



This book tells about a number of “beginnings”—the creation of the world and of the first man and woman. It also tells how God made a special covenant (agreement) with Abraham and promised to bless him and his descendants. Genesis also includes a number of stories about two of Abraham’s descendants: his grandson Jacob, who was also known as Israel, and Abraham’s great-grandson Joseph who became an important administrator and court official for the king of Egypt.

The Story of Creation

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
2 The earth was barren, with no form of life; it was under a roaring ocean covered with darkness. But the Spirit of God was moving over the water.

The First Day
3 God said, “I command light to shine!” And light started shining. **4** God looked at the light and saw that it was good. He separated light from darkness **5** and named the light “Day” and the darkness “Night.” Evening came and then morning—that was the first day.

The Second Day
6 God said, “I command a dome to separate the water above it from the water below it.” **7** And that’s what happened. God made the dome **8** and named it “Sky.” Evening came and then morning—that was the second day.

The Third Day
9 God said, “I command the water under the sky to come together in one place, so there will be dry

ground.” And that’s what happened. **10** God named the dry ground “Land,” and he named the water “Ocean.” God looked at what he had done and saw that it was good.

11 God said, “I command the earth to produce all kinds of plants, including fruit trees and grain.” And that’s what happened. **12** The earth produced all kinds of vegetation. God looked at what he had done, and it was good. **13** Evening came and then morning—that was the third day.

The Fourth Day

14 God said, “I command lights to appear in the sky and to separate day from night and to show the time for seasons, special days, and years. **15** I command them to shine on the earth.” And that’s what happened. **16** God made two powerful lights, the brighter one to rule the day and the other to rule the night. He also made the stars. **17** Then God put these lights in the sky to shine on the earth, **18** to rule day and night, and to separate light from darkness. God looked at what he had done, and it was good. **19** Evening came and then morning—that was the fourth day.

The Fifth Day

20 God said, “I command the ocean to be full of living creatures, and I command birds to fly above the earth.” **21** So God made the giant sea monsters and all the living creatures that swim in the ocean.

He also made every kind of bird. God looked at what he had done, and it was good. ²²Then he gave the living creatures his blessing—he told the ocean creatures to live everywhere in the ocean and the birds to live everywhere on earth. ²³Evening came and then morning—that was the fifth day.

The Sixth Day

²⁴God said, “I command the earth to give life to all kinds of tame animals, wild animals, and reptiles.” And that’s what happened. ²⁵God made every one of them. Then he looked at what he had done, and it was good.

²⁶God said, “Now we will make humans, and they will be like us. We will let them rule the fish, the birds, and all other living creatures.”

²⁷So God created humans to be like himself; he made men and women. ²⁸God gave them his blessing and said:

Have a lot of children! Fill the earth with people and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the ocean, the birds in the sky, and every animal on the earth.

²⁹I have provided all kinds of fruit and grain for you to eat. ³⁰And I have given the green plants as food for everything else that breathes. These will be food for animals, both wild and tame, and for birds.

³¹God looked at what he had done. All of it was very good! Evening came and then morning—that was the sixth day.

2 So the heavens and the earth and everything else were created.

The Seventh Day

²By the seventh day God had finished his work, and so he rested. ³God blessed the seventh day and made it special because on that day he rested from his work.

⁴That’s how God created the heavens and the earth.

The Garden of Eden

When the LORD God made the heavens and the earth, ⁵no grass or plants were growing anywhere. God had not yet sent any rain, and there was no one to work the land. ⁶But streams came up from the ground and watered the earth.

⁷The LORD God took a handful of soil and made a man. God breathed life into the man, and the man started breathing. ⁸The LORD made a garden

in a place called Eden, which was in the east, and he put the man there.

⁹The LORD God placed all kinds of beautiful trees and fruit trees in the garden. Two other trees were in the middle of the garden. One of the trees gave life—the other gave the power to know the difference between right and wrong.

¹⁰From Eden a river flowed out to water the garden, then it divided into four rivers. ¹¹The first one is the Pishon River that flows through the land of Havilah, ¹²where pure gold, rare perfumes, and precious stones are found. ¹³The second is the Gihon River that winds through Ethiopia. ¹⁴The Tigris River that flows east of Assyria is the third, and the fourth is the Euphrates River.

¹⁵The LORD God put the man in the Garden of Eden to take care of it and to look after it. ¹⁶But the LORD told him, “You may eat fruit from any tree in the garden, ¹⁷except the one that has the power to let you know the difference between right and wrong. If you eat any fruit from that tree, you will die before the day is over!”

¹⁸The LORD God said, “It isn’t good for the man to live alone. I need to make a suitable partner for him.” ¹⁹⁻²⁰So the LORD took some soil and made animals and birds. He brought them to the man to see what names he would give each of them. Then the man named the tame animals and the birds and the wild animals. That’s how they got their names.

None of these was the right kind of partner for the man. ²¹So the LORD God made him fall into a deep sleep, and he took out one of the man’s ribs. Then after closing the man’s side, ²²the LORD made a woman out of the rib.

The LORD God brought her to the man, ²³and the man exclaimed,

“Here is someone like me!

She is part of my body,
my own flesh and bones.

She came from me, a man.

So I will name her Woman!”

²⁴That’s why a man will leave his own father and mother. He marries a woman, and the two of them become like one person.

²⁵Although the man and his wife were both naked, they were not ashamed.

The First Sin

3 The snake was sneakier than any of the other wild animals that the LORD God had made. One day it came to the woman and asked,

“Did God tell you not to eat fruit from any tree in the garden?”

²The woman answered, “God said we could eat fruit from any tree in the garden, ³except the one in the middle. He told us not to eat fruit from that tree or even to touch it. If we do, we will die.”

⁴“No, you won’t!” the snake replied. ⁵“God understands what will happen on the day you eat fruit from that tree. You will see what you have done, and you will know the difference between right and wrong, just as God does.”

⁶The woman stared at the fruit. It looked beautiful and tasty. She wanted the wisdom that it would give her, and she ate some of the fruit. Her husband was there with her, so she gave some to him, and he ate it too. ⁷At once they saw what they had done, and they realized they were naked. Then they sewed fig leaves together to make something to cover themselves.

⁸Late in the afternoon a breeze began to blow, and the man and woman heard the LORD God walking in the garden. They were frightened and hid behind some trees.

The Trouble with Sin

⁹The LORD called out to the man and asked, “Where are you?”

¹⁰The man answered, “I was naked, and when I heard you walking through the garden, I was frightened and hid!”

¹¹“How did you know you were naked?” God asked. “Did you eat any fruit from that tree in the middle of the garden?”

¹²“It was the woman you put here with me,” the man said. “She gave me some of the fruit, and I ate it.”

¹³The LORD God then asked the woman, “What have you done?”

“The snake tricked me,” she answered. “And I ate some of that fruit.”

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the snake:

“Because of what you have done,
you will be the only animal
to suffer this curse—

For as long as you live,
you will crawl on your stomach
and eat dirt.

¹⁵You and this woman
will hate each other;
your descendants and hers
will always be enemies.

One of hers will strike you
on the head,
and you will strike him
on the heel.”

¹⁶Then the LORD said to the woman,

“You will suffer terribly
when you give birth.
But you will still desire
your husband,
and he will rule over you.”

¹⁷The LORD said to the man,

“You listened to your wife
and ate fruit from that tree.

And so, the ground
will be under a curse
because of what you did.

As long as you live,
you will have to struggle
to grow enough food.

¹⁸Your food will be plants,
but the ground will produce
thorns and thistles.

¹⁹You will have to sweat
to earn a living;
you were made out of soil,
and you will once again
turn into soil.”

²⁰The man Adam named his wife Eve because she would become the mother of all who live.

²¹Then the LORD God made clothes out of animal skins for the man and his wife.

²²The LORD said, “These people now know the difference between right and wrong, just as we do. But they must not be allowed to eat fruit from the tree that lets them live forever.” ²³So the LORD God sent them out of the Garden of Eden, where they would have to work the ground from which the man had been made. ²⁴Then God put winged creatures at the entrance to the garden and a flaming, flashing sword to guard the way to the life-giving tree.

Cain Murders Abel

4 Adam and Eve had a son. Then Eve said, “I’ll name him Cain because I got him with the help of the LORD.” ²Later she had another son and named him Abel.

Abel became a sheep farmer, but Cain farmed the land. ³One day, Cain gave part of his harvest to