

STUDY GUIDE

SIX SESSIONS

30 DAYS TO UNDERSTANDING



THE BIBLE

UNLOCK THE SCRIPTURES
IN 15 MINUTES A DAY

MAX ANDERS

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STUDY GUIDE | SIX LESSONS

MAX ANDERS



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

30 Days to Understanding the Bible Study Guide

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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Let's make a bargain. If you will give me fifteen minutes a day for the next six weeks, I will give you an understanding of the Bible. In the course of this study, you will learn the story of the entire Bible . . . the major characters, major events, major points of geography, and major doctrines. You will be able to put these people and facts together in their proper chronological order and trace the geographic movement as you think your way through the entire Bible.

What is more, you will do this with a group of people like yourself who also want to gain a greater understanding of the story, history, geography, and teachings of the Bible. With this in mind, we have developed this study to be experienced in a group setting such as a Bible study, Sunday school class, or any small group gathering. Each session begins with a welcome section and two questions to get you and your group thinking about the topic. You will then watch a video featuring Max Anders and engage in some small-group discussion.

During the week, you will maximize the impact of this course by completing five daily personal studies, each of which has been designed to take fifteen minutes to complete. You will also be encouraged at the end of the first session to select one person from the group to serve as your partner throughout the course. You will check in with this person during the week to reflect on what you have learned and share your insights together.

All of the small-group members should have their own copy of this study guide. Each member is also encouraged to have a copy of the *30 Days to Understanding the Bible* book, as reading it alongside the curriculum will provide deeper insights and will make the journey more meaningful. (See the “For Next Week” section at the end of each between-studies section for the chapters in the book that correspond to the material you and your group are discussing.)

To get the most out of your group experience, keep the following points in mind. First, the real growth in this study will happen during your small-group time. This is where you will process the content of the teaching for the week, ask questions, and learn from others as you hear what God is doing in their lives. For this reason, it is important for you to be fully committed to the group and attend each session so you can build trust and rapport with the other members. If you choose to only go through the motions, or if you refrain from participating, there is a lesser chance you will find what you’re looking for during this study.

Second, remember that the goal of your small group is to serve as a place where people can share, learn about God, and also build intimacy and friendship. For this reason, seek to make your group a safe place. This means being honest about your thoughts and feelings and listening carefully to everyone else’s opinion. (If you are a group leader, there are additional instructions and resources in the back of the book for leading a productive discussion group.)

Third, resist the temptation to fix a problem people in the group might be having or to correct their theology, as that is not the purpose of your small-group time. Also, keep everything your group shares confidential. This will foster a rewarding sense of community in your group and create a place where people can heal, be challenged, and grow spiritually.

The Bible is an enormous book covering much information and many subjects. It is simply not possible to learn everything about it in six weeks. But you can gain a beginning knowledge—and overview—that you can use to build a more complete understanding in the years ahead. Over the course of this study, you can gain a foundational grasp of the most important book ever written. So, let's get started!

— Max Anders

SESSION ONE

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

If you want to learn architecture, you must first learn how buildings are put together. If you want to learn sailing, you must first learn how ships are put together. And if you want to understand the Bible, you must first learn how the Bible is put together.

M A X A N D E R S



WELCOME

Welcome to *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*! This is the first step on a journey that can revolutionize your understanding not only of Scripture, but also yourself and the world around you. The Bible is the bestselling, most-loved, and most-impactful book ever written. Actually, the Bible isn't a single book—it is a collection of sixty-six books written by more than forty individuals over a period of more than 2,000 years. It's an enormous volume that contains a huge amount of information on a wide range of topics—including history, poetry, prophecy, geography, instructions, epistles, commandments, promises, and more.

For these reasons, the Bible can often seem intimidating . . . and even overwhelming. Maybe you have tried to learn about the Bible in the past and found it difficult to understand. Maybe you have been reading the Bible for years, yet you still lack confidence when it comes to expressing what it is and what it says. Or, maybe this is the first time you have opened its pages.

Regardless of your level of experience, what you will encounter with your group over the course of the next six weeks will provide a key to unlocking what the Bible says, what it teaches, and how to apply it to your everyday life. Through the videos that accompany each session, and the daily interactions in this study guide, you will build a solid foundation for engaging and understanding the most important book ever written.

SHARE

To get started, take a few minutes to introduce yourself to anyone you do not know in the group. Then jump into the theme of this session by discussing the following questions:

- How would you describe your level of understanding of the Bible at this point in your life? Beginner? Intermediate? Advanced?
- What are you hoping you will learn about the Bible during this study?

WATCH

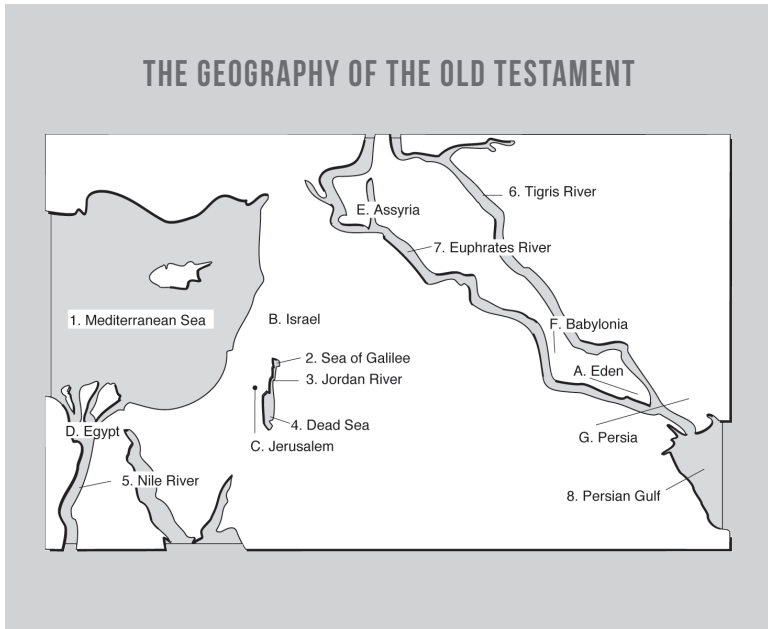
Play the video segment for session one. As you watch, follow along with the main points listed in the outline below and record any key thoughts or concepts that stand out to you.

- I. **The Promise:** If you commit to spending fifteen minutes a day in this study for the next six weeks, you will receive an understanding of the entire Bible.
 - A. It possible to understand each of the major people, major places, and major events of the Bible.
 1. The problem many people have with the Bible is that they start out by studying the details without ever getting the big picture.
 2. This study will focus on the big picture first and save the details for later.
 - B. When gaining an understanding of the Bible as a whole, it is important to focus on the broad strokes.
 1. There are thousands of mountain peaks in Colorado, but there are only fifty-three that rise over 14,000 feet.

2. This study will focus on the “fourteeners” of God’s Word, which is a manageable amount of information to process.
- II. **Structure:** A key to mastering the Old Testament is understanding that it contains only three types of books.
- A. These three types of books are:
 1. Historical books
 2. Poetical books
 3. Prophetical books
 - B. There are seventeen historical books in the Old Testament.
 1. Only eleven of those books are primary. The other six are secondary.
 2. So, if you want to get your mind around the story of the Old Testament, you need to read Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Ezra, and Nehemiah.
 3. These eleven books create a timeline into which you can fit the secondary historical books, the poetic books, and the prophetic books.
- III. **Geography:** In addition to understanding the structure of the Bible, it is important to also understand the broad strokes of biblical geography.
- A. The entire area described in the Old Testament is about the same size as the state of Texas.
 - B. Israel, the promised land for God’s people in the Old Testament, is roughly the same size as New Hampshire.

OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

HISTORICAL	POETICAL	PROPHETICAL
Primary:	Job	Isaiah
Genesis	Psalms	Jeremiah
Exodus	Proverbs	Lamentations
Numbers	Ecclesiastes	Ezekiel
Joshua	Song of Solomon	Daniel
Judges		Hosea
1 Samuel		Joel
2 Samuel		Amos
1 Kings		Obadiah
2 Kings		Jonah
Ezra		Micah
Nehemiah		Nahum
		Habakkuk
Secondary:		Zephaniah
Leviticus		Haggai
Deuteronomy		Zechariah
Ruth		Malachi
1 Chronicles		
2 Chronicles		
Esther		



IV. **History:** The Bible's historical books cover twelve eras of the biblical story.

A. In the Old Testament:

1. **Creation Era:** the creation of the world and humankind, and early events.
2. **Patriarch Era:** the birth of the Hebrew people through a family of patriarchs, covered a period of 200 years.
3. **Exodus Era:** the exodus of the Hebrew people as they are delivered out of 400 years of slavery in Egypt to return to their Promised Land.
4. **Conquest Era:** the conquest of the Promised Land by the Hebrew people after their exodus from Egypt.

5. **Judges Era:** a period of 400 years during which Israel was governed by rulers known as judges.
6. **Kingdom Era:** an additional period of 400 years during which Israel was a full-fledged nation ruled by a monarchy.
7. **Exile Era:** a period of seventy years during which the Jewish people were in exile, having been conquered by foreign powers.
8. **Return Era:** the return of the exiled Jewish people to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple.
9. **Silence Era** a final period of 400 years between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament.

B. In the New Testament:

1. **Gospel Era:** the life of Jesus of Nazareth as told in the Gospels.
2. **Church Era:** the formation of the Christian church.
3. **Missions Era:** the expansion of the church into the Roman Empire through missions.

V. **Creation Era:** The story of creation, the fall, the flood, and the tower of Babel.

- A. **Creation:** God created everything in the universe out of nothing.
- B. **Fall:** Adam and Eve were deceived by Satan and chose to rebel against God, which ushered sin into the world.
- C. **Flood:** God performed a radical surgery on the world's population, removing the cancer of evil through a world-wide flood.

THE BIBLICAL ERAS			
ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	REFERENCE
Creation	Adam	Eden	Genesis 1–11
Patriarch	Abraham	Canaan	Genesis 12–50
Exodus	Moses	Egypt	Exodus–Deuteronomy
Conquest	Joshua	Canaan	Joshua
Judges	Samson	Canaan	Judges–Ruth
Kingdom	David	Israel	1 Samuel–2 Chronicles
Exile	Daniel	Babylonia	Ezekiel–Daniel
Return	Ezra	Jerusalem	Ezra–Esther
Silence	Pharisees	Jerusalem	—
Gospel	Jesus	Israel	Matthew–John
Church	Peter	Jerusalem	Acts 1–12
Missions	Paul	Roman Empire	Acts 13–28

- D. **Tower of Babel:** Humanity again rejected God’s command to spread out, inhabit and civilize the earth, instead attempting to establish a single civilization.

VI. Review

- The structure of the Old Testament includes historical books, poetical books, and prophetic books.
- Knowing the geography the Bible enables its history and its story to come alive.
- The Creation describes the earliest events in God’s Word, including the creation the world, the Fall, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel.

DISCUSS

After watching the video, use the following questions to unpack what you learned as a group.

1. What did you find most interesting about the teaching in this session? What is your greatest takeaway from what was covered?

2. What questions do you have after watching the video?

3. In your mind, why is it helpful to understand the structure of the Bible and the types of material that it contains?

4. How does it influence your understanding of the Bible to learn that most of the action takes place within an area that is only the size of Texas?

5. In the teaching, you were introduced to the concept of “fourteeners” in the Bible, which means focusing on just those people and ideas that are most critical to understanding the broad strokes of the Bible. What are some “fourteeners” from the Creation Era of the biblical timeline?

6. The Fall is the low point of the Creation Era. How would you explain, in your own words, why Adam and Eve sinned?

APPLY

Understanding the Bible is a critical step for anyone who seeks to follow God—but it is never the final step. Instead, understanding what God’s Word says should always lead you to apply those truths in your life. In other words, knowledge should always lead to obedience. For this reason, each section of this study will include both material to learn and recommendations for putting what you have learned into practice.

Furthermore, following the truth of the Bible is not only something you do as an individual, but also something you do in community with other Christians. For that reason, the application sections in this study will encourage you to connect with a partner (or a small group of fellow participants) as you put what you learn into practice.

To get started, choose a partner or partners (or if your group is smaller, you may choose to do this as a group) who will join with you in seeking to grow over the next six weeks of this study. As you close this session, take a moment to discuss your thoughts. What are you feeling as you get started? What was something that stood out to you in this first lesson? What are you hoping to learn or experience as a result of going through this study?



SESSION ONE

BETWEEN-SESSIONS STUDY

If you have not already started reading *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*, now is a great time to begin. This week, you may want to read the introduction and chapters 1–4 in the book before engaging in the following between-sessions activities. Be sure to read the reflection questions after each activity and make a few notes in your guide about the experience. There will be a few minutes for you to share any insights you learned at the start of the next session.

DAY 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

What is your goal for working through this study? I have shared one of my main goals in the title of this resource: *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*. The key word is *understanding*. Understanding the Bible is not easy . . . but it can be made much easier than it often is.

As we said, it is helpful to start with the “fourteeners,” and a significant “fourteener” is learning the structure of how the Bible is put together. In any endeavor—whether writing a term paper, building a house, figuring out how to play a piece of music, or anything else—you first need to have an overview of where you are going and how to put things together. The same is true of the Bible. If you want to understand it and learn where it is leading you, you need to know how it is put together.

This is our goal for the material that you will encounter during the course of the next six weeks. To get started today on this journey, we will look at the two major structural divisions of the Bible: the Old Testament and the New Testament. One note as we begin: because there's not enough time to explore specific Bible verses in the video content, we will make that a priority in these daily interactions. By the time you finish these thirty days of study, you will engage some of the most important passages in all of Scripture.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

The first thirty-nine books of the Bible make up what we call the Old Testament. As you saw in the video teaching this week, seventeen of those books are historical. If you want to understand the story of the Hebrew nation, you must read these books, for they compose a historical timeline for the nation of Israel. Five of the books in the Old Testament are poetical, which means they primarily contain poems, songs, and wise sayings. The remaining seventeen books are prophetic, which means they contain proclamations and prophecies concerning the Israelites.

The Old Testament not only instructed the Israelites in how they were to relate to God, but it also provides instruction to those of us in the New Testament. Today, we no longer sacrifice animals to maintain our fellowship with God, but we are to obey the principles that we find in the Old Testament, especially as they are reiterated in the New Testament.

Read the following verses found in the New Testament that alert us to the value of the Old Testament in our lives today:

These things happened to them [people in the Old Testament] as examples and were written down as warnings

for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come (1 Corinthians 10:11).

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope (Romans 15:4).

A vital lesson from the Old Testament that carries across into our day today is the importance of believing and trusting God, and as a result, obeying Him.

How does the story of the Old Testament provide a warning for our lives today about the importance of faith and obedience (see 1 Corinthians 10:11)?

How does the Old Testament encourage us and give us hope today regarding the importance of faith and obedience (see Romans 15:4)?

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament centers on the life, ministry, and impact of Jesus Christ as a historical figure. The twenty-seven books that make up the New Testament serve as the record of Jesus' birth,

His ministry, and the ministry of His disciples and apostles, which was carried on after He was crucified.

The New Testament begins with four historical accounts of Jesus' life (we refer to these as the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and the book of the Acts of the Apostles. The rest of the New Testament is comprised of letters—also known as epistles—which were written by leaders of the early church to provide guidance and structure for living as followers of Jesus in an often-hostile world.

Read the following verses found in the New Testament describing the coming of Christ:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. . . .

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:1–5, 14).

What does this passage teach us about who Jesus is?

What does this passage teach us about what He did before He was born as Jesus of Nazareth?

REVIEW

At the end of each day, you will be asked to fill in some blanks. This is because repetition is the key to mental ownership. By being faithful to complete the review exercises, you will not only gain mastery of important information today, but you will also create a powerful foundation of knowledge that will enable multiplied learning tomorrow. (For this exercise, refer to the notes you took in the “Watch” portion of this week’s group study section.)

- There are ____ books in the Old Testament and ____ books in the New Testament. There are ____ books in the entire Bible.
- The Old Testament is the story of God and the _____ people, their poets, and their prophets.
- There are three kinds of books in the Old Testament: _____ books, _____ books, and _____ books.

Answers to each of these review questions are in the back of this guide.

DAY 2: GEOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Isn’t it amazing how quickly printed maps became a thing of the past? With smartphones and GPS satellites, they are rarely

needed—but we will always need geography, which is the study of the physical features of our world. Why? Because, as we travel, we will always need to understand where we have come from and where we are going!

In a similar way, geography is critical for understanding the Bible. To be able to visualize geographic locations and movement causes the story of the Bible to come alive in our minds in a way that it will not otherwise. It allows us to remember, to connect dots, to grasp significance that we cannot do without it.

The person who is ignorant of geography cannot fully understand history—for the two subjects are closely linked. And because the Bible is largely history, we will be exploring a healthy dose of geography each week throughout this study.

BODIES OF WATER

Refer to the map in the group discussion section for this session. Notice there are eight key bodies of water identified: (1) the Mediterranean Sea, (2) the Sea of Galilee (actually a freshwater lake seven miles wide by fourteen miles long), (3) the Jordan River (which flows south out of the Sea of Galilee), (4) the Dead Sea (the lowest point on earth, almost 3,000 feet below sea level), (5) the Nile River (the most famous river in the world that flows through Egypt), (6) the Tigris River, (7) the Euphrates River, and (8) the Persian Gulf (which along with the Tigris and Euphrates forms the eastern boundary for the lands of the Old Testament).

Which of these bodies of water were you already familiar with? Which ones were new to you?

In your own words, why is it important to understand the geography of the nations, regions, and bodies of water described throughout the Old Testament?

LOCATIONS

There are seven key locations identified on the map: (A) the Garden of Eden (where everything began), (B) Israel (a land that lies between the Mediterranean coast and the Sea of Galilee-Jordan River-Dead Sea), (C) the city of Jerusalem, (D) Egypt (where the Israelites were enslaved), (E) Assyria (a great world power that conquered the northern kingdom of Israel), (F) Babylonia (a great world power that conquered the southern kingdom of Judah), and (G) Persia (the final historical superpower of the Old Testament eras).

Jerusalem is one of the most important locations in the entire Bible. It is the capital city of the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, and was the home of the Temple of Solomon, one of the most impressive buildings ever built. The center of worship for Israel, it was the most treasured location in all the nation. It was well-protected by an impressive wall and well-fortified. If other nations wanted to conquer the nation of Israel, they knew they had to conquer Jerusalem.

Located just off the northwestern shoulder of the Dead Sea, it is built atop Mount Zion and nestled within a larger mountain range in the central region of Israel, which made it difficult to attack in ancient days. The city was originally built and occupied by the Jebusites. King David was only able to conquer the city because of some creative thinking regarding its water shafts and ducts:

The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, “You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off.” They thought, “David cannot get in here.” Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion—which is the City of David.

On that day David had said, “Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those ‘lame and blind’ who are David’s enemies.” That is why they say, “The ‘blind and lame’ will not enter the palace.”

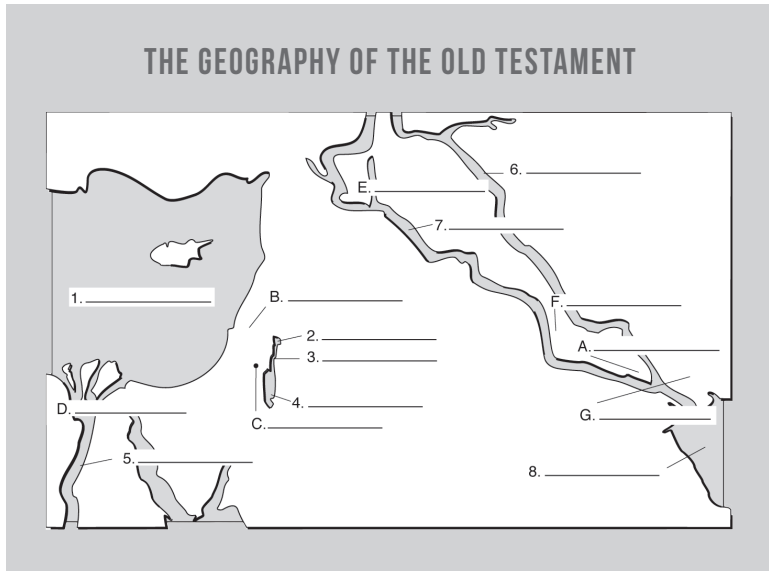
David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the terraces inward. And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him (2 Samuel 5:6–10).

What do you know about Jerusalem as a city today?

What are three reasons why Jerusalem is an important city within the Bible?

REVIEW

Fill in the blanks in the map from memory. (Refer to the notes you took in the “Watch” portion of this week’s group study section if you need additional help.) Note that the blanks with numbers are bodies of water, while the blanks with letters are locations.



DAY 3: HISTORY IN THE BIBLE

You have likely heard the phrase, “Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it.” Well, it is also true that those who ignore the history of the Bible will never understand it. This is because the Bible is packed with historical people, places, and events.

The storyline of the Bible can be divided into twelve main eras, with a central figure and main location for each era. Nine of the eras are found in the Old Testament, and three are found in the New Testament. We will explore the nine Old Testament eras during the next two weeks, starting tomorrow with the

Creation Era. But today, we will explore what the Bible says about the importance of history by highlighting a key passage from the book of Psalms.

HISTORY IN SONG

Psalm 78, written by a man named Asaph, is a history lesson wrapped in a song. Through seventy-two verses, he expounded on the many ways God had blessed previous generations of His chosen people, the Israelites. That was the good news. The bad news was that Asaph also listed the many ways the Israelites had rebelled against God and rejected His laws.

Importantly, at the beginning of his song, Asaph offered a brief but powerful explanation on the value of paying attention to history:

My people, hear my teaching;
listen to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth with a parable;
I will utter hidden things, things from of old—
things we have heard and known,
things our ancestors have told us.
We will not hide them from their descendants;
we will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,
his power, and the wonders he has done.
He decreed statutes for Jacob
and established the law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach their children,
so the next generation would know them,
even the children yet to be born,
and they in turn would tell their children.

Then they would put their trust in God
and would not forget his deeds
but would keep his commands.

They would not be like their ancestors—
a stubborn and rebellious generation,
whose hearts were not loyal to God,
whose spirits were not faithful to him (Psalm 78:1–8).

Why is it important to actively teach the lessons of Bible history from generation to generation (see the bolded words in the psalm above)?

What result was Asaph hoping to avoid by sharing this history (see underlined words in the psalm above)?

REVIEW

Fill in the blanks in the following chart from memory. (Refer to the notes you took in the “Watch” portion of this week’s group study section if you need additional help.)

OLD TESTAMENT ERA	REFERENCE
1.	Genesis 1–11
2.	Genesis 12–50
3.	Exodus–Deuteronomy
4.	Joshua
5.	Judges–Ruth
6.	1 Samuel–2 Chronicles
7.	Ezekiel–Daniel
8.	Ezra–Esther
9.	—
NEW TESTAMENT ERA	REFERENCE
1.	Matthew–John
2.	Acts 1–12
3.	Acts 13–28

DAY 4: THE CREATION AND FALL

It seems the more we learn about our universe, the more we realize how much we need to learn. From subatomic particles all the way to immeasurable galaxies, the scope of creation is immense! And that immensity says a great deal about our Creator. The Creation Era in the Bible is contained in the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis. Today, we will look at two main events that occur in Genesis 1–3: the creation and the fall.

THE CREATION

Perhaps more than anything else, the mystery and immensity of our universe capture our imagination and incites us to wonder about creation. God answers this question about the origin

of our world in the first chapter of Genesis, where we read the following:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. . . . the first day. And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” . . . the second day. And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” . . . Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” . . . the third day.

And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night . . . the fourth day. And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” . . . the fifth day. And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” . . .

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. . . . the sixth day (Genesis 1:1–3, 5–6, 8–9, 11, 13–14, 19–20, 23–24, 26–27, 31).

How does the author of this passage describe the process in which God created the heavens, the earth, the creatures on the planet, and human beings?

What is different about the way that God created humans from the rest of creation?

THE FALL

The event known as “the Fall” happened in a single moment. Satan, appearing in the form of a serpent, lured Adam and Eve into rebelling against God and violating the one prohibition He had given them: not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The consequences of that moment have affected all of humanity since. Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden, and a curse fell on all creation when sin entered the world. All of the pain, evil, and suffering that humanity has endured can be traced back to this incredibly significant choice:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves (Genesis 3:1–7).

Where do you currently see evidence of the curse of sin in our world? In your own life?

What are some ways humanity is still attempting to “be like God”?

REVIEW

Fill in the timeline for these events that you have learned in the Creation Era. (Refer to the passages in the “reference” column if you need additional help.)

TIMELINE	WHAT GOD CREATED/ WHAT OCCURRED	REFERENCE
Day 1 of Creation		Genesis 1:1–3
Day 2 of Creation		Genesis 1:6–8
Day 3 of Creation		Genesis 1:9–13
Day 4 of Creation		Genesis 1:14–19
Day 5 of Creation		Genesis 1:20–23
Day 6 of Creation		Genesis 1:24–31
After Creation		Genesis 3:1–24

DAY 5: THE FLOOD AND THE TOWER

Over the next several hundred years, as humans multiplied in numbers, so did their tendency to sin. Ultimately, the time came when God could only find eight people in the entire world who

were willing to live in a righteous relationship with Him. The consequences that result are covered in Genesis 4–11: the flood and the Tower of Babel.

THE FLOOD

In judgment for humanity's sin, God determined to wipe out all of the evil and corrupt members of the human race and begin again with the eight righteous individuals that He had found—Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives. He did this by sending a flood:

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an arc of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit high all around. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of

every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

Noah did everything just as God commanded him (Genesis 6:11–22).

What are the reasons that God gave for choosing to destroy humanity?

What promise did God make to Noah and his family?

THE TOWER OF BABEL

God’s post-flood mandate was for humans to spread out, populate, and subdue the earth. However, in disobedience to that command, humans stayed in one place and began to build a monument to their own greatness. We read in Genesis what happened as a result:

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.

They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The LORD said, “If, as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.”

So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth (Genesis 11:1–9).

What were the reasons the people gave for wanting to build the tower?

What were God’s purposes in confusing their languages?

REVIEW

Write the correct number in the blank from the options on the right. (Refer to the notes you took in the “Watch” portion of this week’s group study section if you need additional help.)

EVENT		DESCRIPTION
Creation:		1. Judgment for sin (Genesis 6:13)
Fall:		2. Beginning of the nations (Genesis 11:8–9)
Flood:		3. Sin entered the world (Genesis 3:6–7)
Tower:		4. Humans made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26)

Fill in the blanks from memory:

ERA	SUMMARY
Creation:	Adam is created by God, but he _____. This is known as “the _____.” This destroys God’s original _____ for humans.

APPLY

Check in with your partner each week to review and discuss what you studied. Use the following questions to help determine those goals and cement the main concepts in your minds.

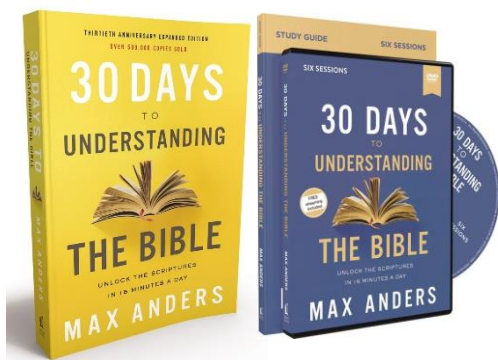
- **Introduction:** Discuss what you hope to learn during the course of this study. Also discuss in what areas you would like to grow spiritually.
- **Geography:** Look up some news articles to see what has been happening in Jerusalem recently. When you meet this week, pray, in the words of Psalm 122:6, for

the “peace of Jerusalem”—asking that God would protect the city and keep its citizens from harm.

- **History:** Discuss some of the lessons that you have learned from personal past mistakes—especially those moments when you turned away from God. Discuss how reflecting on those mistakes might keep you from future mistakes.
- **Creation and the Fall:** Adam and Eve’s choice to rebel against God was rooted in the belief that, in order to be truly happy, they needed something more than God was giving to them. Discuss where you might be tempted to go outside the will of God to get something that you (mistakenly) believe you need in order to be truly happy.
- **The Flood and the Tower:** Discuss the importance of obeying God’s instructions—even if they might not make sense to you.

FOR NEXT WEEK

Use the space below to write any insights or questions from your personal study that you want to discuss at the next group meeting. In preparation for next week, review chapters 5–9 in *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*.



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