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Week One

A DOVE IN GOD'S GARDEN

Scripture Reading for This Week

Matthew 10:29–31

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

What words best describe the main point of this passage? Write them in the space below.

Daughter _____

Mom _____

Psalm 139:13–16

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; . . . My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the

depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

What words best describe the main point of these verses? Write them in the space below.

Daughter _____

Mom _____

Tell each other why you chose these words.

*A*s dawn birthed the morning of the sixth day of creation, God stood back and inspected His work.

The sun in the sky cast its warmth over rolling grassy hills and majestic mountains that jutted up between the valleys and plains of earth, pointing back toward heaven. Birds of every kind soared the azure skies before returning to their nests on the seashore or land. Animals of every species found homes in their favorite terrain, while fish and dolphins and other creatures swam vast oceans, lakes, and rivers.

A lazy river meandered through the Garden of Eden where God had placed the first man, Adam, to live. At nightfall the river swelled until it spilled over its banks and blanketed the garden with a thin sheet of water that nourished the lush foliage. As the sun burst on each new day, the water receded, leaving a covering of dew on the ground.

God came down from heaven and walked through the sleeping garden looking for Adam. The power of His presence stirred a breeze that rustled leaves in a whisper of praise to the Mighty Creator.

God found Adam sleeping in a patch of moss growing in the hollowed-out trunk of a redwood tree. For a few moments, God just stood and watched Adam's chest rise and fall to the rhythm

of his restful breath. God took pleasure in what He had created. It was good. But He had not yet finished His work. To be complete, earth required one final touch of the Creator's hands.

While Adam slept, God reached His hand down and took one of his ribs, closing up the flesh around it. Stooping near the ground, He gently laid the rib in the soil in front of Him. His hands scooped soft, moist dirt and heaped it in a mound over the bone. Then those powerful yet gentle hands molded and shaped a new creation.

As God worked, the creature gradually began to take shape. The form looked a lot like Adam, but at the same time distinctly different. This image was smaller and rounder than Adam and had a softer appearance.

Several animals poked their curious faces through the bushes to get a better look. They watched . . . wondering. A bear padded boldly right up to the creature and sniffed. Other animals began to creep closer now, fascinated by this new addition to the garden.

God paused briefly, considering the qualities this new creation would require to fulfill her purpose on earth.

Overhead, a dove cut against the wind, striking a fanciful silhouette against the blue. God watched the bird rise higher and higher into the sky, pumping its wings harder, faster, higher until it was merely a speck in the heavens. God bid the bird to come to Him, and the pale speck in the distance grew bigger and bigger as the dove suddenly plunged toward earth. Dropping near the ground, it spread its wings and glided to rest on God's shoulder.

God whispered softly to the dove and stroked the back of its head as it cooed its allegiance to the Mighty Creator. He loved the qualities of the dove—gentle, friendly, and delicate. To Him the dove represented peacefulness, loyalty, and purity.

Inside woman, God placed the gentle characteristics of the dove.

But like Adam, this new creation would also need to be strong like the lion. But, no, not the lion. More like the strength of the alabaster—a pure, white stone God had tucked into the

hillsides of Milan. Yes, that was more like it—strong, yet beautiful and translucent.

Now the creature was complete.

God smiled. Then, inhaling deeply, He breathed life into the woman.

Once more, God viewed His masterpiece. “It is perfect,” He said with a smile as He woke Adam up to make the introduction.

Adam was clearly delighted. “I will call you Eve,” he said to her. Then God rested from His work.

What the Story Says

We are God’s pride and joy. As our Creator, He knows us well and delights in our unique characteristics.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean when we say that God delights in us?
2. Have you ever made something that gave you pleasure? Do you think that might be how God felt?
3. Do you think God delights in your unique traits—those qualities that make you different from anyone else?

DEFINITION OF DELIGHT:

To take great pleasure, joy, and satisfaction.

DEFINITION OF UNIQUE:

Distinct, one of a kind.

What Does the Bible Say?

Look up the following Scriptures and fill in the blanks.

Week One: A Dove in God's Garden

Psalm 149:4

For the Lord takes _____ in his _____.

Psalm 103:14

For he _____ how we are _____.

What does this tell you about the level of God's involvement in our personal lives?

Matthew 10:30

And even the very _____ of your head are all _____.

If God knows even the small details about us, how much more does He care about the more important things in our lives?

Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord your God is _____, he is _____
_____. He will take great delight in you, he will
quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.

Look at the second part of the last verse. It says, "He will take great delight in you . . . he will rejoice over you with singing." Write one word that best describes how that makes you feel.

Daughter _____

Mom _____

Looking Deeper

For Discussion:

Ask each other to list some of the qualities that make each of you unique.

GROWING LITTLE WOMEN

Daughter:

Mom:

Together, list three ways you can begin to use those qualities on a daily basis.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List three things both of you could do this week that would please God.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Compare your ideas with these:

- Go to bed early one night each week to enjoy a leisurely chat with God.
- Read from your Bible every day, even if all you can manage is a few verses.

Week One: A Dove in God's Garden

- Ask God each morning to accompany you throughout your day.

Wow! Now you have six great ideas. Practice them this week.

For Discussion:

Discuss and list below three reasons you know you are special to God.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Compare your ideas with these:

- His Word says so.
- He died on the cross for my sins.
- I experience His love when I feel His presence.

Action Ideas

Spend some time looking at old photos of you and your family. Daughter, ask your mother to tell you all about the day you were born.

Words to Memorize

For the Lord takes delight in his people.
Psalm 149:4

Your Goal for This Week

Closing Prayer

Lord, help me to remember that You created me for Your pleasure. Teach me how to please You in all that I do.