



The Big Picture

Lesson 3: The Story Of The Bible (Part 1)

The words that are written in the pages of the Bible are not a bunch of unrelated sayings, rules, or “once upon a time” type stories. Instead, it all tells one great story that everyone on this earth needs to hear and obey! You see, the words written in the Bible tell us about a God who has always existed and will always exist, who knows everything, sees everything, is everywhere, can do everything that He desires to do, and does not do anything that is wrong. And, the words written in the Bible tells us about a plan that this God had for saving mankind before He ever created the earth or the universe! Every word written in the Bible is but a very small piece that helps us to understand “the big picture” of the Bible’s story.

The beginning. The first verse in the Bible says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). The first two chapters of the book of Genesis tell us how everything about this world and universe came into existence when God created it all in six days (and rested on the seventh day). This book also tells us about how God created the first man and woman (Adam and Eve) and how sin entered the world whenever they disobeyed God. Now, mankind needed to be saved from sin or else he would be punished forever. Later, the book tells us about three patriarchs named Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To them, God made three promises that are the basis of the Bible story. First, God promised to make a great nation from their descendants. Second, God promised to give their descendants the land of Canaan. Third, God promised to bless the entire world through their Seed (this would be Jesus Christ). The book of Genesis closes with Jacob’s family living in Egypt during a famine.

The exodus. When the second book of the Bible opens (the book of Exodus), the descendants of the Patriarchs are a very large number. Whenever a Pharaoh (king) in Egypt came to power, he decided to make slaves of these people (who were called Israelites). Then, God called one of the Israelites by the name of Moses to lead these people out of slavery and into the promised land of Canaan. He brought them out of Egypt by the power of God bringing ten plagues on the Egyptians and parting the Red Sea. Once the Israelites were out of Egypt, God gave the Israelites a law (called the Law of Moses) and made an agreement

with them. If they would do what He told them to do, He would bless them and they would be His people. But, if they would not do what He said, He would punish them. They agreed. Shortly after this, the Israelites made a golden calf to serve and worship instead of God, and they complained against God while they were traveling in the wilderness on their way to the land of Canaan. Then, whenever God was about to give them the land of Canaan, the people were too afraid and did not believe in God enough to fight against the people who lived there. After this, Moses also did not obey God on one occasion. Because of all this, God would only allow Joshua and Caleb (who did believe) and those who were younger than 20 to go into Canaan. They would wander in the wilderness until all of the others died.

Conquering Canaan. After all the Israelites who had not listened to God died in the wilderness, God used Joshua as the new leader for the people. God allowed them to cross the Jordan River in order to come into the land of Canaan. From this point, Joshua would now lead God's people in a series of military battles against the people who lived in this land. As long as the Israelites obeyed God, God would cause them to be victorious no matter how large or strong the enemy was. Thus, the Israelites conquered the land of Canaan and divided up the land among the 12 tribes of Israel. Now, God had fulfilled His promise to give the descendants of the Patriarchs this land. However, the Israelites made a mistake whenever they tried to take the land. They did not obey God and destroy all those who lived there. Therefore, after the Israelites had taken the land, the original Canaanites often influenced God's people to worship false gods and disobey God. Then, God would punish His people. And, whenever they would repent and cry out to Him for help, God would give them a judge who would deliver His people from the enemy. This continued for many years during the days of the judges.

We have just begun to see how the Bible story all fits together. But, we have already seen the beginning of sin in the world and God's plan to save people from sin. And, we have now seen God keep the first two of his promises He made to the Patriarchs. We will continue to study the Bible story to understand how He keeps the third promise – which is the most important promise of them all!

Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

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Study Questions:

1. Who created the world?
2. How long did it take Him to create it?
3. What did Adam and Eve do that did not please God?
4. Who were the three Patriarchs?
5. What three promises did God make to them?
6. What happened when the Israelites were in Egypt?
7. Who brought them out of Egypt?
8. Who led the Israelites into the land of Canaan?

Memory Verse:

“[A]ccording to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord”
(Ephesians 3:11).

Draw a picture of the lesson you learned about: