

THE STORY CHAPTER 1

The Beginning of Life as We Know It

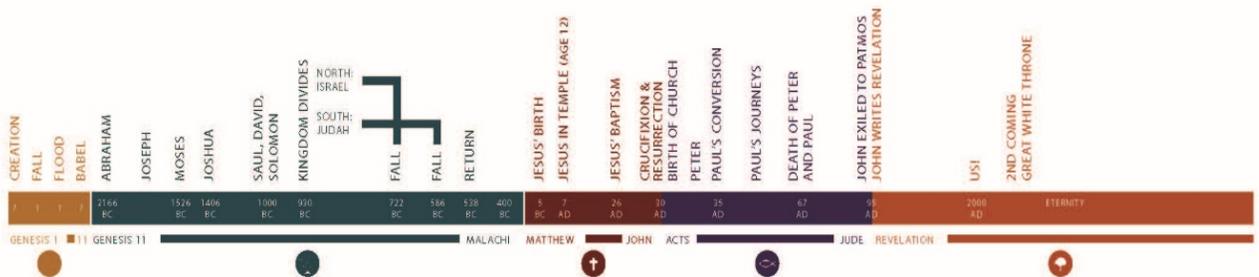
9-16-18

As you know, today we start our study of The Story of God from Genesis through Revelation.

My hope and prayer is that the truth of Scripture will come alive to you like never before through this study.

- And, when that happens, we never get over it!!

Let's look at the timeline that we'll be seeing a lot throughout our study:



We are embarking on a journey for over 31 weeks, and it's going to take us from the beginning of God's story to the end, the greatest story ever told.

Five Movements:

1. [The story of the Garden](#)
2. [The story of Israel](#)
3. [The story of Jesus](#)
4. [The story of the Church](#)
5. [The story of the New Garden](#) (back where we started)

Movement One: The Garden

The first sentence in this story is...

[In the Upper Story, God creates the Lower Story.](#)

We're going to look at 4 different elements of this first movement today:

1. Creation

The very first sentence of the Bible is powerful and critical for us to understand as we start our study.

Genesis 1:1; *The Story pg. 1*

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Main Character: God Himself!

It's all about Him:

- God created the Heavens and the Earth!

Understanding of Genesis 1-2:

- Not a science lesson about the age of the earth.

- Debate about how long it took to create the earth?!

-- Did God make it quickly to look old or did He make it slowly so that it IS old?

THIS IS NOT THE MAIN POINT OF GENESIS 1-2!

We must understand that there is a Creator God and He is responsible for the creation of everything that we know.

So, what was His plan? WHY?

EX: Group the other night? Why would God do all of this if He knew what was going to happen?

Next sentence in the movement:

His vision is to come down and be with us in a beautiful garden.

God creates a beautiful garden in which He wants to come down to earth and dwell with His creation.

EX: As my children get older I find myself wanting to spend more time with them and my bride. Vacation last summer. The whole point was for us to do something as family!!

God created Adam and Eve and placed them in this beautiful garden because He wanted to spend time with them!

Garden: Called Eden where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers connect, by the Persian Gulf.

Look in the front cover of your book:



LISTEN: God's plan was to dwell in that garden with His favorite part of creation.

- The part that He created and then said, "This is VERY good."

He loves us and wants to be with us. This was His plan for the garden, and really for creation.

However, He wanted to see if man's desire was the same as His. So He placed two trees in the garden. One was the tree of life and one was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Question: Why in the world would God even make that an option?

- He wanted to know if mankind wanted to be with Him as much as He desired to be with us.

EX: Relationship struggles when you are wondering if the person you're dating is as into you as you are into them.

- You work up all the nerve to look her in the eyes and say, "I love you!"
- And, she looks right back at you and say, "Uh, thanks?"
- Then you know...

So, God gives man the option and he chooses evil.

And, then we see the second element of this first movement:

2. The Fall

The next sentence in this movement:

The first two people reject God's vision and are escorted from the garden.

- They ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- They were deceived by satan and chose to disobey God's command.

Genesis 3:6-7

⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then we see the next sentence:

Their decision introduces sin into the human race and keeps us from community with God.

This is the Fall...

- The whole plan was for us to walk with the Creator in the garden and now that fellowship has been broken.

At this point something changed in their nature.

- Sin began to run through their bloodstream.

The tree was about the "knowledge of good and evil".

- They had not experienced evil before this point.

- Their choice invited evil into their hearts and from that day forward they, and we, have a constant choice to make:
- Will we serve God or ourselves?

For the first time ever they felt shame!

- You and I know that this is a common result of choosing the wrong thing but for them this was a new thing!
- They clothe themselves and try to make that feeling go away.
- Same thing you and I do today!
- (Sometimes literally)

Then look where it leads:

Cain & Abel

This is where we get the picture that the decision made by Adam and Eve really does still to this day affect us all.

Page 7 (Genesis 4) we meet Adam and Eve's two sons, Cain and Abel.

Both boys make a sacrifice to the Lord. The Lord is pleased with Abel's sacrifice but not pleased with Cain's.

Then there is a decision to be made: Cain can learn from his brother and try to please the Lord next time or he can do what he did.

Cain was so angered by this that God had a talk with Him:

Genesis 4:7

⁶ Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

Then Cain goes out and kills his brother. He chose evil. Even after God Himself visited him and told him what to do.

Proof: The sin of the father affected the children, and still affects us all.

It's just the TRUTH: If you are human you have inherited the same seed from Adam as Cain did. Which means you are constantly having to choose between good and evil.

Then we see the result of this sin from God’s perspective:

Genesis 6:5-6; The Story, pg. 8

The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.

Think of where God’s heart is right now!

- He created us to be with us.
- We just showed Him that we would rather have stuff and knowledge than Him.
- It came to the point where He **regretted making human beings.**

BUT, here is some of the best news I’ll give you today: It did not end here! We will see that God actually wanted us back. And, even as we go through all of the Scripture to teach of what that looks like moving forward, one of our biggest challenges is understanding “WHY”. Why in the world would God want us back after we had broken His heart like that?

Some of you struggle with that exact thought today! Why would God want me after what I’ve done or where I’ve been?

His Word will show us as we move forward.

And we see the next sentence:

[At this moment God gives a promise and launches a plan to get us back.](#)

Can you imagine what you would be thinking at “that moment”?

Of course our question in that is “How”. What is His plan to get us back?

Genesis 6:7-8; The Story, pg. 8

So the Lord said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.” But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

Really, starting right here and moving through the rest of the Bible is God's story of how he kept that promise and made it possible for us to enter a loving relationship with Him.

Then we see the next element:

3. The Flood

In our minds this plan would make perfect sense.

EX: How many of you at some point have gotten so fed up with the junk in your garage that you had one of those “everything must go and if we need it again we'll buy a new one” days?

- You called Goodwill to see how big of a truck they could bring TO YOU!

God's plan: I'll keep the one guy that I see as faithful and his family. He puts them in a huge boat with animals of all kinds and sends a flood that pretty much kills every other living thing on the planet.

So, when the rain ends, Noah and his family exit the boat and we start over now with the **seed** of Noah instead of Adam.

But here's the problem:

Genesis 9:20-23

²⁰ Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. ²¹ When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. ²² Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. ²³ But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness.

Ham enters the tent and finds his dad drunk and “uncovered”.

- He had a choice to make: Cover him up and honor him or go tell my brothers and shame him.

- He chose evil over good!

What we learned through this is that Noah and his family took the sin of Adam and Eve onto the boat with them. And, it shows in the actions of Noah and his son soon after the flood is over.

- Adam's sin nature was still with them moving forward.

Question: Do you think God was surprised by the fact that this first attempt to bring us back to Him didn't work?

I believe one of the reasons God took Noah and his family through all of this was to teach us a very valuable lesson:

[“No plan involving man will ever be good enough to get us back to God.”](#)

The final element we see in this part of the story...

[The Tower of Babel](#)

Just like it had done before, sin went to an all time high after Noah. The people were obviously still carrying the sin in their blood from Adam.

And, then we see this in Chapter 11:

[Genesis 11:1-9](#)

[11 Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. ² As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. ³ They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.” ⁵ But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. ⁶ The Lord said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” ⁸ So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. ⁹ That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.](#)

The ultimate end road of sin is making more of ourselves than we should!

They were building this tower to reach into Heaven specifically to make themselves famous!

- And isn't this still the biggest problem with sin that we have today.
- When it becomes all about us it cannot be all about God!

So, God confuses their language so that they can no longer work together.

- And, in the end, this is what spread the people out over throughout the land to prepare them for the next part of God's Story!

Conclusion

So, we understand that this plan didn't work to get us back to the Father.

So, what is it actually going to take to get us back in relationship with our Creator?

Well, here's a hint:

Genesis 3:21

²¹ The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

God gives us a sign in this story.

- He covered them with skin of an animal.
- This showed them that the ultimate answer to their problem was going to take the blood of a sacrifice.
- And, right then is Genesis 3:21 we see God already pointing to Jesus!

Which leads us to the last sentence...

The rest of the Bible is God's story of how he kept that promise and made it possible for us to enter a loving relationship with Him.

So, now you've seen the problem. Let's stick together as we spend the next 30 weeks discovering God's solution to bringing us back to Him.

Challenge: