

“In The Beginning”

Series: “The Word of God 2012”

(Genesis 1-11; Psalms 8,12,104; John 1:1-3)

Week 1: January 8, 2012

Welcome! I pray you are here & excited to walk thru the totality of God’s Word with us in 2012!

In this 52 week series, we will be addressing and answering the same question each week:

“Why did God give us this specific 2% of His overall Word?”

As we prayerfully put the chronological pieces of the Bible together week by week...

Our proper response to God’s story has already been laid out for us

Love it...	Psalm.119:97
Honor it...	Job 23:12
Believe it...	John 6:68-69
Become it...	2 Timothy 3:16-17
Study it...	Ezra 7:10
Obey it...	1 John 2:5
Guard it...	1 Timothy 6:20
Fight for it...	Jude 3

The Story:

1. Always remember... this is God’s revelation...
2. This is GOD’s story... He is always the focus.
3. We humans are the “extras” and “supporting cast” in His story...
4. God’s storyline... **Creation → Fall → Rescue → Restoration**
5. Approximately 40% of the Old Testament is written in “story” form
 - a. We need to read literary genre appropriately... think about it...
 - a.i. We read pharmacy prescriptions differently than we read suspense novels
 - a.ii. We read comic strips differently than we read cook books...
 - a.iii. So it is also true that we read historical prose differently than prophecy...
 - a.iv. We read Psalms differently than we read the epistles (letters)
 - b. How best to approach Old Testament stories:
 - b.i. Ask questions about the story’s PURPOSE
 - b.i.1. How is God REVEALED in the story
 - b.i.2. What does God VALUE in the story
 - b.i.3. What was God’s INTENTION in the story
 - b.i.4. Where am I in the story
 - b.i.5. What PROMISES are in play in the story
 - b.i.6. Which of the major THEMES of the Bible are at work in the story
 - b.ii. Notice the DETAILS of the story
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 - b.iii.1. Learn the “good” lessons
 - b.iii.2. Learn from the “bad” examples in the story as well
 - b.iv. IDENTIFY how God is revealed as the HERO in the story
 - b.v. Recognize that smaller STORIES COMBINE to tell the broader story

Helpful reminder: the following are “recurring themes” throughout God’s Word

1. The Character of THE One true God
2. Covenants/Promises
3. Judgment/Consequence for sin/disobedience
4. Blessing for faith and obedience
5. The Lord Savior and sacrifice for sin
6. The coming kingdom and glory

*** Ask when reading a passage “Which theme(s) is God advancing?”

*** Ask how God is being glorified in each particular passage (because He is).

*** Ask how you are to personally respond to and apply the passage.

*** Ask: “What part of God’s story is this and where is it going?”

Some popular ways of summarizing God’s story:

A “3-act drama“ 1). God’s plan for all people; 2). God’s people (Israel); 3) God’s people (Church)

A “4-stage story” 1). Creation; 2). The Fall; 3). Rescue; 4). Restoration

Regardless of one’s memory support methods, Romans 15:4 tells us why we need/have Scripture:

***For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.** – Romans 15:4*

- I. **HIM** “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction”
- a.i.1. **Creator God...** Genesis 1:1ff; John 1:1-3; Psalms 8 & 104
 - a.i.2. **Creation...** ALL things that define reality...
 - a.i.3. **God wants us to KNOW Him & His redemptive plan for humanity**

- II. **HERE** “...so that through perseverance...”
- a.i.1. **Created by God...**
 - a.i.2. **The Fall (start)**
 - a.i.2.a. Genesis 3:1-15
 - a.i.2.a.i. Enter Sin & Satan
 - a.i.2.a.ii. Process: **Devil, Deceit, Doubt, Desire, & Downfall**

VIDEO: “O How He Loves Us” – Amen!

- III. **HURT** “...and the encouragement...”
- a.i.1. **The Fall (on-going)**
 - a.i.2. **The Flood**
 - a.i.3. **Tour of Babel**

VIDEO: “This is where the healing begins” – Amen!

- IV. **HELP** “of the Scriptures” (Psalm 12)

1 Peter 1:13 = *prepare your minds for action, and be sober-*

minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Psalm 119:105 = “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”

V. **HOPE** “we might have hope.”

Romans 15:4 = *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

1 Timothy 1:1 = “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus... who is our hope.”

Romans 15:13 = *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*
To “abound in hope” we must truly “abide in Him.”

To abide in Him is to KNOW Him... and to Know Him is to Love Him – Amen!

Character of God:

Omni/Ever-present, timeless God (In the beginning God... He was there *before* the start...)

All-powerful God (God said... so powerful is He that He literally spoke creation into being)

All-knowing God (He is the great Architect of “reality” – past, present, & future – Amen!)

Initiator-God (Master-Creator, Missionary-Lover, Messiah-Savior)

Triune-God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit... read Matthew 28:19)

Creator-God (In the beginning God created... Ex-Nihilo (the only TRUE Creator ever!))

Creative God (just look around... the heavens, an eyeball, love, color, poetry, science, etc.)

God of order (each day had a set and measured objective... the 7th day for rest = order!)

Good God (looked over all creation... it is good)

God of Grace (every experience we have with His goodness comes from His unmerited favor)

Revelatory God (His Word and His Son are His two greatest Self-revelations to/for us)

Relational God (we were made to glorify Him through our loving relationships with Him)

Merciful God (even in Noah’s day... & still today, God holds back what humanity fully deserves)

“Justice said, ‘Cut them down;’ but mercy interceded... Note that the time of God’s patience and mercy towards provoking sinners is *sometimes* long, but always limited.

Reprieves are not pardons; though God bears (with us) a great while, He will not bear always.” - Matthew Henry, Puritan pastor

God of love and compassion (He did not have to create us or save us...)

God of Truth-in-Love (if you eat of this tree you will surely die)

Holy God (one sin is all it took to separate all of humanity from a perfect & holy God)

Righteous God (the Standard and very definition of what is Right & Righteous)

God of consequences (holiness & justice demand that every sin be paid for... by someone)

God of blessing (Gen.1:28 = “God blessed them... and said: be fruitful and multiply...)

God of wrath (for the wages of sin is death...)

God of work (work the garden)

God of worship (look at Able vs Cain)

God of patience (cousin to mercy... He is not slow... so that none may perish)

God of promise (twin to truth... Genesis 3:15 promises the story humanity’s fight & finale)

God of providence (in Him we move and breathe and have our being)

I pray we have learned, been encouraged, and now champion His hope.

“Remember this, and be assured; take it to heart, you rebels. 9 Remember the former things, those (things) of long ago, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me. 10 I make known the end from the beginning; and from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all that I please.” - Isaiah 46:8-10

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Introductory verse:

Romans 15:4 *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

We can't make sense of today, nor the New Testament without first understanding the Old Testament!

We need to learn who God is...

We need to understand life's most basic truths...

We need to find our place in God's redemptive story...

We need to become familiar with God's eternal storyline:

1. Creation
2. The Fall
3. The Rescue
4. Restoration

When we understand God's story, then and only then will we makes sense of:

1. Him
2. Here
3. Hurt
4. Help
5. Hope

The Story:

6. Always remember... this is God's revelation...
7. This is GOD's story... He is always the focus.
8. We humans are the "extras" and "supporting cast" in His story...
9. God's storyline... **Creation → Fall → Rescue → Restoration**
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Three Acts in the Story:

1. God has a plan for ALL people (3 scenes)
2. God has a covenant people (9 scenes)
3. God has a new-covenant people (5 scenes)

Recurring Themes:

7. The Character of THE One true God
8. Covenants/Promises
9. Judgment/Consequence for sin/disobedience
10. Blessing for faith and obedience
11. The Lord Savior and sacrifice for sin
12. The coming kingdom and glory

Outline of texts:

Genesis:

God
 Creation
 Man
 Satan
 Fall (Devil, Deceit, Doubt, Desire, Downfall)
 Cain/Abel
 Noah
 Flood
 Instruction to go...
 Babel

Psalms:

Ps.8 = Praise God for His display of majesty and grace in creation!
 Ps.104 = Creator God is large and in-charge... He is creation's sovereign Sustainer
 Ps.12 = God promises to come to the aide of His children (in His time & way)

John 1:1-3 = Jesus is God... the God of Genesis 1:1...

Notable details...

- Gen. 1 =
- God is present before time begins... (Alpha/Omega)
 - God “said” and it happens.... Ex-nihilo
 - Repetition in saying “after their kind” = seed/fruit/living creatures
 - Repetition in saying “and God saw that it was good”
- Gen. 2 =
- God’s creation is completed...
 - God blessed the 7th day & made it holy because He rested after His work...
 - God demonstrates that He is a God of order, intentionality, & design
 - God makes man (Adam)
 - God makes man to work in & take care of the garden
 - God commands/warns Adam not to eat of the tree of knowledge
 - God gives loving & truthful warning of consequences/wrath
 - God says it is not good for man to be alone (“in God’s image” = relational)
 - Eve is created... the crown jewel of creation
 - God creates and demonstrates the role & purpose of marriage (one flesh)
- Gen. 3 =
- **Satan (serpent) is crafty AND created... NOT a “tough competitor” for God**
 - **Sin starts with Devil... deceit, doubt, desire... and then downfall**
 - Eve eats with Adam with her... passivity leads to sin and death!
 - Sin is born and immediately finger-pointing & blame-shifting result...
 - God brings swift and significant consequences to the circumstances...
 - * Satan is told of his ultimate doom
 - * Adam and Eve are told of their curses & then are banished...
 - God’s curses and wrath are wrapped in mercy & grace for humanity...
 - **ALL of sin’s ongoing affects are explained in Genesis 3...**
 - God’s promise and commitment to His unchanging story is clear (3:15)
 - Eve is called “the mother of all the living” – eliminating “pre-Adam peoples”
- Gen. 4 =
- Two brothers active and engaged in religious activity... 1 “doing” & 1 “being”
 - It’s a “heart-thing” – with God, it’s not what you “do,” it’s who you “are”
 - God did not look upon Cain with favor... nor his offering (but note the first)
 - God saw Cain’s heart long before Cain got busy with his offering
 - “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Not “keeper” but servant & co-glorifier!
 - God hears the screams that come from His children’s blood... BUT, do we?
 - Note recurring pattern from the fall... lies, deceit, sin spreading, getting worse
 - Again, recurring pattern... Cain shown mercy & grace in midst of God’s curse
 - Genealogies begin... God is ensuring details are kept, confidence maintained
 - Lamech is double trouble...
 - * Breaks God’s design of monogamy in marriage (2 wives)
 - * Brags about committing 2 murders
 - Enosh is born and for the first time: “men began to call on the name of the Lord”
- Gen. 5 =
- More genealogies... more attention to detail
 - Mankind lived a long time before the flood, in sin’s “developing” years
 - “Enoch walked with God and then was no more because God took him away”
 - Methuselah lived 969 years... the longest ever on record in the Bible
 - Noah is born and his dad says: “he will comfort us” in our labor and toil...
 - After Noah is 500 years old he becomes a dad
- Gen. 6 =
- The perpetuation of sin is first described in the inter-marrying of God’s people

- Sin left unrepented becomes a run-away-train in our lives...
- God is only going to accept so much before He brings justice to all
- Sinners and their sin broke God's heart...
- Note the recurring pattern: God's love, our sin, God's love
- Again, recurring patten: sin and disobedience bring pain and consequences
- Note that Creator God is arbiter of all consequences over all of His creation
- Note that God's holiness, righteousness, & justice demand payment for sin
- "But Noah found favor in the eyes of God" (v.8)
- "...Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time, Noah walked with God." v.9
- Noah is the "remnant" before there is a remnant...
- "Make an ark... this is how you shall make it..." (Peculiar & Empowered)
- The flood warns/shows God is serious and truthful about eternal hell...
- "But I will establish My covenant with you & you shall enter the ark..." (Gospel)
- Note: "the animals... WILL COME TO YOU..." (6:20) God empowers His plans!
- "...Noah did according to all that God had commanded him..." (obedience = faith)

- Gen. 7 =
- "Enter the ark... after 7 more days I will send rain" = Get 'em ready!/prep-time
 - "...Noah did according to all that God had commanded him..." (v.5 repeats 6:22)
 - "It came about after the 7 days that the flood came" (God's truth can be trusted)
 - Noah was 600, 2 months, & 17 days old on "flood-day" – very specific...
 - Note: "and the Lord closed it (ark door) behind him."

Isaiah 58:8 = *"...your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard."*

- Noah did his part as commanded... and His Commander & Creator did the rest!

- Gen. 8 =
- God never forgets His children or missions He sends them on (v.1)
 - God's account continues to be detailed...
 - Noah sends out birds to check on God's timing... Noah waits on God!
 - Noah stays in ark 1 month 26 days after the water was gone... waiting on God...
 - "Then God spoke to Noah and said: 'Go out of the ark...'" (vv.15-16)
 - The first thing Noah did on dry ground was worship God via sacrifice...
 - Note the use/priority of valuable resources/animals for worship... (vv.20-21)
 - Note Noah's heartfelt worship is pleasing to God (v.21)

- Gen. 9 =
- "And God blessed Noah and his sons..." (v.1) Faithful obedience brings blessing!
 - God changed man's relationship with the animal kingdom... their food now (v.3)
 - God introduces and decrees capital punishment for intentional murder (vv.5-6)
 - God tells his "remnant" of Noah & sons to be fruitful & populate the world...
 - Note that it is not until Acts 8/9 that God's command of Gen.9 is fulfilled...
 - God's promises are dependant upon no one else but Him... (v.9)
 - God promises to never destroy the earth by flood again... (v.11)
 - Rainbows are signs of God's post-flood promise in v.11... (v.13&15)
 - Noah's 3 boys repopulated the entire world (like Adam & Eve)... (v.19)
 - Noah the righteous man sinned big time... drunk/naked... (for all have sinned)...
 - Note Ham's actions and God's subsequent consequences... Do the right thing!
 - Note God's blessing on Shem & Japheth for doing the right thing... (patterns)

- Gen. 10 =
- v.32 = *These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.*

- Gen. 11 =
- At this point the whole world used the same language (v.1)
 - The people rejected God's command to populate the earth... they "settled" in...
 - The people wanted a tower that would reach heaven... (encroaching on God)
 - The people wanted to "make a name for themselves" (pride)
 - God speaks in the Trinitarian voice ("come let Us") again in 11:7...
 - God once again gets "hands-on" and scatters, confounds, & accomplishes...
 - All the nations & languages of today worn born out of this Babel-account.
 - The second half of ch.11 gives genealogy from Shem to Abram...
- Psalm 8 =
- This is a SONG of PRAISE to our Creator, Sustainer, & Savior Lord
 - Beautiful bookends start and end the Psalm/song (vv.1&9)
 - "O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth" (vv.1&9)
 - God's greatness and man's smallness are contrasted to glorify God & grace...
 - God's children are crowned with His glory and majesty (1 Cor. 5:21)
 - "You make him rule over the works of Your hands..." (v.6)
- Psalm 12 =
- David cries out for God's help because the world was going to hell – literally
 - "Everyone lies to one another; their flattering lips speak with deception." (v.2)
 - God promises to stand up for His own... He promises ultimate safety – Amen!
 - God the promise Keeper is recognized as being trustworthy... no matter what!
 - It is clear that God will right every wrong... evil will not reign forever.
- Psalm 104 =
- God's awesomeness, majesty, and sovereignty over creation is magnified here...
 - "Bless the Lord, O my soul" bookends this Psalm of praise
 - Nothing can stand in comparison or competition with Creator God!
 - Verse 24 summarizes well... "O LORD, how many are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all; the earth is full of Your possessions."
 - The gospel is told figuratively between vv.28-30... it is ALL of grace!
 - We are reminded that our only proper response is to praise & worship God

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God has a plan...

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Jesus in the O.T.

- **John 1:1...** "In the beginning was the Word..."
- **Genesis 1...** "Let US make man in OUR image & likeness"
- **Genesis 3:15...** "and HE will crush your (Satan's) head..."
- **Isaiah 53...** "suffering Servant"
 - Every animal sacrifice pointed to the coming "**Lamb of God**" (John 1:29)
 - Every consequence for sin pointed to **the Cross & Gethsemane's "Cup"**
- **David over Goliath / Joseph over his brothers**
 - Every grace-filled and merciful miracle **pointed to Jesus' resurrection!**
- **Daniel over the lions / Shadrach, Meshach, & Abedigo over the fiery furnace...**
 - Every selection of protection pointed to **our Champion, our King, our Savior!**
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21**
 - "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (v.21)
- **Jesus on Jesus in the O.T.**
 - **Luke 24:25-27:** *And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.*
 - **Luke 24:44-48:** **44** *Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.*

Character of God:

Omni/Ever-present, timeless God (In the beginning God... He was there *before* the start...)
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 God of work (work the garden)
 God of worship (look at Able vs Cain)
 God of patience (cousin to mercy... He is not slow... so that none may perish)
 God of promise (twin to truth... Genesis 3:15 promises the story humanity’s fight & finale)
 God of providence (in Him we move and breathe and have our being)

The Fall:

Inclusion with Adam is God’s way... period!

- Don’t complain... you’ve sinned on your own anyway!
- Don’t complain... David’s baby gives biblical example of God’s grace with little children
- Don’t complain... inclusion with Adam opens the door to inclusion with Christ!

Inclusion with Christ is God’s grace... period!

- Thank the Lord... you never could have paid your own debt!
- Thank the Lord... there is a way out of your bottomless pit!
- Thank the Lord... the way out is a Gift
 - The Gift is totally FREE... but it is not cheap
 - The Gift is offered to every human being – without exception!
 - The Gift is both a Person and a promise...
 - His name is Jesus, the Christ!
 - His promise is known as THE Gospel (a.k.a. “good news” of Jesus Christ)

Our response to God’s story

Love it... Psalm.119:97
 Honor it... Job 23:12

Believe it... John 6:68-69
Become it... 2 Timothy 3:16-17
Study it... Ezra 7:10
Obey it... 1 John 2:5
Guard it... 1 Timothy 6:20
Fight for it... Jude 3

Conclusion:

Romans 15:4: *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope...*

Ephesians 1:17-19: *I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. **I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,** and his incomparably great power for us who believe...*

Personal verses:

Gen. 1 vv.1,3,26-28,31
Gen. 2 vv.1-4,7,15-18,20,23-25
Gen. 3 vv.1,8,12-15
Gen. 4 vv.9-10,26
Gen. 5 vv.1-2,24,27,29
Gen. 6 vv.8-9,18,22
Gen. 7 vv.21-23
Gen. 8 vv.1,15-16,20-21
Gen. 9 vv.1,5-6,13,15,21-27
Gen. 10
Gen. 11 vv.1,4,7-9,

Ps. 8 vv.1,4-6,9
Ps. 104 vv.7,28-30,33-35
Ps. 12 v.1,2,4,6
John 1 vv.1,3

Hosea 4:17 *Ephraim is joined to idols; Let him alone.*