GOD'S RISK

WEEK ONE

WE ARE NOT EVEN TOLD HIS NAME: THE MAN OTHERWISE known by the demons that tormented him—Legion. The Gospel writers simply describe him as a “demoniac.” If there is one story in the New Testament that epitomizes the ravages of evil in humanity, it has to be the story we are going to explore over the next six weeks as we journey through the Gospel of Mark.

But before we begin in Mark, a question begs to be answered: If God, who is infinite and all-knowing, knew of all the pain, chaos, and suffering that evil would inflict on His beloved children, then why did He allow sin to enter the world in the first place?

DAY ONE Pondering Our Divine Design

“It was a dark and stormy night . . .” This famous opening line from *Paul Clifford* powerfully sets the stage for an intriguing story, but the concept didn’t originate there. In fact, the scene is exactly how the story of Legion begins: “When evening had come, [Jesus] said to them, ‘Let us go across to the other side.’ . . . And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat” (Mark 4:35, 37).



.....

"The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."

—Genesis 1:2

.....

.....

The original meaning of the word *cosmos*, from the Greek *kosmos*, is "order" and "harmony," and only later did it come to be synonymous with "universe."

.....

It's dark. A storm is raging. The waters are out of control. Even these seasoned fishermen will soon begin to panic in the chaos. But I'm getting ahead of myself. It is a remarkable story, and it's one I cannot wait for us to dive into. However, to properly study any passage in the Bible, we must first consider how the passage fits within the book in which it appears, as well as how it all fits within the Bible as a whole. This helps us to set the stage for whatever passage we are studying. So before we open Mark's Gospel and dive into the details of our story, we will spend a few days exploring the events that begin with the Bible's first mention of darkness, untamed waters, and chaos.

In the Beginning

Perhaps you are already familiar with the major events recorded in the first three chapters of Genesis:

- God creates the world in six days; He rests on the seventh day.
- God creates Adam and Eve, to whom He gives authority over the earth and all its creatures.
- Adam and Eve live in a garden paradise, enjoying God's presence.
- Then one day, a snake talks, Eve listens, Adam bites, and it all falls apart.

Did God know the risk in allowing mankind to sin and forfeit their dominion over the earth? Of course He did. From our limited perspective, the events in Genesis appear risky; but for God, this divine risk sets the stage for a glorious *divine rescue*.

From Chaos to Cosmos

Read Genesis 1:1-25. How is the earth described according to verse 2?

This passage is packed with contrasts. Fill in the following blanks based on these contrasts. I completed one as an example.

God shines _____ into the darkness.

He establishes order out of chaos.

Out of emptiness, He _____ the earth with life.

PAUSE TO PONDER

Consider the three statements you completed. Try to imagine if one or more of these aspects were missing in our world. Would you still be able to enjoy it? Explain.

Record your thoughts in the margin; do this for all Pause to Ponder sections.

Just imagine a world that is orderly and full of life, but without any light to behold it. Or a world full of light and life, but without any order: no assurance of another sunrise, or seasons, or any physical laws to help us make sense of our world. It is by His wisdom and kindness that God brings light, order, and a world filled with creatures into being *before* He brings mankind—the crown of His creation—to enter and enjoy it.

Read Genesis 1:26-31. In addition to God's blessing "be fruitful and multiply," what else does God tell Adam and Eve to do? Describe this responsibility in your own words.

Regarding man's relation to the earth, the verb commonly translated "subdue" is from the Hebrew root word *kabash*. This verb is quite severe; it literally means to make into a slave. In other words, God expects mankind to exercise kingly authority over the earth, to care for it as God's trusted stewards, and to enjoy its benefits. Humans, created in the image of God, are the only creatures who are given delegated authority. We have been assigned with caring for the earth and all of its creatures. That's quite a responsibility! And yet this delegated authority is a beautiful invitation for mankind to share in God's wonderful work.

PAUSE TO PONDER

In your opinion, how has mankind responded to this responsibility? Where would you place an X on the line below?

untrustworthy ————— trustworthy



Explain your response.

.....

"The heavens are the
LORD's heavens, but the
earth he has given to the
children of man."

—Psalm 115:16

.....



.....
 "[Each day] we wake
 into a world we didn't
 make, into a salvation
 we didn't earn."¹

—Eugene H. Peterson

.....
 God's design for a weekly
 day of rest is a *gift*!

A Sabbath Rest

If there is one thing my friends know about me, it is that I set aside one day each week for a date with Jesus. But this was not always so. It took a near crash and burn incident to teach me the importance of God's design for regular rest. I hate to confess it, but the lesson occurred while I was in seminary. It was not a class or a textbook that drove the message home, though those were certainly provided. Rather, it was an increasingly frantic pace trying to juggle a job, write papers, attend classes, and honor other commitments and responsibilities.

Seven days went by without taking a break, then eight, then nine . . . ten . . . eleven. Each day, I reasoned I could push through one more day. Just one more paper. One more task. One more late night at the computer. Until one day, I finally pushed it too far. I crashed. I was so physically and mentally exhausted that I spent the following week in bed, too ill to do anything at all. Several months later, one of my seminary professors had his class read an article called "The Pastor's Sabbath" by Eugene H. Peterson. God used Peterson's wise words to help me recognize that God's design for a weekly day of rest is a *gift*! It's an opportunity for extended communion with our Creator and to be reminded that "apart from [Him we] can do nothing" (John 15:5). I share some ideas on planning a Sabbath day at the end of this study.

Read Genesis 2:1–3. What did God do on the seventh day and why?

When you think of a Sabbath day (or day of rest), what comes to mind? How would you describe it?

This is the first time we read of God bestowing a blessing over something other than His creatures. The words "the seventh day" are mentioned a full three times in just two verses; clearly, the author wants his audience to take notice.

Read Exodus 16:23, 29–30. Compare these verses with Genesis 2:2–3. What similarities can you discover?

Using a Bible dictionary or conventional dictionary, define the word "holy."

 Reflect on your description of a Sabbath rest. Does the concept of the Sabbath day being holy impact your understanding of God's design for rest? Explain.

Although a formal command to observe a Sabbath rest was not established by God until Exodus 16, the concept of Sabbath, a day of rest, originates from the Hebrew verb *shabath* in Genesis 2. This word suggests simply stopping or taking a break rather than recovery from hard work.

Read Isaiah 40:28 in the margin and John 5:17 in your Bible. In what ways can you take comfort in knowing that God never wearies or stops working? 

The reality is that if God stopped working, the universe would instantly fall apart. Scripture teaches that He holds all things together (Col. 1:17; see also Rom. 11:36). When we read that God rested, it serves as an example to follow, as well as a foreshadowing of a greater rest yet to come. After God accomplished all He set out to do in creating the world, He took time to enjoy His creation—and He desires for us to enjoy it as well.

Consecrated by God

In Genesis 1:3–10, Scripture describes a number of incidents when God separated one thing from another. However, Genesis 2:3 is the first time something is set apart as consecrated, or holy, to God. And what does He consecrate? The light? The earth? Adam? No. He sets apart a period of time.

Glance back at Genesis 1:23, 26–27, and 31. On which day was mankind created?

In the Hebrew view of time, each day begins not in the morning but at sunset. "And there was evening and there was morning, the first day" (Gen. 1:5).

If Adam and Eve were the last creatures God made on the sixth day, on which day, then, did the first humans experience their first *full day* of life?

.....
"The LORD is the everlasting
God, the Creator of the
ends of the earth. He does
not faint or grow weary."

—Isaiah 40:28
.....



Do you think this is significant? Why or why not? *✎*

God worked for six days to create “the heavens and the earth . . . and all the host of them” (Gen. 2:1). His work on the sixth day included creating all the land animals and creatures. Then, when everything else was completed, He created mankind in His own image. This means that the first full day of mankind’s existence was also the very first Sabbath day. It is not only the first day consecrated by God in the history of the world, but it foreshadows an even greater “rest” to come!
And He chose to share it with us!

.....Your Turn

When you consider God’s establishment of a Sabbath, or day of rest, how do you tend to view it? A gift? A burden? A command to obey? Share your thoughts. *✎*

How often, on average, do you (either alone or with your spouse or family) set aside one day of the week for enjoying God’s gifts of rest, His creation, and, most importantly, His presence?

every week

once or twice a month

I can’t remember the last time I took a day off to simply enjoy God’s presence

If you do regularly enjoy a day set apart for God, how has it impacted your relationship with God or helped you recognize your dependence on Him? Share your thoughts.

If you do not regularly enjoy a day set apart for God, or if you struggle to see the value in it, spend some time in prayer asking God to reveal to you His purpose in desiring His people to enjoy a day of “solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD” (Exod. 16:23). Write what He reveals to you.

Wherever you may be in this regard, take a moment and thank God for His desire to spend time with you. Write a prayer as He leads you.

DAY TWO

Falling for the Enemy's Charms

Let's pause here for just a moment. Scripture assures us that when God created the world, He "saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." Yet when we consider all that is happening in our world today, the reality of those words can seem as far out of reach as the idyllic days of Eden itself. After all, people are suffering and have been for centuries. Wars. Disease. Human trafficking. Abortion . . . and the list goes on.

So what went wrong?

The First Garden Paradise

I confess, I don't like gardening. My late grandmother was a prolific gardener, as are my mother, aunt, and cousin. However, I am lucky if I can keep a cactus alive. Even my silk plants tremble when I walk by. Years ago, when I worked in an office and was leaving on vacation, I handed my one lonely plant to a coworker to care for while I was away. When I returned two weeks later, I not only failed to recognize the plant, but my coworker refused to return it, mumbling something about me not deserving to have one.

In Genesis 2:8, Scripture says that God planted a garden. In it, man would find everything he needed to enjoy life: delicious and nutritious food, plenty of fresh water, pleasant surroundings, immortality,² and, most importantly, the enjoyment of God's presence. But something entered in and was lurking in the shadows . . .

Read Genesis 2:15-17. (Optional: read Genesis 2:4-17.) What command and warning does God speak to Adam?

At this point, Adam had no frame of reference for the concepts of evil and death. On what basis, then, did God expect Adam to obey His command?

.....

"And God saw everything
that he had made, and
behold, it was very good."
—Genesis 1:31

.....



PAUSE TO PONDER

Think of a time when you struggled to understand something that God wanted you to do (or not do). What helped you move forward in obedience when what He required seemed to make no sense?

The Bait

In his commentary on the book of Genesis, Victor Hamilton explains, “There are only four chapters in the Bible where Satan is not present, the first two and the last two. The Bible begins and ends with him out of existence. But between Genesis 3 and Revelation 20 he is a factor to be reckoned with.”³

Read Genesis 3:1-8; then, answer the questions that follow. (Optional: read Genesis 2:18-3:8.)⁴

Describe two or three things God could have done to prevent Adam and Eve from eating the forbidden fruit.

Do you find God’s apparent inaction surprising? Confusing? Disturbing? Share your thoughts.

 What reason(s) might God have had for choosing not to intervene? List as many as you can think of.

There are many ways God could have stepped in. He could have interrupted the serpent’s conversation or prevented the serpent’s access to the Garden altogether. God could have blocked the way to the tree by building a wall or posting an angel as a guard. One thing is clear: God could have stepped in if He wanted to. But He didn’t.

If God had prevented the events leading up to Adam and Eve's disobedience, would these actions have removed Adam and Eve's ability to choose to disobey? Explain.

If God had stepped in, His involvement might have kept Adam and Eve's willingness to disobey hidden, but it could never remove the inherent vulnerability that existed from the start. While God made all things good, they were not made *unchangeably* good. God did not create evil; but from the beginning, He created mankind with the dignity of having freedom to make their own choices.

The Setup

Genesis 3:1 describes the serpent as being more crafty (or shrewd) than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

Look up the word "crafty" in a dictionary and write the definition in your own words.

The Hebrew word for "crafty" in Scripture (*arum*) is neutral. Its interpretation, whether a positive trait (such as prudent) or negative (such as shrewd), depends on the context and the character of the one being described. We know that God made all creatures good (Gen. 1:31). However, the creatures were not all created the same. Each kind had a unique set of abilities and strengths. Perhaps the enemy's choice of the serpent as his instrument is not so surprising given that Jesus Himself describes the serpent as a wise creature (Matt. 10:16). Nevertheless, it is important to remember that both the serpent and the enemy speaking through it are created beings and are therefore infinitely inferior to the Almighty Creator of the universe.

Contrast the serpent's remarks to Eve in Genesis 3:1 with the command God gave to Adam in Genesis 2:16–17. In what ways did the serpent twist God's words?

After implying that God was harsh and unkind by exaggerating His prohibition, the serpent then sat back and allowed the woman to correct him. Although Eve

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Interesting fact: The origin of the word "universe" is the combination of "uni" (one) and "verse," which originates from the Latin *versus*, meaning a row or line of poetry. Our English word *universe* ("one verse"), therefore, affirms the biblical account of God speaking the world into existence with just one verse!

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corrected the exaggeration—even defending God’s goodness—the serpent had successfully lured Eve into a deeper conversation.

The conversation moved to a discussion about God Himself. In fact, this was “the first conversation *about* God, the first religious, theological conversation”⁵ in the Bible. The serpent began by claiming to have knowledge superior to God’s. “You will surely not die.” One scholar explains that because the serpent first removed the fear of penalty, the victim was primed to consider the benefits that would come from disobeying God’s command.⁶

PAUSE TO PONDER

When we dismiss God as harsh or unkind, are we afterward more susceptible to falling into temptation? Explain. *ss*

How can knowing and trusting in God’s Word make you less vulnerable to the enemy’s attacks? *ss*

The Fall

Genesis 3:6 states that Adam was with Eve; however, it is unclear whether he was with her during the conversation with the serpent, or whether the events beginning in verse 6 occurred later. However, Scripture does not indicate that Eve left the serpent to go and find Adam.

Consider again Genesis 3:1-8; then, answer the questions that follow. Apart from taking the fruit right then and there, what else could Eve have done?

What else could Adam have done?

ss What principle can you apply to your own life?

The serpent never actually told Eve to eat the fruit. In the same way, Eve never actually told Adam to eat the fruit. As a matter of fact, whether the serpent remained on the scene after he spoke to Eve is not clear. However, the seed of doubt of

God's goodness had been planted. From there, the temptation slithered almost effortlessly into human consciousness.

Glance back at Genesis 1:27-28. What authority did God delegate to Adam and Eve?

Being that the serpent is also one of God's creatures, how did Adam and Eve respond to their delegated authority?

Sadly, rather than ruling over the creatures as God had intended, Adam and Eve allowed a creature to rule over them. In effect, they turned God's created order upside down.

Read John 12:31-32 and Ephesians 2:1-2. Describe Satan according to these verses.

 In what ways do these descriptions shed light on what we are studying?

By bowing to Satan's words instead of God's, Adam and Eve handed Satan their delegated authority on a silver platter.⁷ As a result, Satan became the new "ruler of this world."

Read Job 1:6-12 and 2:1-6. Whom must Satan answer to?

In what ways can you take comfort in knowing that all authority ultimately belongs to God?

Half-Truths

After casting doubt on God's goodness, the serpent suggested that God had selfish motives for His threats. The serpent made three specific promises.



In the table below, list the three promises Satan made in Genesis 3:4–5 in the order they appear in the passage. Then, next to each one, state whether or not the promise was confirmed. I completed the first one for you.

Promise	Outcome (Did the serpent's words come true?)
1. <i>You will not die.</i>	Yes
2.	
3.	(Hint: read Gen. 3:22)

 Ponder the table. What conclusions can you draw?

The serpent was crafty indeed. It appears he was correct; however, his words were only half-truths. First, Adam and Eve did not die in that moment, but God's warning of death would soon come to pass. Second, their eyes were opened, but rather than bringing happiness, wisdom, and power, it brought consciousness of sin and the resulting fear and shame. Finally, the serpent's promise—you will be like God, knowing good and evil—was confirmed, in one sense, by God Himself in Genesis 3:22. However, the “knowing” was not on a level that brought them closer to God. In fact, it sent them cowering into the shadows away from His presence.

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 “But each person is
 tempted when he is
 lured and enticed by his
 own desire.”

—James 1:14

Read James 1:14 in the margin. What insight does this verse offer in light of the events we are studying?

Read James 4:7 and 1 Peter 5:8–9. In what manner should a Christian respond to the enemy's schemes, according to these verses?

Like every human being who would follow them, Adam and Eve each had a choice to make: God's will or my will? Asserting self-will when it is in conflict with God's will is always disobedience, which is sin. As with Eve, the danger for each of us is not when we take the first bite (by then, it's too late), but when we *engage* with the enemy in conversation. To this day, he whispers his deception into any receptive ears: “Did God really say . . . ?”

.....Your Turn

Thinking on your past, in what ways has the enemy attempted to cast doubt on:
God's goodness in your heart and mind?

The authority of God's Word in your life?

How about right now? Is there an area of your life in which you are tempted to doubt God's goodness or downplay the teaching in God's Word? If so, bring the situation to God in prayer and ask Him to help you see what might be at the root of your struggle. Write a prayer in response to what God reveals to you.

Whether or not you are experiencing this kind of struggle right now, what one thing can you do this week to guard your heart and mind from the enemy's schemes? Write a prayer of response below.

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"Eden" in Hebrew means
"delight" or "happiness."
It is not the name of the
garden, but rather the
country or region where
God planted His garden.⁸

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