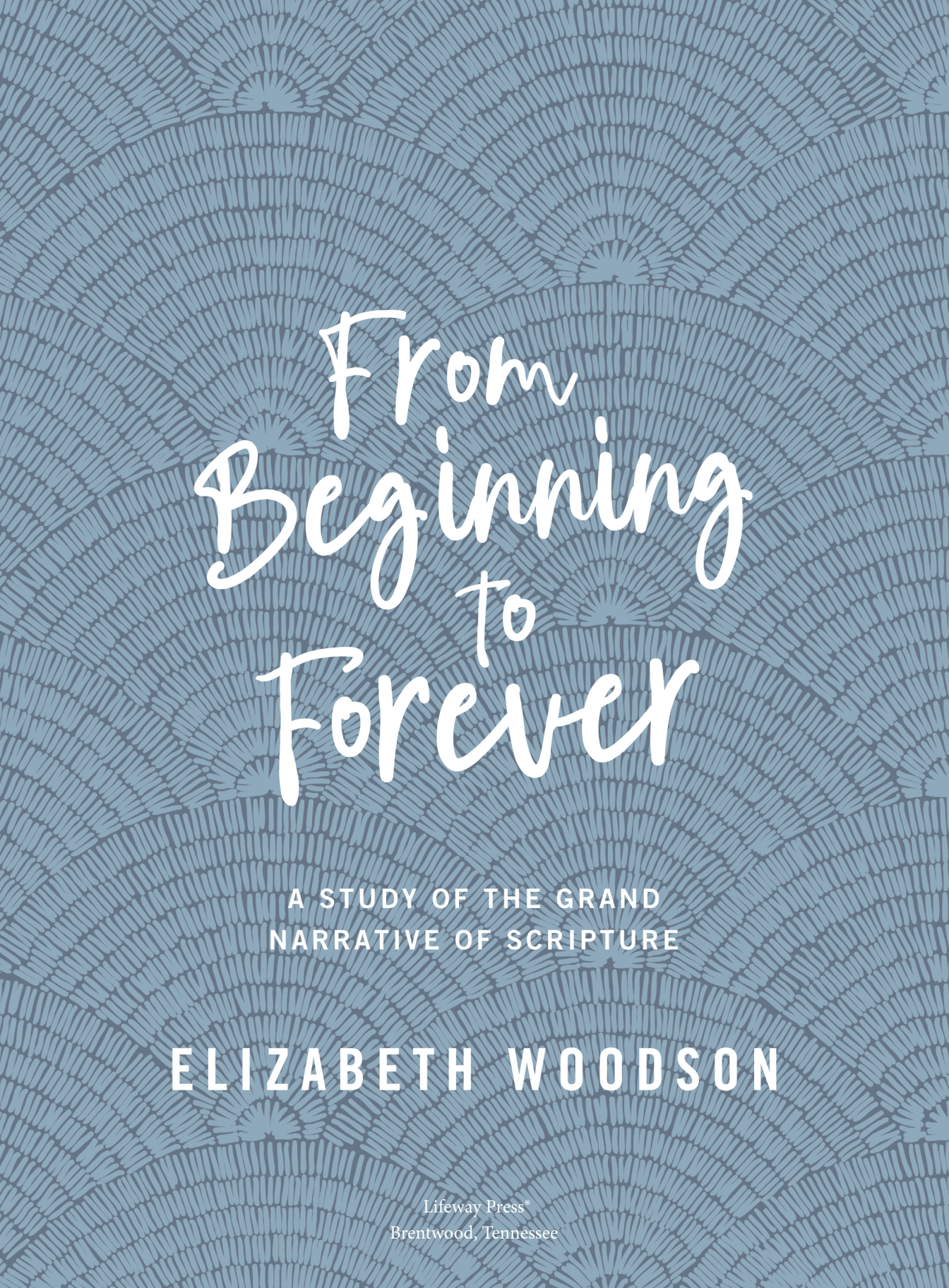


8-SESSION BIBLE STUDY
WITH VIDEO ACCESS

From Beginning to Forever

A STUDY OF THE GRAND
NARRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE

ELIZABETH WOODSON



From Beginning to Forever

A STUDY OF THE GRAND
NARRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE

ELIZABETH WOODSON

Lifeway Press®
Brentwood, Tennessee



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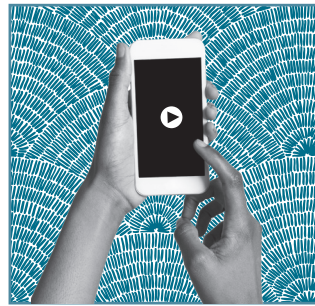
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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Welcome to *From Beginning to Forever: A Study of the Grand Narrative of Scripture*. This is a study that will show you how all of Scripture is God's great story of redemption and restoration. Because we believe discipleship happens best in community, we encourage you to do this study together in a group setting. Or, if you're doing this alone, consider enlisting a friend or two to do it at the same time. This will give you study friends to pray with and connect with over coffee or through text or email so you can chat about what you're learning.



With the purchase of this Bible study book, you have access to teaching videos that provide content to help you better understand and apply what you just studied in the previous session. You'll find detailed information on how to **access the teaching videos** on the card inserted in the back of your Bible study book.

At times in the study, you'll be asked to look up Scripture passages in different translations. You can access those translations through biblegateway.com or other Bible apps. The various translations are abbreviated in the study:

AMP: Amplified Bible

CSB: Christian Standard Bible

ESV: English Standard Version

NIV: New International Version

NKJV: New King James Version

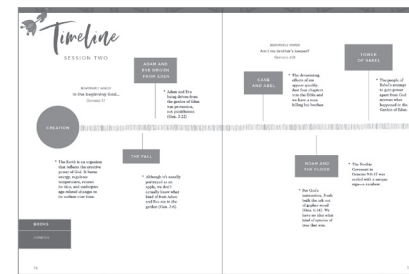
NLT: New Living Translation

WHAT'S INSIDE

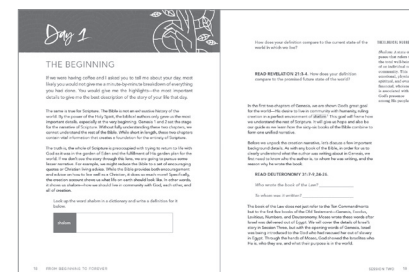
Here are some things you're going to find in the study.



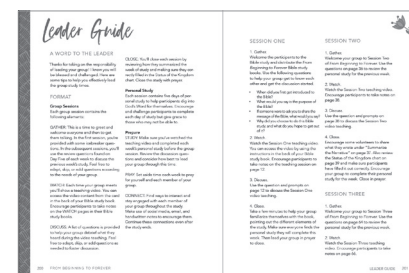
Video Guide: As you meet with your group each week, these pages provide a place to take notes from the video teaching and discussion questions to debrief the video teaching.



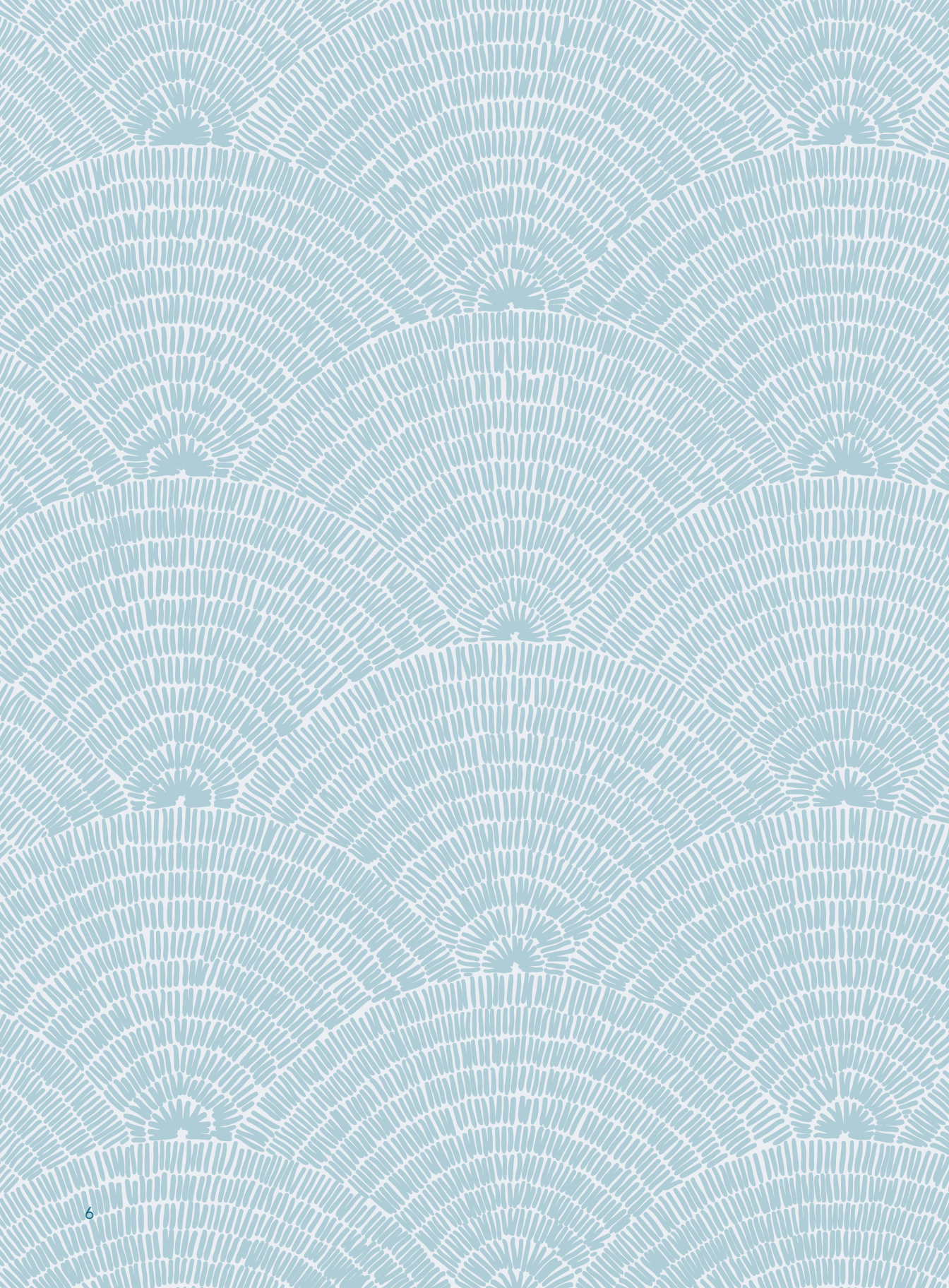
Time line: These pages give you a big-picture view of some of the events that took place during the Scripture passages covered in the week. They also show you the books of the Bible that relate to that time period or storyline.



Personal Study: Each week you'll have five days of personal study with the last day as a review day. In the sidebars beside words that are highlighted, you'll find "theological nuggets" that further explain the concept.



Leader Guide: This guide will help a leader prepare to lead the study and provide instruction for the content and flow of each group session.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elizabeth Woodson is a Bible teacher and author who is passionate about equipping believers to understand the rich theological truths of Scripture. She loves helping people internalize their faith and connect it practically to everyday life.

She is a contributing author for *World on Fire* and the author of *Embrace Your Life: How To Find Joy When the Life You Have Is Not the Life You Hoped For*. She is also a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary with a Masters in Christian Education.

A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

For generations, we have communicated the truth about our existence from the perspective of a character in a narrative whose plotline is continually unfolding. As humans, we “have a built-in narrative instinct, as if we have been designed to use stories to remember our past, make sense of our present, and shape our future.”¹ A collection of facts seen through the lens of our mind, body, and heart, stories are the means by which we interpret our life experiences. They help us make sense of the world and find our place within it, answering the three core life questions all of us ask—*Who am I? Why am I here? Where do I belong?*

However, we aren’t born with these stories. Over the years, they are shaped by lots of different influences. The TV shows we watch, people we follow on social media, and our community all teach us how to view our lives and the world we live in.

Sometimes these stories teach us that we are what we have, look like, or do for a living. They encourage us to find our purpose in “following our hearts” or “doing what we feel.” And most of all, they tell us that finding a place of belonging is easy—as long as we are doing the right thing to earn our spot!

While popular and enticing, these stories simply aren’t true. In fact, only one can fully answer our core life questions—the story of the Bible! As the original and greatest Storyteller of all time, God gave us an epic story that explains who He is, who we are, and what He has for us to do in His world. It lays a foundation for us to build our lives upon and ultimately shows us that the good life can only be found in Jesus Christ!

Over the next eight sessions, you and I will walk through this story together.

When we jump into the beginning of the story, we will see in the first verses of the Bible that God’s plan with creation was to establish His kingdom. But something went tragically wrong, and for the rest of Scripture, we will see God work to restore what He initiated at the beginning of time. With each session, we will take one more step toward the restoration of God’s kingdom. The kingdom of God is where we are able to live the good life, and as we’ll see in future weeks, it is the work of Jesus Christ that gets us into that kingdom.

We don’t have time in this study to dig down deep into all the nitty-gritty details, so, we will examine the story from a fifty-thousand foot level, using the theme of kingdom to connect all the pieces of the story together. The goal of our journey will be to give you the tools to tell the story in your own words. Yes, YOU have the ability to not just know the story of the Bible but share it in your own words. We will work on your ability to retell the story a little bit each week, so by the end of the study you will have a summary of the entire story.

My hope is that by the end of this study you will understand how the entire story of Scripture helps us know who God is, who we are, and what we are called to do in His world. The goal, friends, is not to just know facts, but to study information that will transform our motivation for living and love for God.

I’m excited to jump into this journey with you!

Let’s go!

Elizabeth

When we jump into the beginning of the story, we will see in the first verse of the Bible that God’s plan with creation was to establish His kingdom. But something went tragically wrong, and for the rest of Scripture, we will see God work to restore what He initiated at the beginning of time.





SESSION ONE

Introduction

Video + Group Guide

SESSION ONE

WATCH Session One video teaching and take notes below.



To access the video teaching sessions, use the instructions in the back of your Bible study book.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is "story" so important to our lives?
- 2 What currently has the biggest influence on your story?
- 3 Do you see the Bible as a collection of stories or one big story? Explain.
- 4 Before this teaching, how would you have explained the kingdom of God?
- 5 Do you now have a better understanding of kingdom? Explain.
- 6 What is one point or truth that really stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?



THE STATUS OF THE KINGDOM

In the chart below, write the definition of the kingdom of God. Then write in the explanation for each phrase I'll give you in the teaching video.

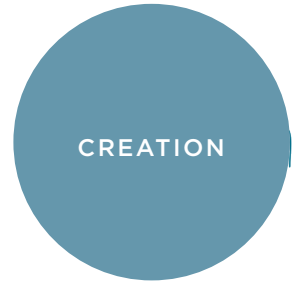
Definition of the Kingdom of God	Explanation
God's _____ in	
God's _____ under	
God's _____ and _____.	



The Creation & Corruption of the Kingdom

Timeline

SESSION TWO



MEMORABLE WORDS
In the beginning God . . .
Genesis 1:1

ADAM AND EVE DRIVEN FROM EDEN

* God driving Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden was protection, not punishment (Gen. 3:22-23).

CAIN AND ABEL

MEMORABLE WORDS
Am I my brother's keeper?
Genesis 4:9 (ESV)

* The devastating effects of sin appear quickly. Just four chapters into the Bible, we have a man killing his brother.

TOWER OF BABEL

* The people of Babel's attempt to gain power apart from God mirrors what happened in the garden of Eden.

THE FALL

FUN FACT
The earth is an organism that reflects the creative power of God. It burns energy, regulates temperature, renews its skin, and undergoes age-related changes to its surface over time.¹

* Although it's usually portrayed as an apple, we don't actually know what kind of fruit Adam and Eve ate in the garden (Gen. 3:6).

NOAH AND THE FLOOD

* Per God's instruction, Noah built the ark out of gopher wood (Gen. 6:14). Scholars are unsure what species of tree this is referring to.

* The Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9:8-17 was sealed with a unique sign—a rainbow.

FUN FACT
The earth travels around the sun at 67,000 mph.

BOOKS
GENESIS

Day 1



THE BEGINNING

If we were having coffee and I asked you to tell me about your day, most likely you would not give me a minute-by-minute breakdown of everything you had done. You would give me the highlights—the most important details to give me the best description of the story of your life that day.

The same is true for Scripture. The Bible is not an exhaustive history of the world. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the biblical authors only gave us the most important details, especially at the very beginning. Genesis 1 and 2 set the stage for the narrative of Scripture. Without fully understanding these two chapters, we cannot understand the rest of the Bible. While short in length, these two chapters contain vital information that creates a foundation for the entirety of Scripture.

The truth is, the whole of Scripture is preoccupied with trying to return to life with God as it was in the garden of Eden and the fulfillment of His garden plan for the world. If we don't see the story through this lens, we are going to pursue some lesser narrative. For example, we might reduce the Bible to a set of encouraging quotes or Christian living advice. While the Bible provides both encouragement and advice on how to live well as a Christian, it does so much more! Specifically, the creation account shows us what life on earth should look like. In other words, it shows us *shalom*—how we should live in community with God, each other, and all of creation.

Look up the word *shalom* in a dictionary and write a definition for it below.

shalom	
--------	--

How does your definition compare to the current state of the world in which we live?

READ REVELATION 21:3-4. How does your definition compare to the promised future state of the world?

In the first two chapters of Genesis, we are shown God's great goal for the world—His desire to live in community with humanity, ruling creation in a perfect environment of *shalom*.¹ This goal will frame how we understand the rest of Scripture. It will give us hope and also be our guide as we learn how the sixty-six books of the Bible combine to form one unified narrative.

Before we unpack the creation narrative, let's discuss a few important background details. As with any book of the Bible, in order for us to clearly understand what the author was writing about in Genesis, we first need to know who the author is, to whom he was writing, and the reason why he wrote the book.

READ DEUTERONOMY 31:7-9,24-26.

Who wrote the book of the Law? _____

To whom was it written? _____

The book of the Law does not just refer to the Ten Commandments but to the first five books of the Old Testament—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Moses wrote these words after Israel was delivered out of Egypt. We will cover the details of Israel's story in Session Three, but with the opening words of Genesis, Israel was being introduced to the God who had rescued her out of slavery in Egypt. Through the hands of Moses, God showed the Israelites who He is, who they are, and what their purpose is in the world.

THEOLOGICAL NUGGET

SHALOM: A state of peace that refers to the total well-being of an individual or community. This emotional, physical, spiritual, and even financial wholeness is associated with God's presence among His people.²

Now that we've laid a foundation for the beginning of the story, let's jump in!

Let's start with the first verse of the Bible, Genesis 1:1. Write it out.

Based on this verse, who is the main character of the Bible?

Why is this important for us to remember as we read through the Bible?

READ GENESIS 1:1–2:3 and fill in the table to summarize God's creation of the world.

Day	Scripture Reference	What did God create?
Day 1	Genesis 1:2-5	
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		

What three things did God do on the seventh day of creation (Gen. 2:3)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Since God is not human, He does not get tired as we do. Why did He choose to "rest" on the seventh day? Give your best answer; we will cover it in the video teaching time.

Genesis 1 and 2 both describe the same events but do so differently. One creation account is more poetic, while the other uses more prose. Either way, in the first two pages of Scripture, God detailed the establishment of His kingdom. We see Him create a world in which all of humanity and creation thrive under His loving care. It is a world that embodies *shalom*, where everything is as it should be.

Look back to your notes on page 13 and write below the definition of the kingdom of God.

God's _____ in God's _____ under

God's _____ and _____.³

Summarize what you learned about the kingdom of God in Genesis 1 and 2 by answering the following questions.

1. Who are the people God created? _____ and _____
2. Describe the place God created for them to live. Include details about the two trees that were in this place.
3. What rules did God give them (Gen. 2:16-17)? How would their obedience to these rules result in blessing?

While lots of questions can arise concerning the specific details of creation, it's helpful for us to focus on the author's main points—God created, creation is good, and humanity is unique among creation. The beginning of the story matters, and in the first two chapters of the Bible, we are introduced to God's divine design for all of creation. Tomorrow we are going to dig a little deeper into the story, examining what it tells us about God and ourselves.

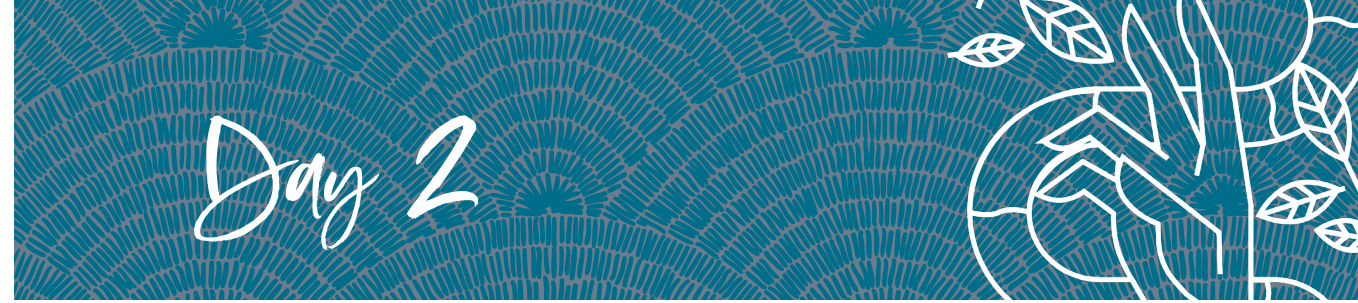


IMAGE BEARERS

At some point, all of us will ask ourselves three important questions: *Who am I? Where do I belong? What am I here for?* Innate within our humanity is a longing for identity, community, and purpose. Yet whether through social media, the latest self-help guru, or a close friend, many of us will try to find answers to these questions outside of the Bible. While we view the Bible as providing helpful advice, we fail to see it as what it is—the primary influence of our worldview, shaping how we view ourselves and the world we live in.

In its first few pages, the Bible provides us with answers to our questions of identity, community, and purpose. Through the words of Moses, God was showing Israel and us that our best lives are lived in community with Him and His people, under His rule and blessing. By showing us who He is, we are able to understand who we are called to be and what we are called to do in His world.

In the words of the theologian John Calvin, “without knowledge of God there is no knowledge of self.”⁴ Before we can fully understand who we are, we have to first understand who God is, specifically what He has revealed about Himself in Scripture. So, let's look back over Genesis 1 and 2 and see what these passages teach us about God.

READ GENESIS 1:1. Fill in the blanks below to complete the first four words of this verse.

_____ *the* _____

Is the word you used to fill in the last blank singular or plural? Why is this significant? What does this one detail teach us about God?

Remember, Moses was writing Genesis to the Israelites after they had been delivered out of Egypt. The Israelites had been under Egyptian rule as slaves for four hundred years. This means they would have been very familiar with, and perhaps even influenced by, the Egyptians' religious practices, maybe even more so than the God of the Bible.⁵

READ EXODUS 12:12.

What is the main difference between the gods the Egyptians worshiped and the God of the Bible?

In light of your answer, why do you think the words of Genesis 1:1 would have been especially significant for Israel?

God's first description of Himself shows He alone is God. No other being, animal, or part of nature rivals His authority; He alone is sovereign.

Look up the word *sovereign* in a dictionary and write a definition for it.

sovereign	
-----------	--

In Genesis 1, what repeated phrase did Moses use to describe how God created the world? Read Psalm 33:6 to help with your answer.

The first demonstration of God's sovereignty takes place within creation. The magnitude of God's power is demonstrated by how He creates all things by His word.⁶ Not only did God create by His word, His word created out of nothing! Only God has the power to do this, and therefore, in the first sentence of the Bible, He established Himself as the One who has full control and authority over

all of creation. Since He created the world, He alone gets to determine how His creation lives.

READ PSALM 95:1-7. How should we respond to God's sovereignty?

Now that we have learned what the creation narrative tells us about God, let's see what it tells us about our divine identity and purpose.

Genesis 1:26-27 tells us we are made in God's image.

With what other part of creation do we share this aspect? How should this impact how we view ourselves?

Some words carry a consistent meaning throughout time while others have a specific meaning that is connected to a specific point in time. This is true for the word *image*. In ancient Near Eastern culture, which is the culture of the original audience of Genesis, kings would leave images of themselves in the cities or areas they ruled.⁷ These "images" were designed to remind the people of the power and grandeur of the king.

In Daniel 3, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon built a ninety-foot tall statue that the people were to bow down and worship.⁸ As Nebuchadnezzar's *image* was built to represent him, in similar fashion we were designed to represent God. But instead of reflecting the oversized ego of an arrogant king, we were designed to reflect the good and true attributes of God to the world. By interacting with us or seeing how we interact with others, people should be able to know what God is like.

In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul listed the fruit of the Spirit—attributes of God—that we should embody as His children: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

God's attributes fall into two different categories, communicable and incommunicable. His communicable attributes are those we can embody as His creation, such as love, joy, peace, and patience. His incommunicable attributes are those that He alone can display, such as omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

Day 3



CULTURAL MANDATE is the term theologians use to describe the divine purpose we have been given in Genesis 1:28.

Choose two of the attributes and list ways you can exhibit those characteristics at work, home, or school this week.

In addition to our divine design as image bearers, the creation narrative also shows us our divine purpose.

LOOK UP GENESIS 1:28 IN THE NEW LIVING TRANSLATION (NLT). What words are used in place of *subdue* and *rule* (or *have dominion over*)?
_____ and _____

What do these words illustrate about how humanity is supposed to care for the rest of God's creation?

VICE-REGENT:
a person who acts in place of a ruler, governor, or sovereign

As King, God has given us the responsibility to steward His creation, helping it to flourish. We have been given the royal role of *vice-regents*, representing God's reign over creation and exercising dominion on His behalf. To echo the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:10, our kingdom task is to ensure that God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven.⁹ Nothing we do is mundane or ordinary; rather it is an opportunity to help God's creation flourish and thrive!

Think about the current responsibilities you have in your sphere of influence (for example, work, home, or school). How would you approach these responsibilities differently if you saw them through the lens of your divine purpose?

The answers to our questions about identity, purpose, and belonging are found within the opening pages of Scripture. We serve a sovereign God, who alone holds all authority as King. He has made us in His image and given us the responsibility to cultivate the world He created; our best life is found in community with God. But as we will see tomorrow, when we try to find the answers to these questions outside of God, things quickly take a turn for the worst.

REBELLION

On Day One of this study, we discussed how the biblical authors didn't give us every detail—only the most important ones. So, as we walk through the biblical narrative, we need to pay attention to the information these authors share with us as well as how they share it.

One important detail I want us to focus on today is the order in which the biblical authors chose to tell the story of how the world began. The order is significant because the Bible starts with Genesis 1, not Genesis 3. In the words of Michael Williams, "If we miss the biblical emphasis upon the goodness of God's original creation, we will also fail to see the blasphemy of sin for what it truly is: a rebellion against God and his good gifts, a rebellion from the loving word of God, a rebellion that brings discord and fracture into God's creation. Sin is never normal or natural. It never fits."¹⁰

READ GENESIS 3:1-7.

Then reread verse 1 in different translations—the Christian Standard Bible (CSB), New International Version (NIV), and New Living Translation (NLT). Compare the word each translation uses to describe the serpent. What insight into the serpent's character do these words provide?

Why did the biblical author include this detail for his readers at the beginning of the story?

How did the serpent's question to Eve distort the words God gave in Genesis 2:16-17?

Living up to his character, the serpent asked Eve a strategic question that intentionally drew her attention away from the blessings of God, casting doubt about His sufficiency and goodness. Instead of highlighting the vast provision that God had given them, the serpent focused on the one prohibition.

What did the serpent say would happen if Adam and Eve ate the fruit (Gen. 3:4)? How did his words cast doubt on God’s character?

Based upon what we read in Genesis 1–2, how do we know that what the serpent said is untrue? Give your best answer; we will cover it in the video teaching time.

In Genesis 3:6, the biblical author gave three reasons why Eve ate the fruit. List them below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve chose to trust the serpent over God, eating the forbidden fruit. Instead of trusting God as their King and following the rules He set up for how they should live in the garden, they trusted their own judgment. Instead of believing that God’s way was good, they believed their way was better and in doing so chose to be king of their own lives. Instead of living under God’s authority as His image bearers and royal stewards of His world, they wanted to live under their own authority. This one act of disobedience introduced sin into the world.

According to our culture, is sin a serious offense? List two words or phrases people in our culture might use to describe sin.

Look up the verses below and write the word(s) used to describe sin.

Exodus 23:21 _____

Leviticus 26:40 _____

Judges 2:11 _____

1 John 3:4-5 _____

According to Scripture, is sin a serious offense? Explain why.

Sin is described as any thought, word, or action that does not conform to God’s instructions in the Bible.¹¹ As the Creator of the universe, God is perfect in all His ways. He is perfectly good, perfectly wise, perfectly holy, and so much more. God always knows what’s best, so when we choose our way over His, it’s because we believe that something or someone is more trustworthy than Him.

Why is it sometimes hard for us to trust that God’s way is best?

What sins do you struggle with? What or who are you choosing to trust in rather than trusting in the character of God (for example, friends, self, or material objects that bring you joy or comfort)?

The impact of Adam and Eve’s actions was immediate. Instantaneously, their sinful choice gave them knowledge of good and evil, but not in the way they expected.

Use the table below to summarize how Adam and Eve’s decision changed their lives.

	BEFORE ADAM AND EVE EAT THE FRUIT	AFTER ADAM AND EVE EAT THE FRUIT
Their view of their bodies	Genesis 2:25	Genesis 3:7
Their relationship with God	Genesis 2:7,15-21	Genesis 3:8-10
Their relationship with each other	Genesis 2:21-24	Genesis 3:11-12

Adam and Eve were created to live in a perfect world, in relationships with God and one another that were without strife, selfishness, and shame. But sin changed everything, both with creation and humanity. The environment of *shalom* was now broken, and that brokenness would affect humanity at its very core. You see, Adam and Eve’s actions didn’t impact only them. Before they ate the fruit, Adam and Eve were able to not sin. But after they ate the fruit, sin became the default setting for them and all of humanity. Romans 5:12 tells us that “just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned.”

However, sin doesn’t only affect us individually. It also affects us corporately. When sinful people come together, they create institutions and systems that allow sinful behavior to be promoted throughout the culture. Actions and issues like abortion, racism, human trafficking, and other injustices are a few examples of what results when a group of image bearers create systems that harm other image bearers.

READ AMOS 5:11-12.

In this passage, the prophet Amos addressed the nation of Israel. What was Israel guilty of doing?

Why is it easier for us to focus more on individual sin than corporate sin?

How should God’s view of Israel’s behavior impact how we view corporate sin in our culture?

When sin entered the world, our ability to live in fellowship with God, perfectly living out our divine calling as image bearers, died. Instead of building God’s kingdom, humanity now seeks to build its own rival kingdom. Instead of living under God’s authority, we fight to live under our own. As we walk through the story, we will see this cosmic war between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world unfold. But no matter how bad things get, there is always hope! No one is more powerful than our God, and tomorrow we will see the first glimpse of how our great and mighty God will conquer sin and restore His kingdom.

Day 4



THE PROMISE

With one decision, Adam and Eve's lives immediately changed. Their desire for autonomy resulted in an act of cosmic rebellion. God made them to be rulers, but they were not content being rulers. They wanted to be king and queen. They wanted to be their own authority, not live under the authority of God. Among the trees in the garden was a tree of life and a tree of the knowledge of good and evil that resulted in death. Adam and Eve chose the latter and would now experience the consequences of their decision, which would include being sent away from Eden and separated from the presence of God.¹²

COMPARE GENESIS 3:14-19 IN THE NIV AND NLT. In your own words, summarize the curses that God gave the serpent, Eve, and Adam.

THE SERPENT

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

EVE

- 1.
- 2.

ADAM

- 1.
- 2.

At the end of this very sad scene, God shed the blood of animals to provide a more permanent solution for Adam and Eve's inadequate fig leaf coverings. In the midst of His judgment, He showed them love and compassion. Proverbs 3:11-12 says, "Do not despise the LORD's instruction, my son, and do not loathe his discipline; for the LORD disciplines the one he loves, just as a father disciplines the son in whom he delights." God knew what Adam and Eve's future would be like and what they would need. Instead of letting them leave ill-prepared, He blessed them.

Why did God send Adam and Eve away from the garden (Gen. 3:22-23)?

Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were now living in a sinful state. God could not allow them to eat from the tree of life and live forever in that condition, so He sent them away from the garden of Eden. They were separated from the presence of God, their only Source of peace and wholeness. Being cast out of the garden was also indicative of the broken relationship they had with Him, as they now lived as enemies of God (Rom. 5:10). But even though the end of Adam and Eve's story in Genesis 3 might look bleak, God did not leave them (and us) without hope! Before He sent Adam and Eve on their way, God made a huge promise that one day He would fix what they broke. Let's go back to Genesis 3:15 and take a look at it.

READ GENESIS 3:15 IN VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS.

In your own words, summarize what God said to the serpent.

Describe the difference between the impact delivered by the offspring and the impact delivered by the serpent. Who will win this promised battle of hostility?

What does this promise teach us about God’s character? In the moments you are struggling with sin, how can this truth provide you with hope and encouragement?

As we read through the narrative of Scripture, we will see God pursuing His people despite their continual rejection of His love and authority. After Adam and Eve ate the fruit, God could have chosen to wipe out the entire world and start over again. But He didn’t. Instead of discarding His broken image bearers, God worked over hundreds of years to save them. Through Christ, God has done what we cannot—overcome sin (2 Cor. 5:21)! No matter how bad things get, we’ll see that God is always working to fulfill the promise He made in Genesis 3:15.

After Adam and Eve left the garden, things went downhill quickly. The power of sin quickly became evident, as well as the speed by which it overtook humanity. From Genesis 4–11, the biblical author shows us how quickly sin spreads. Starting with the serpent’s evil promise of autonomy, it quickly moves to a full-blown culture of godlessness where all of humanity has come together in the ultimate act of rebellion—the elevation of their own authority over God’s authority.¹³

READ GENESIS 4:1-16 and fill in the chart to summarize what you learn.

	Abel	Cain
What was his vocation?		
What did each present as an offering to the Lord?		
How did God respond to each offering?		

What warning did God give Cain in verse 7? Did Cain heed this warning? Why or why not?

Despite Cain’s actions, in what way did God show him grace (Gen. 4:11-15)?

We are only four chapters into the narrative of Scripture, and there has been a murder. Things escalated quickly after what happened in the garden. Unfortunately, the spread of sin did not slow down; it only became more and more pervasive. Whether it’s the story of Noah in Genesis 5–10 or the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11, humanity quickly started to build their own kingdom. But instead of being rooted in the goal of stewardship, flourishing, and *shalom*, they were rooted in selfishness, self-preservation, and self-exaltation.

Through these stories, the biblical author is showing us the vast impact of sin, how it breeds corruption and therefore demands God’s judgment. But through these same stories, we also see that God’s judgment is never an end in itself but rather a means to restore *shalom*. God will not allow the sin of man to undo the creation order or thwart His redemptive purposes.¹⁴

Day 5



WEEKLY REVIEW

On Day Five of each session, we will spend time reviewing what you've experienced over the past four days. This gives you time to both catch up and reflect on what you have learned.

This review process will be twofold.

1. I will ask you to answer a series of questions that will help you summarize the main points of that session's lesson.
2. After you complete the questions, use your answers to write a two to three sentence summary for what happened in the grand narrative of Scripture that session.

This session we walked through the first part of the grand narrative of Scripture—the creation and the fall of the kingdom. Answer the questions to summarize this session's main points. Feel free to use bullet points.

1. What are some things God created?
2. What does God's creative act teach us about Him?
3. What divine identity and purpose does God give humanity?
4. What happened when Adam and Eve ate the fruit?
5. What were the long-lasting kingdom consequences of this decision?
6. How did God promise to restore the kingdom?

SUMMARIZE THE NARRATIVE

In the space below, use your answers to the previous questions to create a two to three sentence summary of what happened this session in the grand narrative of Scripture.

Video + Group Guide

SESSION TWO

WATCH Session Two video teaching and take notes below.



To access the video teaching sessions, use the instructions in the back of your Bible study book.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 How would you define *shalom*?
- 2 Why is it so important for us to understand how the story of Scripture begins?
- 3 What do we learn about God from the creation story?
- 4 What do we learn about ourselves from the creation story?
- 5 What's significant about God's story starting in Genesis 1 rather than Genesis 3?
- 6 What is one point or truth that really stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?



THE STATUS OF THE KINGDOM

In the chart below, fill in the blanks to review the definition of the kingdom of God. (Look back at your notes on p. 13 if you need help). At the close of each teaching video, I will update the status of each phrase.

The Kingdom of God	Creation of the Kingdom	Corruption of the Kingdom
God's _____ in		
God's _____ under		
God's _____ and _____.		