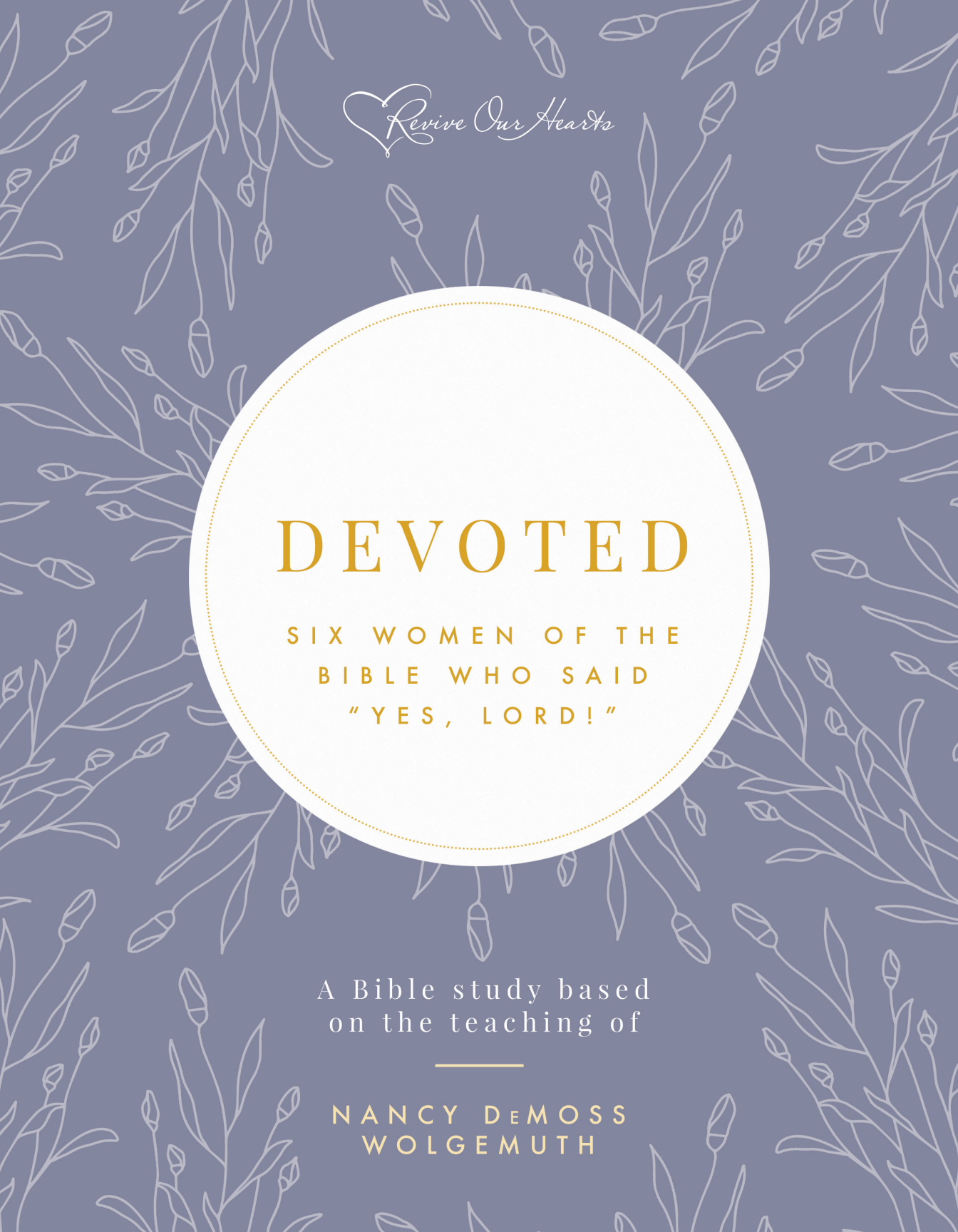




Revive Our Hearts

DEVOTED

SIX WOMEN OF THE
BIBLE WHO SAID
"YES, LORD!"

A Bible study based
on the teaching of

NANCY DEMOSS
WOLGEMUTH

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All emphasis in Scripture quotations has been added by the author.

As you work through this study, use this space to doodle, color, and meditate on God's Word and consider how these stories give you true hope.

FOR WHATEVER
was written
IN THE PAST
was written
FOR OUR *instruction,*
SO THAT WE MAY HAVE
hope
THROUGH *endurance*
AND THROUGH THE
encouragement
FROM THE *Scriptures.*

ROMANS 15:4

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INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Devoted. We hear the word often . . .

Maya is a *devoted* wife and mother.

Emily is a *devoted* teacher.

Jasmine is *devoted* to serving her church community.

As Christians, we read *devotionals* and do our morning *devotions*. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines *devoted* as “characterized by loyalty and *devotion*,” which means “the fact or state of being ardently dedicated and loyal.”¹

The women of the Bible highlighted in this study exemplified that kind of steadfast dedication to the Lord, remaining loyal to Him despite difficult circumstances—but even more, they did so with their eyes locked on God’s providence, trusting Him to lead them through whatever deep waters came their way. And in every story, God proved Himself faithful.

OUR HOPE FOR YOU

Over the next six weeks, the *Revive Our Hearts* Team hopes that through the stories of these six ordinary women and their extraordinary God, you too will learn to trust Him and His good purposes more with each passing day. We pray that you will delight in His ways as you become a woman who is wholly, fully, unwaveringly devoted to Him.

TIPS FOR USING THIS STUDY

As you use this study, ask yourself:

- What does each woman's story teach me about the heart, ways, and character of God?
- How does it point to Jesus and the gospel?
- Is there an example here to follow or avoid? If so, how should I seek to change?

Each week of study is divided into five suggested daily lessons, but feel free to work at your own pace. Do what works for you.

Remember the Holy Spirit is your primary teacher as you seek to understand God's Word. Jesus Himself told you that the Holy Spirit is a gift and a "Counselor" able to "teach you all things and remind you of everything [Jesus has] told you" (John 14:26).

Secondary tools that can help you better understand the Word of God (but aren't necessary) include:

- An English dictionary to look up the basic meaning of words
- Various translations of the Bible (a good online tool is BibleGateway.com)
- A concordance
- A Bible dictionary
- Commentaries
- A study Bible
- Colored pens or pencils to write in your Bible

You may also find it beneficial to listen to the following podcast series at ReviveOurHearts.com:

- Week 1—"Surrender: Facing Our Fears"
- Week 2—"Hannah's Prayer and God's Power"
- Week 3—"A Breath of New Life (2 Kings 4)"
- Week 4—"Anna: The Woman Who Welcomed Christ"
- Week 5—"Mary of Nazareth"
- Week 6—"Satisfying Our Thirst (The Woman at the Well)"

To help you get more from this study, we've also included group discussion questions at the end of this book.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Spend time meditating on and memorizing the following verse this week:

BY FAITH
EVEN SARAH HERSELF, WHEN SHE
WAS UNABLE TO HAVE CHILDREN,
RECEIVED POWER
TO CONCEIVE OFFSPRING, EVEN
THOUGH SHE WAS PAST THE AGE,
SINCE SHE CONSIDERED THAT THE
ONE WHO HAD PROMISED
WAS FAITHFUL.

HEBREWS 11:11



Sarah's Story

FROM GENESIS 12:1 – 6; 16:1 – 8; 21:1 – 10; HEBREWS 11:8 – 16

THE CALL OF ABRAM

12 The LORD said to Abram:
Go from your land,
your relatives,
and your father's house
to the land that I will show you.

² I will make you into a great nation,
I will bless you,
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,
I will curse anyone who treats you
with contempt,
and all the peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.

⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵ He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated, and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the site of Shechem, at the oak of Moreh. (At that time the Canaanites were in the land.)

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

16 Abram's wife, Sarai, had not borne any children for him, but she owned an Egyptian slave named Hagar. ² Sarai said to Abram, "Since the LORD has prevented me from bearing children, go to my slave; perhaps through her I can build a family." And Abram agreed to what Sarai said. ³ So Abram's wife, Sarai, took Hagar, her Egyptian slave, and gave her to her husband, Abram, as a wife for him. This happened after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan ten years. ⁴ He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When she saw that she was pregnant, her mistress became contemptible to her. ⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for my suffering! I put my slave in your arms, and when she saw that she was pregnant, I became contemptible to her. May the LORD judge between me and you."

⁶ Abram replied to Sarai, "Here, your slave is in your power; do whatever you want with her." Then Sarai mistreated her so much that she ran away from her.

⁷ The angel of the LORD found her by a spring in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ He said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She replied, "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai."

THE BIRTH OF ISAAC

21 The LORD came to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised.

² Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time God had told him.

³ Abraham named his son who was born to him—the one Sarah bore to him—Isaac. ⁴ When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded him.

⁵ Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

⁶ Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and everyone who hears will laugh with me." ⁷ She also said, "Who would have told Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne a son for him in his old age."

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL SENT AWAY

⁸ The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day Isaac was weaned. ⁹ But Sarah saw the son mocking—the one Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham.

¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, “Drive out this slave with her son, for the son of this slave will not be a coheir with my son Isaac!”

HEBREWS 11

⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and set out for a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance. He went out, even though he did not know where he was going.

⁹ By faith he stayed as a foreigner in the land of promise, living in tents as did Isaac and Jacob, coheirs of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

¹¹ By faith even Sarah herself, when she was unable to have children, received power to conceive offspring, even though she was past the age, since she considered that the one who had

promised was faithful. ¹² Therefore, from one man—in fact, from one as good as dead—came offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and as innumerable as the grains of sand along the seashore.

¹³ These all died in faith, although they had not received the things that were promised. But they saw them from a distance, greeted them, and confessed that they were foreigners and temporary residents on the earth.

¹⁴ Now those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they were thinking about where they came from, they would have had an opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But they now desire a better place—a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.



Week 1

SARAH—SURRENDER WHEN THE PATH IS UNKNOWN

Big Idea: SURRENDERING TO THE LORD LEADS TO ETERNAL BLESSING.

Most of us like to be in control—at least to some degree. We make plans, set goals, weigh our options, and try our best to minimize uncertainty. We want to know where we're going before we take the first step.

It doesn't take many trips around the sun to realize that even with our best-laid plans, there are things that just don't go the way that we had hoped. It can be shocking for us, yet to the Lord it's no surprise. There are times when we must surrender to knowing that He is in control and trust that He knows what He is doing, even when we have more questions than answers.

Abraham and Sarah knew what that was like. Over and over again, in their relationship with God, Abraham and Sarah were called to make a fresh surrender. Just after they had surrendered one thing it seemed like God would come and ask them for something else. They had to relinquish control, step out on a limb, and trust a God they could not see.

How was that possible for Abraham and Sarah, and how is that possible for you and for me? The answer is faith. Just like Abraham and Sarah, we must cast ourselves into the arms of providence and choose to trust and follow God above our human relationships, our earthly attachments, and all visible security. When we do so, we're far more likely to have a heart posture of surrender, even in the face of the unknown.

Day 1: *Get to Know God*

Read Genesis 12:1–6.

Abraham and Sarah (who were called *Abram* and *Sarai* before God changed their names in Genesis 17) grew up in a pagan, idolatrous environment where there was nothing to inspire or nurture faith. When an unseen, unknown God spoke and told Abram, as he was known at the time, to venture out and to leave behind everything that he and his wife were familiar and comfortable with, they were faced with a choice: stay or go. In making that decision they had to consider the cost of surrender. How will our family's needs be met? What will we face? Will we be happy in this uncertainty that God is calling us to pursue?

Scripture doesn't tell us how much, if at all, Abram and Sarai wrestled with God's call. But we do know this: they were real people, which means they had emotions, opinions, and fears just as we do. In Genesis 12:1, God called Abram, saying, "Go from your land, your relatives, and your father's house." And just a few verses later, we read, "So Abram went, as the LORD had told him" (v. 4). What incredible faith, not just on Abram's part but also on the part of Sarai as they trusted the God that they did not yet know well.

Today, we have the written Word of God—His revelation of Himself to us. Through Scripture, we can know His character! And the better we know Him, the more we are able to trust Him.

One of the primary ways our trust in God grows is by paying close attention to what He reveals about Himself in His Word.

Look up the following passages and list the attributes of God described in each one.

DEUTERONOMY 32:3-4

1 SAMUEL 2:2

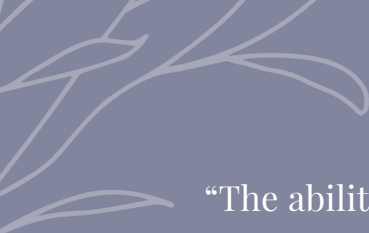
ISAIAH 46:10

MATTHEW 11:29

COLOSSIANS 1:16-17

How do these attributes encourage you to trust in the Lord and His ways?

While Sarah didn't have a physical copy of the Scriptures like we do, she did have God's word that was spoken to her husband. That was the foundation on which her faith rested and what motivated her to surrender to the Lord over and over again.



“The ability to relinquish control of your life to God comes from the assurance that He is trustworthy and sovereign, not just of the universe but over even the smallest details of your life. He sees all; He knows all; He never makes mistakes; He never fails.”

—Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

If God is truly good and faithful, as His Word reveals Him to be, then surrender is not reckless—it is reasonable.

What area of your life are you most tempted to control rather than entrust to God? What would it look like to surrender that area to Him today?

When we surrender our lives to the Lord, we are not promised an easy path. We do not know where He may lead us, what circumstances we may face, or how challenging the journey may become. But like Sarah, we can confidently trust the God who calls us because we know His character.

Grab a sticky note or a note card and take a moment to write down an attribute of God’s character that will help you surrender to Him this week. Then put it somewhere you will see to remind your heart that He is trustworthy in every situation.

Day 2: *An Eternal Mindset*

Read Hebrews 11:8–10.

Hebrews 11 tells us that by faith Abraham and Sarah obeyed God’s call and went to live in the land He had promised them. There, they lived as foreigners, dwelling in tents like Isaac and Jacob. According to verse 10, what enabled them to live this way? What were they looking forward to?

God had promised Abraham and Sarah something eternal and lasting. Because of that, they were willing to endure whatever hardships they faced along the way. Their eyes were fixed on what lay ahead—not merely an earthly inheritance but the fulfillment of God’s promises. They understood that ultimately this world was not their home; their true citizenship was in heaven.

What earthly things do you tend to value more than that which is eternal? Circle any of the words below that apply.

Convenience SPOUSE
Financial Status
Title REPUTATION
POSSESSIONS
Homeland TIME
FAMILY
Friends
Children

“Abraham and Sarah were willing to risk everything this world considers essential in order to be eternally secure and to gain the blessing of God.”

—Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

As believers, we too are sojourners, looking forward to our promised land—heaven. Like Abraham and Sarah, we must keep our eyes and hearts focused on the right things—that which is eternal rather than what is temporary.

Read the following passages. Circle the references that reflect the mindset of a citizen of heaven. Draw a square around those that reflect the mindset of a citizen of earth.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:18

PHILIPPIANS 1:27

PHILIPPIANS 3:19

COLOSSIANS 3:1–2

JAMES 4:4

1 JOHN 2:15–17

Briefly describe what it means to have the mindset of a citizen of heaven.

What might it look like to live as a citizen of heaven in everyday life?

How does having an eternal mindset change your perspective on surrendering to the Lord?

Day 3: *Promises That Overcome Fear*

Read Hebrews 11:11–12.

God had given Abraham and Sarah some grand promises in Genesis 12, but those promises did not happen right away—far from it. Instead, God’s timing required patience, endurance, and continued trust as they waited for Him to fulfill what He had spoken.

Read Genesis 12:4. How old was Abraham when God made these promises to him and Sarah?

Now read Genesis 21:5. How old was Abraham when Sarah gave birth to Isaac?

How many years did Abraham and Sarah wait for the promise of descendants to be fulfilled?

For all those years, Sarah had no visible evidence that God’s promises would be fulfilled. Yet according to Hebrews 11:11, she “considered that the one who had promised was faithful.”

Think back to Day 1 of this week's study. How could knowing the character of God have helped Sarah persevere as she waited?

When we face uncertainty or long seasons of waiting, like Abraham and Sarah, we are not left without hope. God has given us promises in His Word that speak directly to our deepest fears and reservations.

Look up the following passages. What is the Lord promising in each verse? Try to keep your answer to one or two words.

JOHN 14:27 _____

ROMANS 8:28 _____

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9-10 _____

HEBREWS 13:5 _____

JAMES 1:5 _____

If we are in Christ, and we have all of God's promises and provision, we can move from fear to surrender. Luke 12:32 tells us, "Don't be afraid, little flock, because your Father delights to give you the kingdom." God does not promise that if we trust Him we will never face danger or difficulty. But He does promise that those who take refuge in Him are held in His care and under His protection.



What fears are holding you back from saying “Yes, Lord!” today? In the chart below, list those fears on the left side. Then, on the right side, write a promise from God’s Word that helps you trust Him even when life feels uncertain.

MY FEARS	GOD’S PROMISES

Because of His promises, you can surrender to Him.

Write out a promise from God’s Word that has encouraged you from the verses above. Slip it into your purse or pocket, and pull it out when you’re tempted to fear this week. Let it remind you that the Lord is faithful and His promises are sure.

“Whatever your fears, whatever the unknowns or the challenges in your life, remember that God has promised to provide for you. He has promised to share His pleasure with you. He has promised to protect you, and He has promised to give you His enduring presence.”

—Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

A Cultural Practice and God's Promise

In Israel and throughout the ancient Near East, barrenness was generally considered one of the greatest hardships a woman and family could experience, since children were essential for carrying on the family line.¹

Beyond cultural shame and personal heartache, without a viable heir, Sarah faced an uncertain future. If Abraham died, she would be left alone in a foreign land with little legal protection and essentially no control over her home or welfare.

In the ancient laws of the Code of Hammurabi and the Nuzi texts, provisions existed that allowed a man whose wife had not borne a son to have children through a slave woman, with those children then recognized as his heirs.²

Day 4: *Trust and Obey*

Read Genesis 16:1–5.

While Sarah is a strong example of surrendering to the Lord when the path is unknown, she was also fully human, which means she didn't always trust and obey Him perfectly.

One clear example comes during the long years of waiting for the promised son. As her patience wore thin—and perhaps as doubt crept in—she gave her maidservant Hagar to Abraham, suggesting that he might obtain a child through her. In this moment, Sarah did not wait in surrender but instead took matters into her own hands.

Can you think of a time when you tried to take matters into your own hands rather than surrendering the situation to the Lord? What was the outcome?

What are you most afraid of surrendering to the Lord? Why?

God calls us to trust His promises and bring our needs to Him in faith rather than striving or manipulating outcomes. When we refuse to surrender, we become trapped by the very things we try to control, leaving us with a choice between trusting God and living in freedom—or clinging to control and experiencing stress and bondage. **Surrender doesn't lead to misery; it leads to freedom. In fact, misery is the result of not surrendering to the Lord.**

Read Genesis 16:4–8, 12 and 21:8–10. How did Sarah's decision to take matters into her own hands negatively affect each person involved? Record your answers in the chart on the following page.



Against that backdrop, Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham in an effort to obtain a son through culturally accepted means. In doing so, she turned to the pagan customs of her surrounding world rather than waiting for God to fulfill His promise. Her attempt to take matters into her own hands ultimately led to deep grief and ongoing heartache.

The vulnerability Sarah and Hagar experienced was one result of humanity's fall into sin. Throughout Scripture, God works within the realities of a broken world while steadily revealing His heart for justice, compassion, and the protection of the vulnerable, as seen in the laws He later gave Israel. Though injustice will persist until Christ makes all things new, these accounts remind us that God is at work bringing restoration and caring for those who suffer.

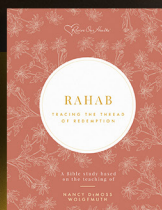
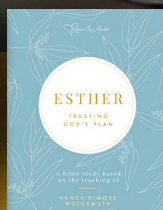
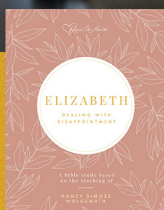


Revive Our Hearts
PRESENTS THE
**Women
of the Bible**
SERIES

Study God's Word.

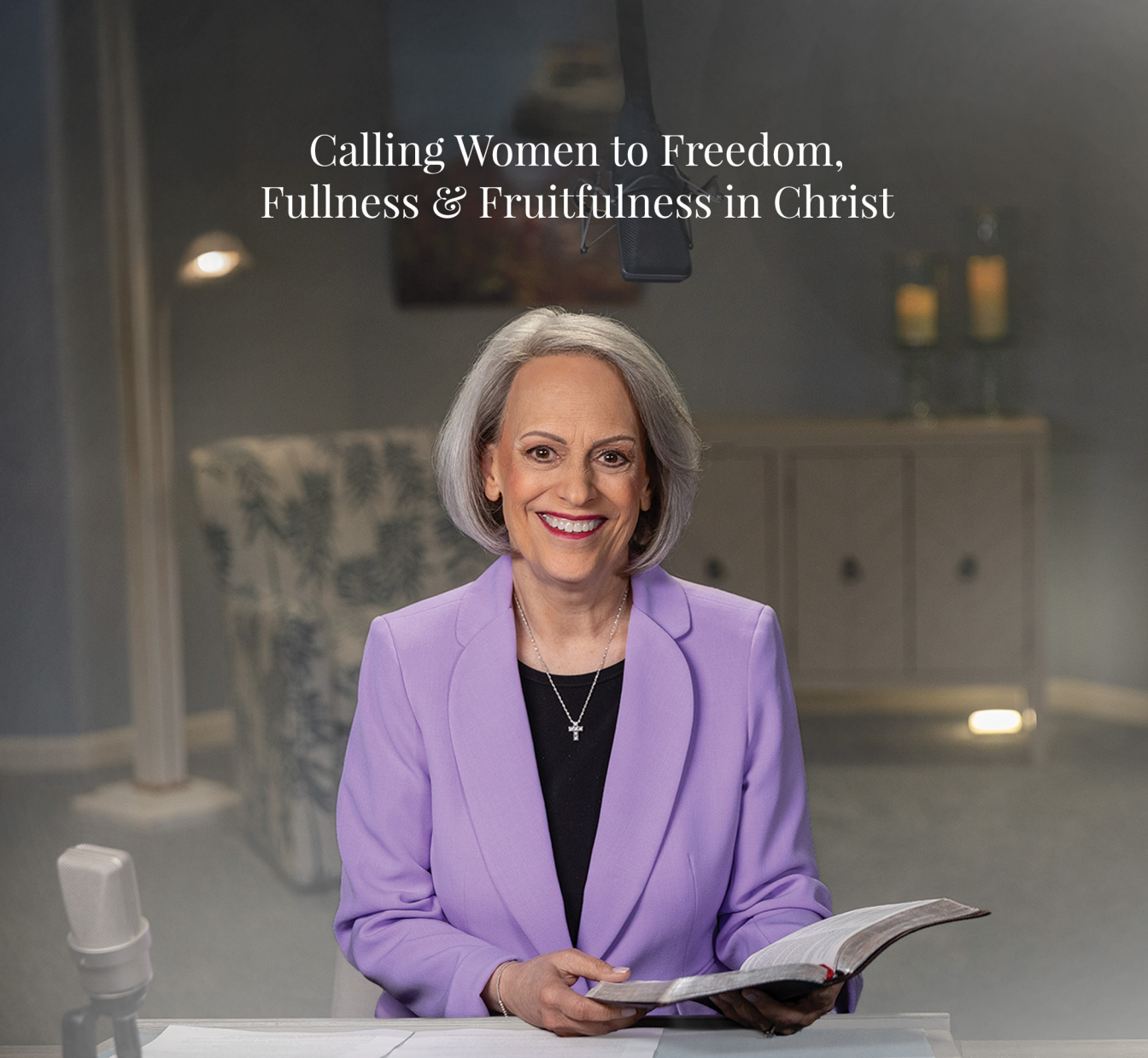
Examine the lives of ordinary women
that point to an extraordinary God.

Discover that every story
is really God's story.



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Calling Women to Freedom, Fullness & Fruitfulness in Christ



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