

# January 1

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## GENESIS 1

**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.**

<sup>3</sup>And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." <sup>7</sup>And God made the firmament and separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And it was so. <sup>8</sup>And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

<sup>9</sup>And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth." And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

<sup>14</sup>And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, <sup>15</sup>and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And

it was so. <sup>16</sup>And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. <sup>17</sup>And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup>to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens." <sup>21</sup>So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." <sup>23</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. <sup>25</sup>And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup>And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." <sup>29</sup>And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup>And

to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. <sup>31</sup>And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

**2** Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. <sup>2</sup>And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. <sup>3</sup>So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

<sup>4</sup> These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup>when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; <sup>6</sup>but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground—<sup>7</sup>then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. <sup>8</sup>And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. <sup>9</sup>And out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup>A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. <sup>11</sup>The name of the first is Pi’shon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Hav’ilah, where there is gold; <sup>12</sup>and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. <sup>13</sup>The name of the second river is Gi’hon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush. <sup>14</sup>And the name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphra’tes.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

<sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; <sup>17</sup>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 die.”

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” <sup>19</sup>So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup>The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. <sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; <sup>22</sup>and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup>Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man.”

<sup>24</sup>Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. <sup>25</sup>And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

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**PSALM 1**

Blessed is the man  
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;  
<sup>2</sup>but his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.  
<sup>3</sup>He is like a tree  
planted by streams of water,  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.

<sup>4</sup>The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff which the wind  
drives away.

<sup>5</sup>Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
<sup>6</sup>for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

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## MATTHEW 1

### The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

<sup>2</sup>Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,  
<sup>3</sup>and Judah the father of Per'ez and Ze'rah by Ta'mar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram,  
<sup>4</sup>and Ram the father of Ammin'adab, and Ammin'adab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon,  
<sup>5</sup>and Salmon the father of Boaz by Ra'hab, and Boaz the father of O'bed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse,  
<sup>6</sup>and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uri'ah,  
<sup>7</sup>and Solomon the father of Rehobo'am, and Rehoboam the father of Abi'jah, and Abijah the father of Asa,  
<sup>8</sup>and Asa the father of Jehosh'aphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Jo'ram, and Joram the father of Uzzi'ah,  
<sup>9</sup>and Uzzi'ah the father of Jo'tham, and Jotham the father of A'haz, and Ahaz the father of Hezeki'ah,  
<sup>10</sup>and Hezeki'ah the father of Manas'seh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josi'ah,  
<sup>11</sup>and Josi'ah the father of Jechoni'ah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

<sup>12</sup>And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoni'ah was the father of She-al'ti-el, and She-alti-el the father of Zerub'babel,  
<sup>13</sup>and Zerub'babel the father of Abi'ud, and Abiud the father of Eli'akim, and Eliakim the father of A'zor,  
<sup>14</sup>and A'zor the father of Za'dok, and Zadok the father of A'chim, and Achim the father of Eli'ud,  
<sup>15</sup>and Eli'ud the father of

Elea'zar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob,  
<sup>16</sup>and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

<sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit;  
<sup>19</sup>and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly.  
<sup>20</sup>But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit;  
<sup>21</sup>she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."  
<sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us).  
<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife,  
<sup>25</sup>but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

**2** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, Wise Men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying,  
<sup>2</sup>"Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him."  
<sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;  
<sup>4</sup>and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.  
<sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers

of Judah;

for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel."

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod summoned the Wise Men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; <sup>8</sup>and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” <sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king they went their way; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; <sup>11</sup>and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

#### REFLECTION

Scripture begins with God creating everything out of nothing. God’s word is creative, and from it ushers a world filled with beauty, truth, and goodness. Much like his Creator, the author of Genesis employs his own creativity in shaping his words to tell with beauty and brevity the story of the Lord’s creation. With beguiling simplicity he employs patterns of repetition, illustrating God’s order and design from day to day. The author is no mere chronicler, and the reader of Scripture is challenged to read with care, as the series of days follows a deeper pattern: the first three days give the earth form, and the next three fill the void with content (solving the problems of formlessness and void in Genesis 1:2). The seventh day has no parallel, as well as no literal sunset, and, therefore, no end. Far from primitive prose, this account rises up to a poem of high praise—simple, but deeply sublime. As a wise scribe would later say, “It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out” (Prv 25:2). Reading Scripture is thus a kind of royal exploration. In science, man explores the “what” and the “how” of the world, but in the quest of Scripture, we take on the greater task of discovering the “why.” What is a practical way to make the daily reading of Scripture an integral part of your spiritual life?

## January 2

### GENESIS 3

**Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made.**

He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’” <sup>2</sup>And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; <sup>3</sup>but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” <sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

<sup>8</sup>And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup>And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” <sup>11</sup>He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” <sup>12</sup>The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent beguiled me, and I ate.” <sup>14</sup>The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,  
 cursed are you above all cattle,  
 and above all wild animals;  
 upon your belly you shall go,  
 and dust you shall eat  
 all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup>I will put enmity between you  
 and the woman,  
 and between your seed and her seed;  
 he shall bruise your head,  
 and you shall bruise his heel.”

<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said,  
 “I will greatly multiply your pain  
 in childbearing;  
 in pain you shall bring forth children,  
 yet your desire shall be for your husband,  
 and he shall rule over you.”

<sup>17</sup>And to Adam he said,  
 “Because you have listened to the voice of  
 your wife,  
 and have eaten of the tree  
 of which I commanded you,  
 ‘You shall not eat of it,’  
 cursed is the ground because of you;  
 in toil you shall eat of it all the days of  
 your life;

<sup>18</sup>thorns and thistles it shall bring forth  
 to you;  
 and you shall eat the plants of the field.

<sup>19</sup>In the sweat of your face  
 you shall eat bread  
 till you return to the ground,  
 for out of it you were taken;  
 you are dust,  
 and to dust you shall return.”

<sup>20</sup>The man called his wife’s name Eve, be-  
 cause she was the mother of all living. <sup>21</sup>And  
 the LORD God made for Adam and for his  
 wife garments of skins, and clothed them.

<sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the  
 man has become like one of us, knowing  
 good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his  
 hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat,  
 and live for ever”—<sup>23</sup>therefore the LORD God  
 sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to  
 till the ground from which he was taken.

<sup>24</sup>He drove out the man; and at the east of the  
 garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and  
 a flaming sword which turned every way, to  
 guard the way to the tree of life.

**4** Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she  
 conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I  
 have gotten a man with the help of the  
 LORD.” <sup>2</sup>And again, she bore his brother  
 Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and  
 Cain a tiller of the ground. <sup>3</sup>In the course of  
 time Cain brought to the LORD an offering  
 of the fruit of the ground, <sup>4</sup>and Abel brought  
 some of the firstlings of his flock and of  
 their fat portions. And the LORD had regard  
 for Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup>but for Cain and  
 his offering he had no regard. So Cain was  
 very angry, and his countenance fell. <sup>6</sup>The  
 LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and  
 why has your countenance fallen? <sup>7</sup>If you do  
 well, will you not be accepted? And if you  
 do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its  
 desire is for you, but you must master it.”

<sup>8</sup>Cain said to Abel his brother, “Let us go  
 out to the field.” And when they were in the  
 field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel,  
 and killed him. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD said to Cain,  
 “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do  
 not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” <sup>10</sup>And  
 the LORD said, “What have you done? The  
 voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me  
 from the ground. <sup>11</sup>And now you are cursed  
 from the ground, which has opened its  
 mouth to receive your brother’s blood from  
 your hand. <sup>12</sup>When you till the ground, it shall  
 no longer yield to you its strength; you shall  
 be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”

<sup>13</sup>Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is  
 greater than I can bear. <sup>14</sup>Behold, you have  
 driven me this day away from the ground;  
 and from your face I shall be hidden; and  
 I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the  
 earth, and whoever finds me will slay me.”  
<sup>15</sup>Then the LORD said to him, “Not so! If any  
 one slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on  
 him sevenfold.” And the LORD put a mark on  
 Cain, lest any who came upon him should  
 kill him. <sup>16</sup>Then Cain went away from the  
 presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land  
 of Nod, east of Eden.

<sup>17</sup>Cain knew his wife, and she conceived  
 and bore E’noch; and he built a city, and  
 called the name of the city after the name of  
 his son, Enoch. <sup>18</sup>To E’noch was born I’rad;  
 and Irad was the father of Mehu’ja-el, and



Mehuja-el the father of Methu'sha-el, and Methusha-el the father of La'mech. <sup>19</sup>And La'mech took two wives; the name of the one was A'dah, and the name of the other Zillah. <sup>20</sup>A'dah bore Ja'bal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle. <sup>21</sup>His brother's name was Ju'bal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. <sup>22</sup>Zillah bore Tu'bal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Na'amah.

<sup>23</sup>La'mech said to his wives:

"A'dah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
you wives of Lamech, hearken to  
what I say:

I have slain a man for wounding me,  
a young man for striking me.

<sup>24</sup>If Cain is avenged sevenfold,  
truly La'mech seventy-sevenfold."

<sup>25</sup>And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another child instead of Abel, for Cain slew him."

<sup>26</sup>To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name E'nosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of the LORD.

**5** This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. <sup>2</sup>Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. <sup>3</sup>When Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. <sup>4</sup>The days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years; and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup>Thus all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

<sup>6</sup>When Seth had lived a hundred and five years, he became the father of E'nosh. <sup>7</sup>Seth lived after the birth of E'nosh eight hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup>Thus all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

<sup>9</sup>When E'nosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Ke'nan. <sup>10</sup>E'nosh lived after the birth of Ke'nan eight hundred

and fifteen years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>11</sup>Thus all the days of E'nosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.

<sup>12</sup>When Ke'nan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Ma-hal'alel. Ke'nan lived after the birth of Ma-hal'alel eight hundred and forty years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup>Thus all the days of Ke'nan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

<sup>15</sup>When Ma-hal'alel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jar'ed. <sup>16</sup>Ma-hal'alel lived after the birth of Jar'ed eight hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>17</sup>Thus all the days of Ma-hal'alel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

<sup>18</sup>When Jar'ed had lived a hundred and sixty-two years he became the father of E'noch. <sup>19</sup>Jared lived after the birth of E'noch eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup>Thus all the days of Jar'ed were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

<sup>21</sup>When E'noch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methu'selah. E'noch walked with God after the birth of Methu'selah three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup>Thus all the days of E'noch were three hundred and sixty-five years. <sup>24</sup>E'noch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

<sup>25</sup>When Methu'selah had lived a hundred and eighty-seven years, he became the father of La'mech. <sup>26</sup>Methu'selah lived after the birth of La'mech seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>27</sup>Thus all the days of Methu'selah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.

<sup>28</sup>When La'mech had lived a hundred and eighty-two years, he became the father of a son, <sup>29</sup>and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground which the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands."

<sup>30</sup>La'mech lived after the birth of Noah five hundred and ninety-five years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup>Thus all the days of La'mech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

<sup>32</sup>After Noah was five hundred years old, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Ja'pheth.

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## PSALM 2

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

<sup>2</sup>The kings of the earth set themselves,  
and the rulers take counsel together,  
against the LORD and his anointed, saying,

<sup>3</sup>“Let us burst their bonds asunder,  
and cast their cords from us.”

<sup>4</sup>He who sits in the heavens laughs;  
the LORD has them in derision.

<sup>5</sup>Then he will speak to them in his wrath,  
and terrify them in his fury, saying,

<sup>6</sup>“I have set my king  
on Zion, my holy mountain.”

<sup>7</sup>I will tell of the decree of the LORD:  
He said to me, “You are my son,  
today I have begotten you.

<sup>8</sup>Ask of me, and I will make the nations  
your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.

<sup>9</sup>You shall break them with a rod of iron,  
and dash them in pieces like a potter's  
vessel.”

<sup>10</sup>Now therefore, O kings, be wise;  
be warned, O rulers of the earth.

<sup>11</sup>Serve the LORD with fear,  
with trembling <sup>12</sup>rejoice,  
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way;  
for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

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## MATTHEW 2

**<sup>13</sup>Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till**

I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” <sup>14</sup>And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.”

<sup>16</sup>Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the Wise Men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the Wise Men. <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup>“A voice was heard in Ra'mah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled,  
because they were no more.”

<sup>19</sup>But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, <sup>20</sup>“Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.”

<sup>21</sup>And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup>But when he heard that Archela'us reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled. “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

### REFLECTION

Every great story needs a villain. In the midst of the paradise of Eden, he enters—the primordial villain, the serpent, the devil himself. All other evil antagonists in every other story are but a shadow and echo of this original evil. In Revelation 12 we are told that he is a fallen angel who rebelled against God. His three most common titles in Scripture—the deceiver, the accuser, and the destroyer—unmask his tools and his goal. In his first encounter with humanity, his words seek to weave a web of deceit about God the Father, suggesting that he

is a tyrant and his law is arbitrary. Here, and in all his efforts throughout history, Satan attempts to deceive those made in the image of God, robbing them of their divine likeness. The curse upon the serpent reveals that there will be enmity between the serpent and the seed of the woman (see Gn 3:15). Unfortunately, some descendants of the woman will fall under the influence of the serpent, as Cain does in killing Abel, and later as Herod will in seeking the life of the Child born of the Virgin—the long awaited “seed” that will crush the serpent’s head. The serpent brings a great division within humanity, starting with Cain, to Herod, to the end of time. The question to ask yourself is, as St. Ignatius of Loyola describes in his *Spiritual Exercises*, under whose banner will you march?

## January 3

### GENESIS 6

**When men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them,**

**<sup>2</sup>the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair; and they took to wife such of them as they chose. <sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said, “My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for he is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.” <sup>4</sup>The Neph’ilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.**

<sup>5</sup>The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. <sup>6</sup>And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. <sup>7</sup>So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground, man

and beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” <sup>8</sup>But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. <sup>10</sup>And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Ja’pheth.

<sup>11</sup>Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup>And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. <sup>13</sup>And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh; for the earth is filled with violence through them; behold, I will destroy them with the earth. <sup>14</sup>Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. <sup>15</sup>This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. <sup>16</sup>Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and set the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks. <sup>17</sup>For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall die. <sup>18</sup>But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>19</sup>And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. <sup>20</sup>Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you, to keep them alive. <sup>21</sup>Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them.” <sup>22</sup>Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

**7** Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his



mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate; <sup>3</sup>and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive upon the face of all the earth. <sup>4</sup>For in seven days I will send rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” <sup>5</sup>And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

<sup>6</sup>Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. <sup>7</sup>And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark, to escape the waters of the flood. <sup>8</sup>Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, <sup>9</sup>two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. <sup>10</sup>And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

<sup>11</sup>In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. <sup>12</sup>And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup>On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Ja’pheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, <sup>14</sup>they and every beast according to its kind, and all the cattle according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind, and every bird according to its kind, every bird of every sort. <sup>15</sup>They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. <sup>16</sup>And they that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

<sup>17</sup>The flood continued forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. <sup>18</sup>The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. <sup>19</sup>And the waters prevailed so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven

were covered; <sup>20</sup>the waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. <sup>21</sup>And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, birds, cattle, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm upon the earth, and every man; <sup>22</sup>everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. <sup>23</sup>He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. <sup>24</sup>And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.

**8** But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; <sup>2</sup>the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, <sup>3</sup>and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters had abated; <sup>4</sup>and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ar’arat. <sup>5</sup>And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

<sup>6</sup>At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made, <sup>7</sup>and sent forth a raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; <sup>9</sup>but the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put forth his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. <sup>10</sup>He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; <sup>11</sup>and the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. <sup>12</sup>Then he waited another seven days, and sent forth the dove; and she did not return to him any more.

<sup>13</sup>In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. <sup>14</sup>In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. <sup>15</sup>Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup>“Go forth from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>17</sup>Bring forth with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth.” <sup>18</sup>So Noah went forth, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. <sup>19</sup>And every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves upon the earth, went forth by families out of the ark.

<sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup>And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done. <sup>22</sup>While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

**9** And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. <sup>2</sup>The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. <sup>3</sup>Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. <sup>4</sup>Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. <sup>5</sup>For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of man; of every man’s brother I will require the life of man. <sup>6</sup>Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image. <sup>7</sup>And you, be fruitful

and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it.”

<sup>8</sup>Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup>“Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup>and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. <sup>11</sup>I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” <sup>12</sup>And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: <sup>13</sup>I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. <sup>16</sup>When the bow is in the clouds, I will look upon it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.” <sup>17</sup>God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.”

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A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

**PSALM 3**

O LORD, how many are my foes!  
 Many are rising against me;  
<sup>2</sup>many are saying of me,  
 there is no help for him in God. *Selah*  
<sup>3</sup>But you, O LORD, are a shield about me,  
 my glory, and the lifter of my head.  
<sup>4</sup>I cry aloud to the LORD,  
 and he answers me from his  
 holy mountain. *Selah*  
<sup>5</sup>I lie down and sleep;  
 I wake again, for the LORD sustains me.