



covenant
history

THE

NEW INTERNATIONAL READER'S VERSION

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

for kids

DISCOVER THE BEGINNINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

NlRV, The Books of the Bible for Kids: Covenant History
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introduction to Covenant History

Every nation or other large group of related people have a story of how they came to be. Some of the stories from nations a long time ago, such as Assyria and Babylon, are still around today. We can read them and learn about what these people thought about “gods” and people.

The Hebrew people were called Israel as they formed into a nation. This book contains their story of the Creator God and his creation. It tells how the first people decided to live the way they wanted to instead of obeying God and living the way he told them to. Then God chose Abraham and his children and grandchildren to show the world the right way to live.

This book tells the story of Israel all the way from the Creator and the first people to the last king of Israel in their homeland.



DAY 1 GENESIS, PART I

introduction to Genesis, part I

The Creator God made his world. He wanted it to be his temple, the house where he lived. See the beauty of the creation and how much God loved it. And notice how important people are. Other nations saw people as the slaves of the “gods,” but God saw people as ruling with him over the creation. Instead of taking God’s offer to rule with him, the first people chose their own way. And this made the whole story go wrong.



In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth didn’t have any shape. And it was empty. There was darkness over the surface of the waves. At that time, the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. God saw that the light was good. He separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day.” He called the darkness “night.” There was evening, and there was morning. It was day one.

God said, “Let there be a huge space between the waters. Let it separate water from water.” And that’s exactly what happened. God made the huge space between the waters. He separated the water under the space from the water above it. God called the huge space “sky.” There was evening, and there was morning. It was day two.

God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place. Let dry ground appear.” And that’s exactly what happened.

God called the dry ground “land.” He called all the water that was gathered together “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let the land produce plants. Let them produce their own seeds. And let there be trees on the land that grow fruit with seeds in it. Let each kind of plant or tree have its own kind of seeds.” And that’s exactly what happened. So the land produced plants. Each kind of plant had its own kind of seeds. And the land produced trees that grew fruit with seeds in it. Each kind of tree had its own kind of seeds. God saw that it was good. There was evening, and there was morning. It was day three.

God said, “Let there be lights in the huge space of the sky. Let them separate the day from the night. Let the lights set the times for the holy celebrations and the days and the years. Let them be lights in the huge space of the sky to give light on the earth.” And that’s exactly what happened. God made two great lights. He made the larger light to rule over the day and the smaller light to rule over the night. He also made the stars. God put the lights in the huge space of the sky to give light on the earth. He put them there to rule over the day and the night. He put them there to separate light from darkness. God saw that it was good. There was evening, and there was morning. It was day four.

God said, “Let the seas be filled with living things. Let birds fly above the earth across the huge space of the sky.” So God created the great sea creatures. He created every kind of living thing that fills the seas and moves about in them. He created every kind of bird that flies. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them. He said, “Have little ones so that there will be many of you. Fill the water in the seas. Let there be more and more birds on the earth.” There was evening, and there was morning. It was day five.

God said, “Let the land produce every kind of living creature. Let there be livestock, and creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals.” And that’s exactly what happened. God made every kind of wild animal. He made every kind of livestock. He made every kind of creature that moves along the ground. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make human beings so that they are like us. Let them rule over the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Let them rule over the livestock and all the wild animals. And let them rule over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

So God created human beings in his own likeness.

He created them to be like himself.

He created them as male and female.

God blessed them. He said to them, “Have children so that there will be many of you. Fill the earth and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Rule over every living creature that moves along the ground.”

Then God said, “I am giving you every plant on the face of the whole earth that produces its own seeds. I am giving you every tree that has fruit with seeds in it. All of them will be given to you for food. I am giving every green plant as food for all the land animals and for all the birds in the sky. I am also giving the plants to all the creatures that move along the ground. I am giving them to every living thing that breathes.” And that’s exactly what happened.

God saw everything he had made. And it was very good. There was evening, and there was morning. It was day six.

So the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed.

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing. So on that day he rested from all his work. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. He blessed it because on that day he rested from all the work he had done.



Here is the story of the heavens and the earth when they were created. The LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

At that time, bushes had not yet appeared on the earth. Plants had not started to grow. The LORD God had not sent rain on the

earth. And there was no one to farm the land. But streams came from the earth. They watered the entire surface of the ground. Then the LORD God formed a man. He made him out of the dust of the ground. God breathed the breath of life into him. And the man became a living person.

The LORD God had planted a garden in the east in Eden. He put in the garden the man he had formed. The LORD God made every kind of tree grow out of the ground. The trees were pleasing to look at. Their fruit was good to eat. There were two trees in the middle of the garden. One of them had fruit that let people live forever. The other had fruit that let people tell the difference between good and evil.

The LORD God put the man in the Garden of Eden. He put him there to farm its land and take care of it. The LORD God gave the man a command. He said, “You may eat fruit from any tree in the garden. But you must not eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you do, you will certainly die.”

The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.”

The LORD God had formed all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He had made all of them out of the ground. He brought them to the man to see what names he would give them. And the name the man gave each living creature became its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, all the birds in the sky, and all the wild animals.

But Adam didn’t find a helper that was just right for him. So the LORD God caused him to fall into a deep sleep. While the man was sleeping, the LORD God took out one of the man’s ribs. Then the LORD God closed the opening in the man’s side. Then the LORD God made a woman. He made her from the rib he had taken out of the man. And the LORD God brought her to the man.

The man said,

“Her bones have come from my bones.

Her body has come from my body.

She will be named ‘woman,’

because she was taken out of a man.”

That's why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife. The two of them become one.

Adam and his wife were both naked. They didn't feel any shame.

The serpent was more clever than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. The serpent said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat fruit 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 the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden. Do not even touch it. If you do, you will die.'"

"You will certainly not die," the serpent said to the woman. "God knows that when you eat fruit from that tree, you will know things you have never known before. Like God, you will be able to tell the difference between good and evil."

The woman saw that the tree's fruit was good to eat and pleasing to look at. She also saw that it would make a person wise. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her. And he ate it. Then both of them knew things they had never known before. They realized they were naked. So they sewed together fig leaves and made clothes for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking in the garden. It was during the coolest time of the day. They hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called out to the man. "Where are you?" he asked.

"I heard you in the garden," the man answered. "I was afraid, because I was naked. So I hid."

The LORD God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten fruit from the tree I commanded you not to eat from?"

The man said, "It's the fault of the woman you put here with me. She gave me some fruit from the tree. And I ate it."

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What have you done?"

The woman said, "The serpent tricked me. That's why I ate the fruit."

God spoke to the serpent, the woman and Adam. Each one would have a more difficult life because they disobeyed God.

Adam named his wife Eve. She would become the mother of every living person.

The LORD God made clothes out of animal skins for Adam and his wife to wear. The LORD God said, “Just like one of us, the man can now tell the difference between good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out and pick fruit from the tree of life and eat it. If he does, he will live forever.” So the LORD God drove the man out of the Garden of Eden. He sent the man to farm the ground he had been made from. The LORD God drove him out and then placed angels on the east side of the garden. He also placed there a flaming sword that flashed back and forth. The angels and the sword guarded the way to the tree of life.

Adam loved his wife Eve. She became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, “With the LORD’s help I have had a baby boy.” Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

remember what you read

1. What is something you noticed for the first time?

2. What questions did you have?

3. Was there anything that bothered you?

4. What did you learn about loving God?

5. What did you learn about loving others?

A Word About The New International Reader's Version

Have You Ever Heard of the New International Version?

We call it the NIV. Many people read the NIV. In fact, more people read the NIV than any other English Bible. They like it because it's easy to read and understand.

And now we are happy to give you another Bible that's easy to read and understand. It's the New International Reader's Version. We call it the NIrV.

Who Will Enjoy Reading the New International Reader's Version?

People who are just starting to read will understand and enjoy the NIrV. Children will be able to read it and understand it. So will older people who are learning how to read. People who are reading the Bible for the first time will be able to enjoy reading the NIrV. So will people who have a hard time understanding what they read. And so will people who use English as their second language. We hope this Bible will be just right for you.

How Is the NIrV Different From the NIV?

The NIrV is based on the NIV. The NIV Committee on Bible Translation (CBT) didn't produce the NIrV. But a few of us who worked on the NIrV are members of CBT. We worked hard to make the NIrV possible. We used the words of the NIV when we could. When the words of the NIV were too long, we used shorter words. We tried to use words that are easy to understand. We also made the sentences of the NIV much shorter.

Why did we do all these things? Because we wanted to make the NIrV very easy to read and understand.

What Other Helps Does the NIrV Have?

We decided to give you a lot of other help too. For example, sometimes a verse is quoted from another place in the Bible. When it is, we tell you the Bible book, chapter and verse it comes from. We put that information right after the verse that quotes from another place.

We separated each chapter into shorter sections. We gave a title to almost every chapter. Sometimes we even gave a title to a section. We

did these things to help you understand what the chapter or section is all about.

Another example of a helpful change has to do with the word “Selah” in the Psalms. What this Hebrew word means is still not clear. So, for now, this word is not helpful for readers. The NIV has moved the word to the bottom of the page. We have followed the NIV and removed this Hebrew word from the NIrV. Perhaps one day we will learn what this word means. But until then, the Psalms are easier to read and understand without it.

Sometimes the writers of the Bible used more than one name for the same person or place. For example, in the New Testament the Sea of Galilee is also called the Sea of Gennesaret. Sometimes it is also called the Sea of Tiberias. But in the NIrV we decided to call it the Sea of Galilee everywhere it appears. We called it that because that is its most familiar name.

We also wanted to help you learn the names of people and places in the Bible. So sometimes we provided names even in verses where those names don’t actually appear. For example, sometimes the Bible says “the River” where it means “the Euphrates River.” In those places, we used the full name “the Euphrates River.” Sometimes the word “Pharaoh” in the Bible means “Pharaoh Hophra.” In those places, we used his full name “Pharaoh Hophra.” We did all these things in order to make the NIrV as clear as possible.

Does the NIrV Say What the First Writers of the Bible Said?

We wanted the NIrV to say just what the first writers of the Bible said. So we kept checking the Greek New Testament as we did our work. That’s because the New Testament’s first writers used Greek. We also kept checking the Hebrew Old Testament as we did our work. That’s because the Old Testament’s first writers used Hebrew.

We used the best copies of the Greek New Testament. We also used the best copies of the Hebrew Old Testament. Older English Bibles couldn’t use those copies because they had not yet been found. The oldest copies are best because they are closer in time to the ones the first Bible writers wrote. That’s why we kept checking the older copies instead of the newer ones.

Some newer copies of the Greek New Testament added several verses that the older ones don’t have. Sometimes it’s several verses in a row. This occurs at Mark 16:9–20 and John 7:53—8:11. We have included these verses in the NIrV. Sometimes the newer copies added only a

single verse. An example is Mark 9:44. That verse is not in the oldest Greek New Testaments. So we put the verse number 43/44 right before Mark 9:43. You can look on the list below for Mark 9:44 and locate the verse that was added.

Verses That Were Not Found in Oldest Greek New Testaments

- Matthew 17:21 But that kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.
- Matthew 18:11 The Son of Man came to save what was lost.
- Matthew 23:14 How terrible for you, teachers of the law and Pharisees! You pretenders! You take over the houses of widows. You say long prayers to show off. So God will punish you much more.
- Mark 7:16 Everyone who has ears to hear should listen.
- Mark 9:44 In hell, / “ ‘the worms don’t die, / and the fire doesn’t go out.’
- Mark 9:46 In hell, / “ ‘the worms don’t die, / and the fire doesn’t go out.’
- Mark 11:26 But if you do not forgive, your Father who is in heaven will not forgive your sins either.
- Mark 15:28 Scripture came true. It says, “And he was counted among those who disobey the law.”
- Luke 17:36 Two men will be in the field. One will be taken and the other left.
- Luke 23:17 It was Pilate’s duty to let one prisoner go free for them at the Feast.
- John 5:4 From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down. The angel would stir up the waters. The first disabled person to go into the pool after it was stirred would be healed.
- Acts 8:37 Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you can.” The official answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”
- Acts 15:34 But Silas decided to remain there.
- Acts 24:7 But Lysias, the commander, came. By using a lot of force, he took Paul from our hands.
- Acts 28:29 After he said that, the Jews left. They were arguing strongly among themselves.
- Romans 16:24 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen.

What Is Our Prayer for You?

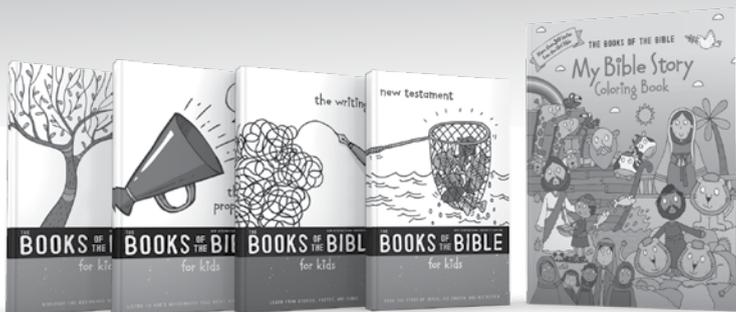
The Lord has blessed the New International Version in a wonderful way. He has used it to help millions of Bible readers. Many people have put their faith in Jesus after reading it. Many others have become stronger believers because they have read it.

We hope and pray that the New International Reader's Version will help you in the same way. If that happens, we will give God all the glory.

A Word About This Edition

This edition of the New International Reader's Version has been revised to include the changes of the New International Version. Over the years, many helpful changes have been made to the New International Version. Those changes were made because our understanding of the original writings is better. Those changes also include changes that have taken place in the English language. We wanted the New International Reader's Version to include those helpful changes as well. We wanted the New International Reader's Version to be as clear and correct as possible.

We want to thank the people who helped us prepare this new edition. They are Jeannine Brown from Bethel Seminary St. Paul, Yvonne Van Ee from Calvin College, Michael Williams from Calvin Theological Seminary, and Ron Youngblood from Bethel Seminary San Diego. We also want to thank the people at Biblica who encouraged and supported this work.



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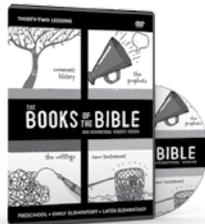
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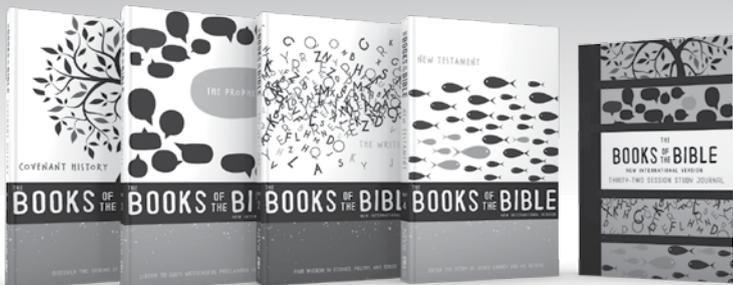
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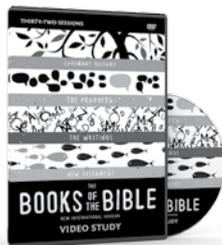
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