

Genesis

Lesson 1: In the Beginning

The footnotes are included for your information. The highlighted scriptures support the text and you may like to read a selection of these to your children (or let them read the scriptures to you so they can see for themselves what the Bible says). It's best to use a good, modern version of the Bible for this.

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"¹ of spirit (**John 4:24a**). And that means He is invisible to us.² You see, 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 *the Word* was also God (**John 1:1-2**). *The Word* later came down to earth and became a man called Jesus Christ (**John 1:14; Philippians 2:5**). Jesus is the Son of God and it's because of Him that we can have the chance to live forever - so we'll be learning a LOT more about Him in future lessons!³

The Bible tells us that it was through Jesus Christ (as *the Word*) that God created everything (**John 1:3, Colossians 1:16**). He created the heavens, the planets, the stars and angels. He created the sun and moon, the earth, the plants and trees and animals - He even created us!

The angels were some of the first things that God created. He created them before He created us - or the earth that we live on. Part of their job

¹ "Made" in the sense of "that's what He is" - NOT "made" in the creative sense. God has always existed (see Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 57:15a).

² Romans 1:19-20; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17 & Hebrews 11:27 all describe God as "invisible".

³ See John 3:16 & 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. 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.

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was to sing praises to God - and when He created the earth they ALL shouted and sang for joy (Job 38:4-7).⁴

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.⁵ Lucifer was a very special angel called a "cherub". He was one of the guardian angels around God's throne in heaven. He was also one of the angels who sang for joy when the earth was created.

So Lucifer was happy. The Bible also tells us that Lucifer was perfect. He was perfect in wisdom and perfect in beauty! But then something happened that changed him. He became puffed up with pride because of his beauty! And that corrupted him (Ezekiel 28:12, 14-15, 17). It made him sin! Eventually 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 decided that he 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! And God wants EVERYONE to be part of this family one day - even you and me!⁶

But God didn't create angels to be part of His special family. He created them to be our helpers, to watch over us and protect us (Hebrews 1:13-14).

⁴ The "morning stars" and "sons of God" in verse 7 are a description of angels (see Job 1:6; Revelation 1:20).

⁵ 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 appears as Lucifer, shining star or morning star in most English Bibles.

⁶ 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. More information about God's Plan can be found in "The Holy Days and God's Plan" lesson in the Holy Day series.

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And perhaps Lucifer didn't think that was fair. Perhaps it made him jealous. And perhaps 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. He persuaded some of the other angels to fight with him and there was a great WAR in heaven!⁷ 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).⁸

After the war, God changed Lucifer's name. You see, Lucifer couldn't be called a "shining star" anymore, because he was no longer a "shining one" - he was full of darkness and evil!⁹ So God changed his name to Satan, the Devil, which means "adversary" or "enemy" - and Satan has been God's enemy ever since!¹⁰

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

⁷ 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).

⁸ In context, these scriptures seem to apply to the war in heaven shortly before Christ's return. But when you put all of the pieces together, there is enough evidence to suggest that they may be dual and also apply to Lucifer's rebellion after the creation of the earth.

⁹ Ephesians 6:11-12, Colossians 1:13 and Jude 6 are some scriptures that show this.

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

¹¹ 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" to prepare the earth to sustain human life.