

# Genesis

## Lesson 1: In the Beginning

*This is a simplified lesson for younger children. The referenced scriptures and footnotes are included for your information, but you can also find out more in the versions of this lesson for older children.*

The Bible tells us that GOD created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1). But who is God? And why can't we see Him?

Well, God is the GREATEST Being in the whole universe. There is no one more important than He is. And He created EVERYTHING!! (Revelation 4:11). We can't see God because He is not "made" out of flesh and blood like we are (1 Corinthians 15:40). He is "made"<sup>1</sup> of spirit (John 4:24a). And that means He is invisible to us. Our eyes weren't made to see things that are spirit - at least, not yet! But one day they will be (1 John 3:2).

### God and "the Word"

In the very beginning - before the world began - there was someone with God called *the Word*. And the Bible tells us that He was God too (John 1:1-2). *The Word* later came down to earth and became Jesus Christ, the Son of God! (John 1:14; Philippians 2:5). Jesus is the one who makes it possible for us to live forever,<sup>2</sup> so we'll be finding out a LOT more about Him in future lessons!<sup>3</sup>

The Bible tells us that it was through Jesus Christ (as *the Word*) that God created everything.<sup>4</sup> He created the angels, the sun and the moon, and the stars. He created the earth, all of the plants and trees and animals. He even created us!

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<sup>1</sup> "Made" in the sense of "that's what He is" - NOT "made" in the creative sense. God has always existed.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, John 3:16 & 1 Corinthians 15:50-57.

<sup>3</sup> For more information about Jesus Christ and His role in our salvation, see "The Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread" lesson in the Holy Day series.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:1-2; Hebrews 11:3

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The angels were some of the first things that God created. He created them long before He created us - or the earth that we live on. Part of their job was to sing praises to God - and when He created the earth, they all shouted and sang for joy! (Job 38:4-7).<sup>5</sup>

### The Shining "Star"

One of the angels that God created was particularly beautiful. Back in the beginning he was called the shining star, son of the morning. But we call him Lucifer today.<sup>6</sup>

The Bible tells us that Lucifer was perfect! He was a special angel - one called a "cherub". It was his job to guard God's throne in heaven. And he was one of the angels who sang for joy when the earth was created.

So Lucifer was happy. But then he changed. He became puffed up with pride because of his beauty. And that made him sin! (Ezekiel 28:12, 14-15, 17). It turned his heart **AGAINST** God. And then Lucifer decided that he wanted to take God's place in heaven! He wanted to be in charge! (Isaiah 14:13-14).

We don't know exactly why Lucifer wanted to be in charge. But perhaps it was because he knew about God's wonderful plan for mankind. You see, God was going to create His own special family. And His Plan was to make human beings - people - who could become part of that family!<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The "morning stars" and "sons of God" in verse 7 are a description of angels (see Job 1:6; Revelation 1:20).

<sup>6</sup> Heylel (roughly translated "bright, morning star") is the Hebrew word used to describe this being in Isaiah 14:12. The word was translated as "Lucifer" in the Latin version of the Bible (the Vulgate) and now appears as Lucifer, shining star or morning star in most English Bibles.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Peter 1:4 explains that God wants us to share in His divine nature. John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 2:10-11 and 1 John 3:2 reveal God's Plan to make us part of His Family - to be His children, His sons and daughters.

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But God didn't create angels to be part of His special family. He created angels to be our helpers, to watch over us and protect us (Hebrews 1:13-14). And maybe Lucifer didn't think that was fair. Maybe that made him jealous. And maybe he wanted to be in charge so he could stop God from carrying out His Plan!

### War in Heaven

So Lucifer decided to fight against God and try to overthrow Him as the ruler of the universe. Some of the other angels decided to fight with him. And there was a great WAR in heaven!<sup>8</sup>

But of course Lucifer LOST the war! No one can EVER fight against the GREAT GOD of the universe and win! (Revelation 12:7-8). After the war, God changed Lucifer's name<sup>9</sup> to Satan, the Devil. It means "enemy" - and Satan has been God's enemy ever since!<sup>10</sup>

Many years passed. Perhaps even millions of years!<sup>11</sup> But finally it was time for God to carry out His Plan. It was time for Him to create human beings - people who could become part of His very own family! And we'll find out how He did this in our next lesson.

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<sup>8</sup> Our traditional teaching is that this war took place between *Genesis* 1:1 and *Genesis* 1:2 - and that it caused some sort of physical destruction that left the earth covered in water and darkness. This view is based on the premise that God did not originally create the world in vain - "without form" (*Isaiah* 45:18) and that the word "was" in *Genesis* 1:2 can also be translated as "became" in Hebrew (i.e. the earth *became* without "form and void" - it wasn't originally created that way).

<sup>9</sup> This is because Lucifer is no longer a "shining star" - he is now full of darkness and evil (see, for example, *Ephesians* 6:11-12 & *Colossians* 1:13).

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, *Revelation* 12:9, *Luke* 10:18-19 and *Matthew* 13:24-25, 37-39a.

<sup>11</sup> Many scientific discoveries (i.e. fossil records, radioactive decay, cosmology, the development of the elements, coal and oil, etc) suggest that God designed a long period of "gestation" before the earth was ready to sustain human life.