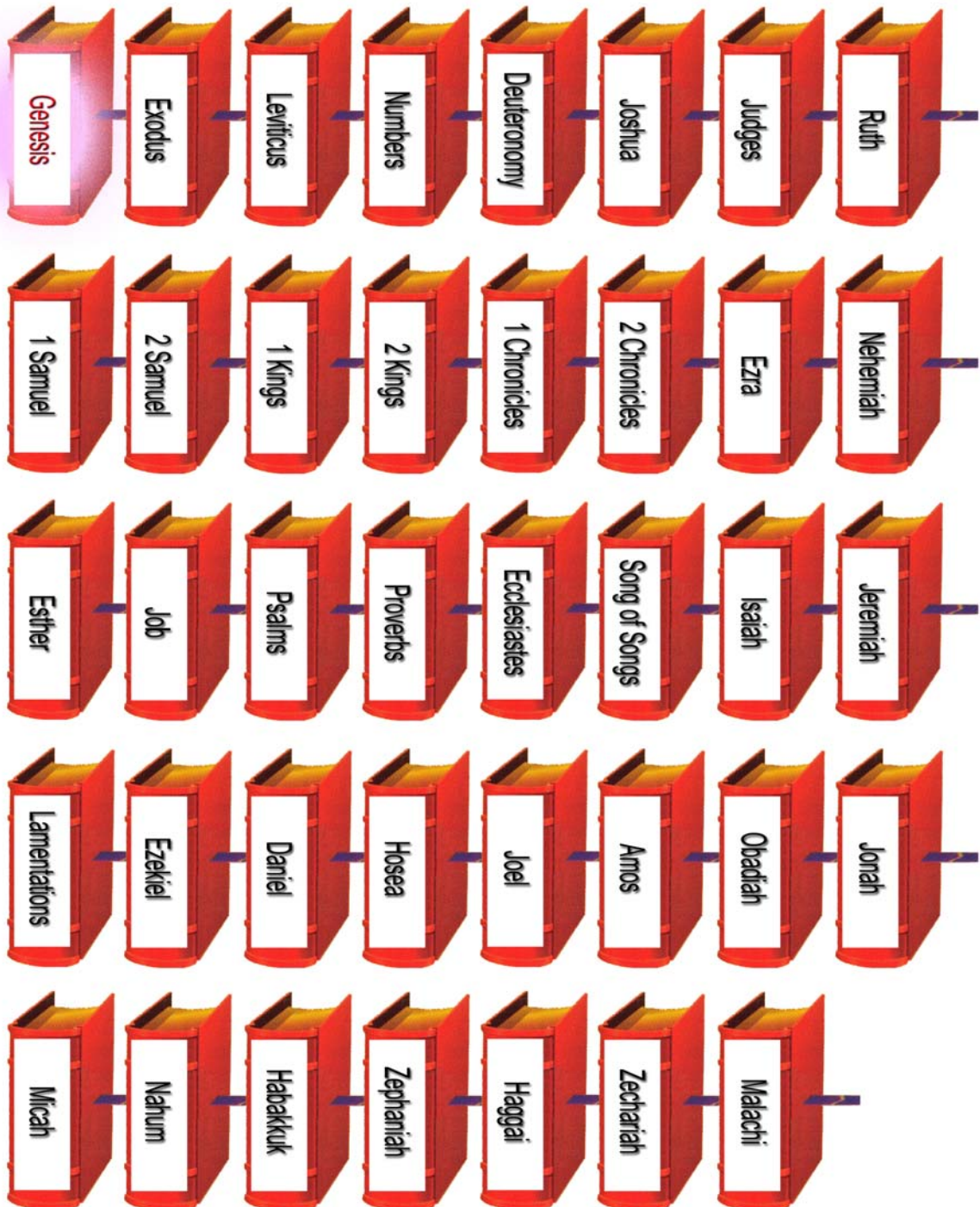


Old Testament Books



Chapter 2

Genesis 1:1

The Story so Far

The Bible is God's book. God is the author of the Bible, but He used human beings to write it. Every word in the Bible comes from God. The Bible has one story – Jesus and His Kingdom. God's Kingdom = God's people, living in God's place, under God's rule and blessing.

Objectives

- To understand who God is, and how He created the world
- To become familiar with the names of God

Connections

- To emphasize that God's rule as King is a central theme in the Bible, which lays the basis for His Kingdom

Summary

God is the Creator and ruling King of this world.

In the Beginning

The very first words of God's book are quite amazing:

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

We can learn a lot from the first sentence of the Bible.



The great assumption

The first four words of the Bible **assume** God's existence. God exists – fact! The Bible is not written to debate this; it starts by claiming this fact. It is not written to prove God's existence, since it does not need proving, but rather it assumes God has always existed! It is the great assumption.

God has always existed

The opening four words of the Bible also tell us that before the beginning, God existed. God has no beginning and no end – He is eternal. He is the great uncreated God. Listen to these words from a song in the Bible that speaks of God as an eternal being:

"Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God" (Psalm 90:2).

God is the powerful Maker

The word "create" means to "make from nothing". The phrase "heavens and the earth" are a collective term meaning "everything". God created the universe and everything in it from absolutely nothing. Human beings have made some amazing and magnificent structures in this world, for example, the Great Wall of China. But human beings can only create with material that already exists. God is so powerful and mighty that He creates everything from nothing!

God is the wise Maker

God was never taught how to make a universe. No-one has been God's teacher. God did not attend school or university. He is so

wise that from nothing He created everything. Listen to these words in the Bible:

“But God made the earth by His power; He founded the world by His wisdom and stretched out the heavens by His understanding” (Jeremiah 10:12).

Only one God

We can also see from Genesis 1:1 that there are not two or three, or 100 gods that worked together to create the universe; there is only one God. In the beginning God (**alone**) created the heavens and the earth.

God is Spirit

Matter is created. God was never created. If God created all the matter that exists in the universe, then we know God is not made of physical matter. In fact, later in the Bible we read: *“God is **spirit...**” (John 4:24).* We cannot see God because He is an invisible spirit.

God is always present everywhere

For God to create the whole universe He must be so much bigger and greater than what He creates. Later in the Bible we are in fact told that He fills heaven and earth and is present everywhere at one time:

“‘Am I only a God nearby’ declares the LORD, ‘and not a God far away? Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?’ declares the LORD. ‘Do I not fill heaven and earth?’ declares the LORD” (Jeremiah 23:23-24).

God is separate from the material world

God existed before anything was created. This shows us that God is not part of His creation. God is separate from His creation. The Creator and His creation are distinct – set apart. Some religions teach that God is a part of His creation but we can see clearly from the Bible that God is set apart from His creation.

God is King (Genesis 1)

Genesis chapter 1 reveals to us that God is the King of His creation. God creates and rules – He is the great Creator-Ruler. This is made clear to us when we read through each day of creation.



The ruling King

God rules His creation like a King. Rulers of countries give names to people and places; they give roles to people in society; they separate and divide provinces. Throughout the first six days of creation God gives names to things; He gives roles to the sun and moon; He separates light from darkness. God makes creatures (birds, fish and land animals) “*according to their kind*”, which means that He put them into categories. God commands action, “*Let the birds fly*” and “*Be fruitful and increase in number*”. God is the King who rules over His creation.

The talking King

The God of the Bible is a talking God. As the King of this universe God’s words are so powerful that when He speaks things are created. God creates this world by talking! He spoke “*and it was so*”! This pattern is repeated for the six days of creation. God speaks and things are created. God is not a silent Ruler of His world but a talking Ruler. He is the King who talks.

“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of His mouth...Let all the earth fear the LORD, let all the people of the world revere Him. For He spoke, and it came to be; He commanded, and it stood firm” (Psalm 33:6-9).

God is the Creator and ruling King of this world.

The names of God

God has various names, each with a significant meaning. Names in the Bible reflect a person’s character. It is the same with God’s names.

God

The word “God” means “Mighty One” or “Powerful One”.

God Most High

This means the God of highest authority.

Lord

Lord means “Master” or “Ruler”.

God Almighty

This name is used to describe God as the all-sufficient God, meaning He is able to supply all the needs of His people.

LORD

In the Bible this name is distinguished from “Lord” by putting all the letters in capitals i.e. “LORD”. In the Hebrew language this is written as “Yahweh”, and means self-existent, self-determining, faithful God. It is the name God uses when He refers to His covenants.

LORD of Hosts

This title is used in the Old Testament a lot to describe God as the King of His people. It is a royal name.



Think it through & discuss

1. What do the first four words of the Bible tell us about God?
2. What features of Genesis 1 highlight that God is King?
3. Why is the word 'create' very unique in the Bible? (See Genesis 1:1, 21, 27, Psalm 148:5, Isaiah 42:5)
4. Read Hebrews 11:1-3 and discuss.