

GENESIS

Genesis is the first book of the Bible. It is the story of the beginning of the world. It tells the story of the beginning of the nation of Israel. Israel will have a special part in God's plan for all human beings.

In the beginning God's created world was good and orderly. But, human beings became proud and disobeyed God. They became filled with evil. This led to suffering. People treated each other badly. Awful things happened everywhere. God decided to judge the world. He sent a great flood to destroy it. But he saved Noah, his family and some of every kind of animal. After Noah, God chose Abraham. God made a special promise with Abraham and his family. Through these people God will provide a way for nations to come back to him.

The book of Genesis ends with Abraham's family growing into the nation of Israel. It was a nation of separate tribes. But they are not in the land God has promised them. So, the story is continued in the next four books. These books are Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Genesis is divided into twelve parts. The first part tells the story of creation. The eleven remaining parts begin with the words, "here is the story of." Each part is about the life and family of the person named. Together these stories tell the history of human beings and their place in this world. These stories also tell the beginning of God's plan to make the world well again.

The Beginning

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth didn't have any shape. And it was empty. There was darkness over the surface of the waves. At that time, the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³God said, "Let there be light." And there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good. He separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light "day." He called the darkness "night." There was evening, and there was morning. It was day one.

⁶God said, "Let there be a huge space between the waters. Let it separate water from water." ⁷And that's exactly what happened. God made the huge space between the waters. He separated the water under the space from the water above it.

⁸God called the huge space "sky." There was evening, and there was morning. It was day two.

⁹God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place. Let dry ground appear." And that's exactly what happened. ¹⁰God called the dry ground "land." He called all the water that was gathered together "seas." And God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, "Let the land produce plants. Let them produce their own seeds. And let there be trees on the land that grow fruit with seeds in it. Let each kind of plant or tree have its own kind of seeds." And that's exactly what happened. ¹²So the land produced plants. Each kind of plant had its own kind of seeds. And the land produced trees that grew fruit with seeds in it. Each kind of tree had its own kind of seeds. God saw that it was good. ¹³There was evening, and there was morning. It was day three.

¹⁴God said, "Let there be lights in the huge space of the sky. Let them separate the day from the night. Let the lights set the times for the holy celebrations and the days and the years. ¹⁵Let them be lights in the huge space of the sky to give light on the earth." And that's exactly what happened. ¹⁶God made two great lights. He made the larger light to rule over the day and the smaller light to rule over the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God put the lights in the huge space of the sky to give light on the earth. ¹⁸He put them there to rule over the day and the night. He put them there to separate light from darkness. God saw that

it was good. ¹⁹ There was evening, and there was morning. It was day four.

²⁰ God said, "Let the seas be filled with living things. Let birds fly above the earth across the huge space of the sky." ²¹ So God created the great sea creatures. He created every kind of living thing that fills the seas and moves about in them. He created every kind of bird that flies. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them. He said, "Have little ones so that there will be many of you. Fill the water in the seas. Let there be more and more birds on the earth." ²³ There was evening, and there was morning. It was day five.

²⁴ God said, "Let the land produce every kind of living creature. Let there be livestock, and creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals." And that's exactly what happened. ²⁵ God made every kind of wild animal. He made every kind of livestock. He made every kind of creature that moves along the ground. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make human beings so that they are like us. Let them rule over the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Let them rule over the livestock and all the wild animals. And let them rule over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created human beings in his own likeness.

He created them to be like himself.

He created them as male and female.

²⁸ God blessed them. He said to them, "Have children so that there will be many of you. Fill the earth and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Rule over every living creature that moves along the ground."

²⁹ Then God said, "I am giving you every plant on the face of the whole

earth that produces its own seeds. I am giving you every tree that has fruit with seeds in it. All of them will be given to you for food. ³⁰ I am giving every green plant as food for all the land animals and for all the birds in the sky. I am also giving the plants to all the creatures that move along the ground. I am giving them to every living thing that breathes." And that's exactly what happened.

³¹ God saw everything he had made. And it was very good. There was evening, and there was morning. It was day six.

2 So the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed.

² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing. So on that day he rested from all his work. ³ God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. He blessed it because on that day he rested from all the work he had done.

Adam and Eve

⁴ Here is the story of the heavens and the earth when they were created. The LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

⁵ At that time, bushes had not yet appeared on the earth. Plants had not started to grow. The LORD God had not sent rain on the earth. And there was no one to farm the land. ⁶ But streams came from the earth. They watered the entire surface of the ground. ⁷ Then the LORD God formed a man. He made him out of the dust of the ground. God breathed the breath of life into him. And the man became a living person.

⁸ The LORD God had planted a garden in the east in Eden. He put in the garden the man he had formed. ⁹ The LORD God made every kind of tree grow out of the ground. The trees were pleasing to look at. Their fruit was good to eat. There were two trees in the middle of the garden. One of them had fruit that let people live forever. The other had fruit that let people tell the difference between good and evil.

¹⁰A river watered the garden. It flowed out of Eden. From there the river separated into four other rivers. ¹¹The name of the first river is the Pishon. It winds through the whole land of Havilah. Gold is found there. ¹²The gold of that land is good. Onyx and sweet-smelling resin are also found there. ¹³The name of the second river is the Gihon. It winds through the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is the Tigris. It runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is called the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God put the man in the Garden of Eden. He put him there to farm its land and take care of it. ¹⁶The LORD God gave the man a command. He said, "You may eat fruit from any tree in the garden. ¹⁷But you must not eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you do, you will certainly die." ¹⁸The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

¹⁹The LORD God had formed all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He had made all of them out of the ground. He brought them to the man to see what names he would give them. And the name the man gave each living creature became its name. ²⁰So the man gave names to all the livestock, all the birds in the sky, and all the wild animals.

But Adam didn't find a helper that was just right for him. ²¹So the LORD God caused him to fall into a deep sleep. While the man was sleeping, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs. Then the LORD God closed the opening in the man's side. ²²Then the LORD God made a woman. He made her from the rib he had taken out of the man. And the LORD God brought her to the man.

²³The man said,

"Her bones have come from my bones.

Her body has come from my body.

She will be named 'woman,' because she was taken out of a man."

²⁴That's why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife. The two of them become one.

²⁵Adam and his wife were both naked. They didn't feel any shame.

Adam and Eve Fall Into Sin

3 The serpent was more clever than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. The serpent said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat fruit from any tree in the garden'?"

²The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden. ³But God did say, 'You must not eat the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden. Do not even touch it. If you do, you will die.'"

⁴"You will certainly not die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵"God knows that when you eat fruit from that tree, you will know things you have never known before. Like God, you will be able to tell the difference between good and evil."

⁶The woman saw that the tree's fruit was good to eat and pleasing to look at. She also saw that it would make a person wise. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her. And he ate it. ⁷Then both of them knew things they had never known before. They realized they were naked. So they sewed together fig leaves and made clothes for themselves.

⁸Then the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking in the garden. It was during the coolest time of the day. They hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called out to the man. "Where are you?" he asked.

¹⁰"I heard you in the garden," the man answered. "I was afraid, because I was naked. So I hid."

¹¹The LORD God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten fruit from the tree I commanded you not to eat from?"

¹²The man said, "It's the fault of the woman you put here with me. She gave me some fruit from the tree. And I ate it."

¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What have you done?"

The woman said, "The serpent tricked me. That's why I ate the fruit."

¹⁴So the LORD God spoke to the serpent. He said, "Because you have done this,