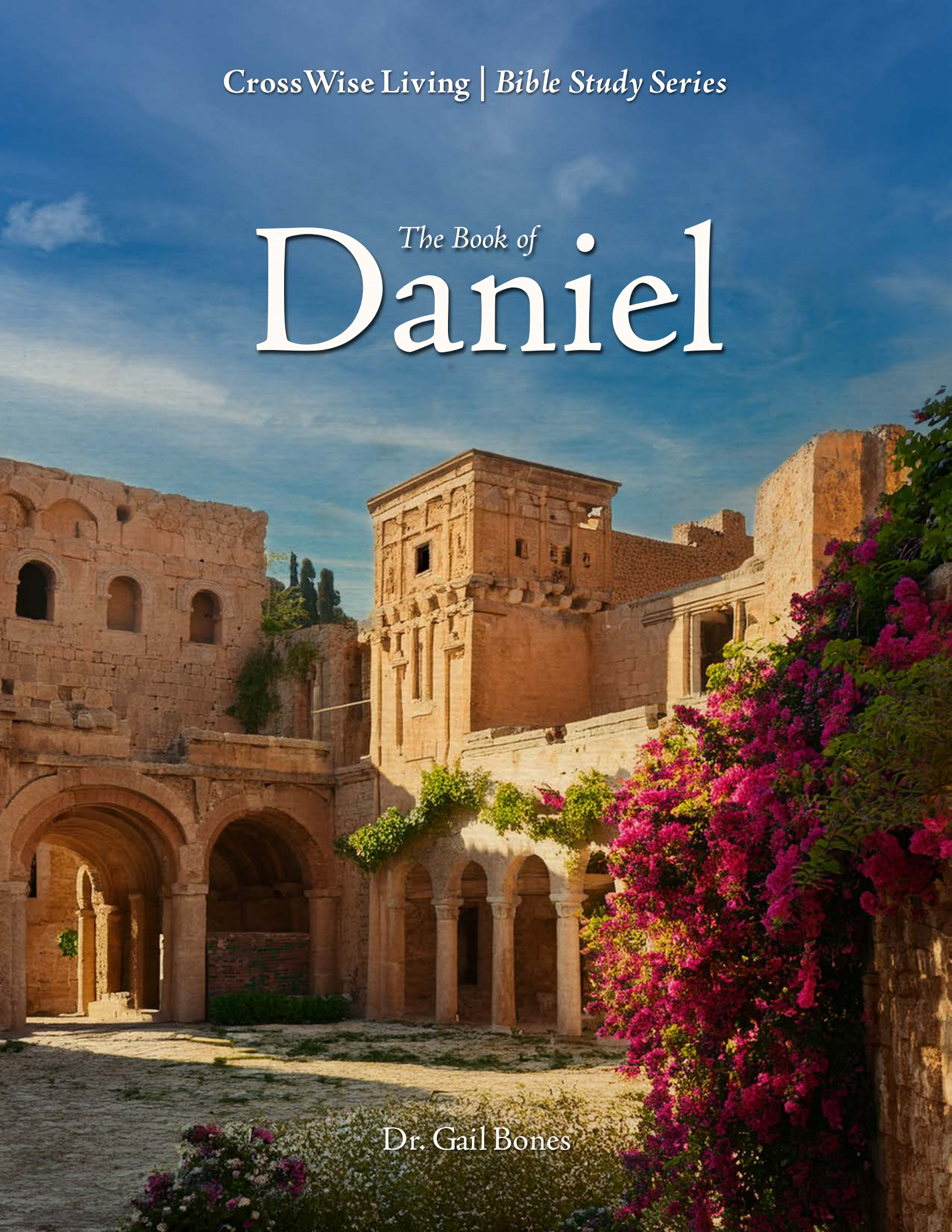


CrossWise Living | Bible Study Series

*The Book of*  
**Daniel**

Dr. Gail Bones



CrossWise Living | *Bible Study Series*

*The Book of*  
**Daniel**

**Dr. Gail Bones**

Treasure House Press  
Franklin, TN

# Dedication

In gratitude to my right-hand woman,

Nalani Hilderman:

scholar, servant, and steadfast friend.

## Special thanks to:

Caleb Weeks, whose creativity and expertise make these resources possible.  
Nali Hilderman, friend, daughter in the Lord, and proofreader par excellence.  
Jeff Bones, my loving husband, who always points me to Jesus.

Published by Treasure House Press

*"In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*

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# The Book of Daniel

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## About the Author

Gail Nelson Bones, Ed.D., is the founder of CrossWise Living, a ministry devoted to helping people at all stages in life navigate change through cross-generational relationships. She has been engaging audiences as a speaker, songwriter, and worship leader for over 40 years. Formerly a professor of education at San Diego Christian College, Dr. Bones is the award-winning author of *Living CrossWise: Hope and Help for Navigating Transition* (2013).

Gail and her husband Jeff have been married for over 40 years and together have recorded seven albums of original Christian music. Along with their now-grown children, they spent many years presenting family concerts at churches across the United States. Gail is currently a women's ministry leader at her home church, a worship leader, and doting grandmother.



## About the Study

This study in the CrossWise Living Series is an in-depth study of the Old Testament book of Daniel, comprised of six chapters of history and six of prophecy. As we live through times of increasing uncertainty and world turmoil, we will find great encouragement as we discover the truth of God's sovereignty over the affairs of men.

After you have read the passage and answered on your own, you may use the notes on your study Bible to supplement your understanding. Be very careful about information you may find online, however. Stick with reliable sources such as biblehub.com or blueletterbible.org for commentaries containing sound doctrine. Make sure you have a good Bible map or atlas because we'll refer to it often.

While you will be meeting with your group primarily to study the Bible together, an important part of your fellowship will be supporting one another in prayer. You'll find a section to record prayer requests at the back of the book. Since time is likely to be limited for this kind of sharing, try to plan ahead as to how you would like your group to pray for you that week—keep your requests succinct so you can devote the last 10-15 minutes of your time to prayer requests. Remember to record your own prayer request on your list so you can recall and record praise for answered prayer.

Here is my blessing for you as you embark on this exciting journey into God's Word. This is one of my favorite passages in Scripture:

*"Then those who feared the Lord spoke with each other, and the Lord listened to what they said. In his presence, a scroll of remembrance was written to record the names of those who feared him and always thought about the honor of his name."*

*Malachi 3:16*

CrossWise Living | Bible Study Series

## The Book of Daniel

# LESSON 1

*“To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.”*

*DANIEL 1:17*

# INTRODUCTION / THE WORLD OF DANIEL

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*“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.” – 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 ESV*

Resting in the sovereignty of God is the key to living with hope, confidence and peace. If we are to take comfort from Romans 8:28: “And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them,” we must be firmly convinced that our God is all powerful, all knowing, and infinitely loving. Our study in the book of Daniel will focus our attention on just these attributes.

This Old Testament book is a fascinating combination of history—the truth about what has been—and prophesy—the truth about what will be. Stunning in the accuracy of its predictions about events that would have been future to Daniel but past to us, this book concludes with prophesies about a time to which we still look forward. Additionally, another unique feature of the book of Daniel is that it is written in two languages. It begins in Hebrew for chapter 1, shifts to Aramaic for chapters 2-7 and reverts to Hebrew for chapters 8-12, for reasons we will explore as we study the text.

## WHO

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The author is Daniel, a Hebrew of noble birth from the royal family of David. As a teenage boy notable for his good looks and intelligence, he was carried off to Babylon by the forces of Nebuchadnezzar during the first of the Babylonian invasions of the southern kingdom of Judah. The Babylonians had a practice of taking the best, the brightest, and the most beautiful from the nations they conquered and moving them to Babylon in order to integrate them into their society. Once there, these individuals were trained in Babylonian culture and their excellent qualities were put to use in service to their king. After the first invasion in 605 B.C. when Daniel was taken captive, the conquerors allowed a Hebrew king to remain on the throne in Judah, but he had to pay tribute and serve under their authority. It was not until after Jewish rebellions in 597 B.C. and 586 B.C. that the Babylonians finally destroyed the temple and burned the city of Jerusalem.

Daniel’s name means “God is my judge,” and with this principle guiding his life, he refused to bow his knee in worship of false gods. He refused to compromise and yet, by God’s sovereignty and favor, he rose to a position of respect, honor, and authority in the pagan society in which he was forced to live. As we spend the next weeks studying his character, we will see why this was so. Daniel is an example to us of keeping a pure heart and a God-honoring testimony in a secular world. He was called “greatly beloved by God,” and you will notice God has no words of correction for him in Scripture—unlike other heroes of faith like Noah, Abraham, Moses, etc. In this he is like Joseph, and we will see other parallels as well.

Daniel was, above all, God’s prophet as Jesus attested in Matthew 24:15. He was absolutely accurate in his predictions concerning world events which are now history, so much so that skeptics have claimed that the book of Daniel had to have been written *after* the events occurred in order to provide so much detail! However, portions of the book of Daniel were found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, including one dating to the 2nd century B.C. and thus modern archeology supports claims to the authenticity of this book of the Bible. Those of us who believe in an eternal, omniscient God have no problem believing in the miraculous and mysterious. Because we can see from our vantage point in history that many of the detailed prophesies have already been fulfilled, we can look ahead with confidence that what has been predicted to take place will occur, to God’s glory.

## WHEN

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Daniel was taken to Babylon in a forced deportation in 605 B.C. He was required to walk 500 miles east to Babylon and once there was made a eunuch. His life spanned the duration of the captivity of the Israelites which lasted 70 years. Daniel was a contemporary of the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Habakkuk. (Ezekiel was taken captive to Babylon and ministered to the Jews there, while Jeremiah and Habakkuk remained in Judah.) Daniel was captured during the first invasion of Jerusalem when the best were taken. Those who remained in Judah were forced to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, but otherwise life continued on. About 8 years later, the Babylonians attacked again and took a much larger group of captives. In 587, or 11 years after the second deportation, they destroyed and burned the city of Jerusalem and Solomon's magnificent Temple.

## WHY

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A century earlier the prophet Isaiah had brought God's people this explicit warning:

*"The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." – Isaiah 39:6-7*

God used the Babylonians to bring judgment against the Jews because of their disobedience and idolatry. Despite his capture and forced exile to this pagan nation, Daniel remained God's man who kept the flame of faith alive for his people even in the midst of this time of judgment.

## WHERE

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Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was a glittering city, the largest in the world at that time, the Paris or New York City of its day. Spectacular buildings, massive statues, colorful mosaics, and towering ziggurats filled the city. The hanging gardens Nebuchadnezzar built were considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World. We can imagine the culture shock when Daniel and his companions were forcibly relocated from the deserts of Judea to this lush, opulent, and decadent land.

Notably, the Jews who were taken into captivity with Daniel and his companions were not forced into slave labor as they had been in Egypt. They were allowed to live in their own communities, to farm and to work. Many prospered in Babylon, and after 70 years when they were released by the Persian King Cyrus, many never returned to their native land. The chief danger God's people faced was the dissolution of their culture, which was the goal of the Babylonians. It was very easy for the Israelites to become assimilated into this pagan culture, seeking satisfaction only "under the sun," and forgetting about the God of Israel whom they were longer allowed to publicly worship. It is clear that this Old Testament book has relevance for us today.

## WHAT

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A key theme of the book of Daniel is God's sovereignty over the affairs of men and the kingdoms of this world. We can also see His faithfulness to his Word. Whether promises of blessings for obedience or consequences for disobedience, what He has declared WILL come to pass. Additionally, we will explore what it means to live a life of uncompromising integrity in a world that opposes our values and faith in God.





# DAY TWO

---

1. Do some research on the prophet Jeremiah. Where, when, and to whom did he prophesy?
2. Read Jeremiah 29:1-14. What were his instructions to those taken captive by the Babylonians?
3. What promise of God did Jeremiah convey to the people?
4. Which verses in this passage give us evidence of God's sovereignty?
5. How does knowing the context of vs. 11—the oft-quoted verse—help you to understand it? How does this help you in your current life situation?

# DAY THREE

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1. Print out, read, and annotate Daniel Chapter 1. What strikes you? What arouses your curiosity? What questions arise?
2. What do we learn about God's hand in world affairs from vv. 1-2? What encouragement does that bring you when you think about specific events in the world today?
3. Looking at v. 2, what parallel do you see between what King Nebuchadnezzar did with the articles from the temple and what he tried to do in the lives of Daniel and his three companions?
4. What comfort did God provide to Daniel in the midst of these trying circumstances? Has He also done the same for you? Share specifics.
5. What methods did King Nebuchadnezzar use to try to change Daniel and the other Hebrews he wished to use in his service? Make a list and explain why each tactic was ordinarily so successful.
6. Think of other times in the Bible when someone's name was changed. Why was each significant?
7. Pray today and ask God if he has a new name for you that will help you understand your calling and identity.

# DAY FOUR

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1. From Daniel 1, why did Daniel refuse to eat the king's delicacies? Try to think of a few reasons.

2. What temptations was Daniel resisting? See the following verses:

Hebrews 11:25

James 4:4

Matthew 6:24

3. For each of the verses above, make a specific application for your life today.

4. What can we observe about Daniel's character from his method of handling this situation?

5. What kind of risk was he taking? What might be a counterpart in our lives today?

6. 1 Samuel 2:30 contains an important promise from God: "...those who honor me I will honor..."

a. How do we see this truth in action in this chapter?

b. Can you think of any present day or historical examples of this principle?

# DAY FIVE

---

1. Re-read Chapter 1. What draws your attention today? Do you see anything new that you had not noticed before?
  
2. Daniel chose an issue that he felt was important enough to risk everything for in order to not compromise. Yet, he obviously submitted to the king's authority in many other areas, for example, he studied and learned the Babylonian literature and language. In fact, he excelled in his service to Nebuchadnezzar in the position he was assigned in the government of this nation that was hostile to his God.
  - a. Why did Daniel choose this one particular issue on which to make such a firm stand?
  
  - b. On what issues would you feel compelled to do likewise in your job, at your school, in your community? Do you have any personal testimonies in this regard?
  
  - c. When is it okay for us to fit in, to go along with our society, to adapt ourselves to the culture in which we live?
  
3. What does God's Word teach us about our responsibilities to God and to the earthly governments under which we live? See:
  - a. Acts 5:29
  
  - b. Romans 13:1-7 (list the principles you find here)
  
4. How do we know when to resist and when to obey civil authorities? What have you learned from Daniel's example in this chapter?

5. How does this chapter describe the ways in which Daniel and his friends were exceptional?
  - a. What was their part and what was God's part in this?
  - b. What application can you make for your own life?
6. What impressed you most about Daniel in this chapter?
7. What are some specific ways you will ask God this week to help you follow Daniel's example?

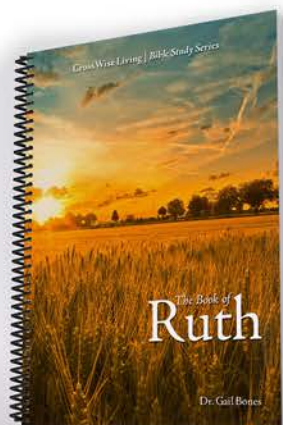
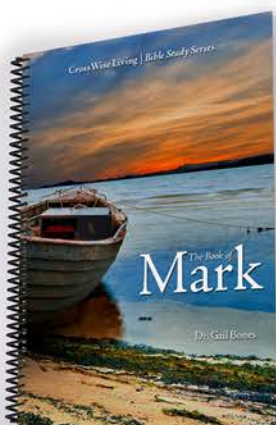
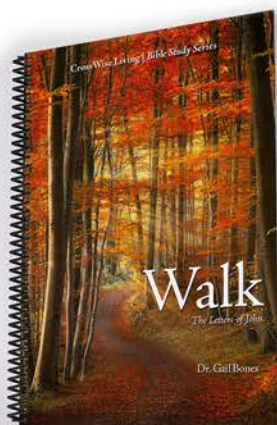
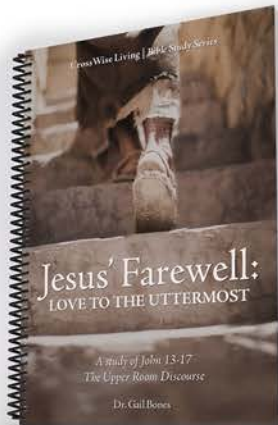
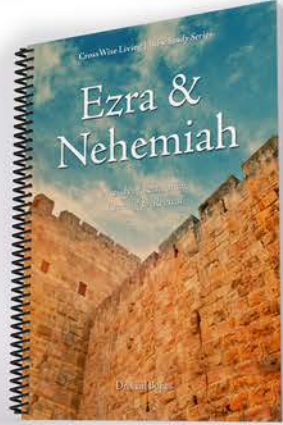
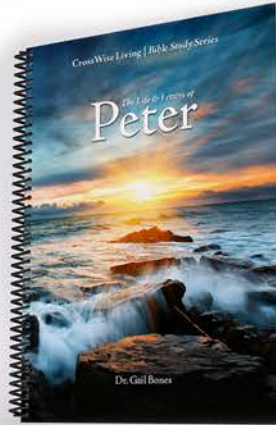
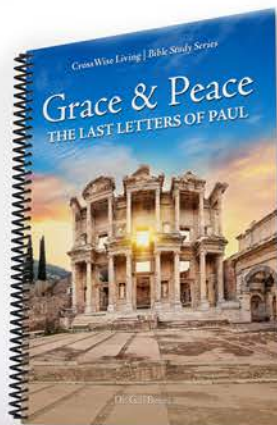
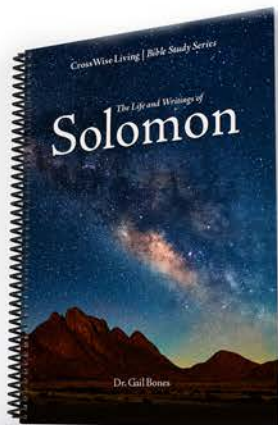
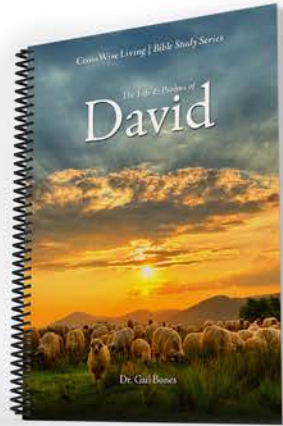
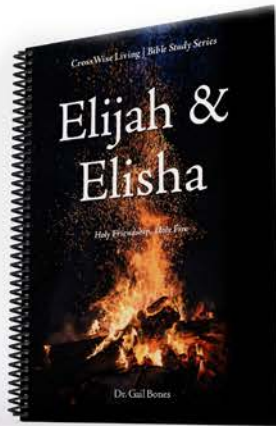
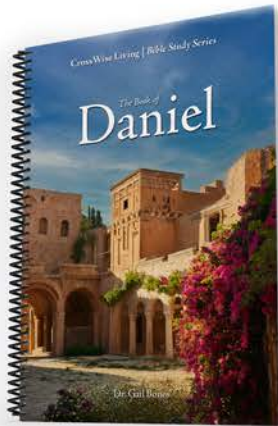
## WEEKLY REVIEW

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1. Which of God's attributes were most clear to you this week?
2. Which passages or insights were most meaningful to you this week? Explain.
3. How have you applied what you've discovered this week about God, others, or yourself?

# More Bible Studies from Gail Bones

CrossWise Living is a ministry devoted to helping people at all stages in life navigate change through cross-generational relationships. Anchored by the work of Dr. Gail Bones, the ministry has been commended by Christian authors, leaders and ministry directors including Pam Farrel, Wayne Rice, Leanna Tankersley, Virginia Friesen, Lynn Vincent, Mark Buchanan and many others through the years. Our discipleship resources promote intergenerational ministry and mentoring relationships.



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