

UNDERSTANDING THE “ONE STORY” OF SCRIPTURE

Week 3 – From the Beginning! What’s the Beginning?

September 23, 2025

The current President of Dallas Theological Seminary, Dr. Mark Yarbrough, was asked *What is something you see missing in the teaching of the church at large —something Christians need to know but are not always taught?* The President of DTS stated, *Every believer in Jesus needs to know how to study the Bible and how to understand The Story of Scripture – what I’m calling the “one story” of Scripture - from beginning to end!*

Re: God’s overall plan, Dr. Mark Yarbrough, President of DTS stated: *Do we understand God’s plan for Israel in the OT which impacts THE WORLD? The world - that’s you and that’s me...NOW and in the FUTURE!*

Kirk Cameron came against Ted Cruz’s statement re: supporting Israel. You can access Kirk Cameron’s incorrect understanding re: Israel: <https://www.tiktok.com/@torncurtain.org/video/7550788894002826527>

Kirk Cameron stated that God was not speaking to Israel when He spoke to Abram in Gen. 12:1-3 - *Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. ² I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’*

What we are reading in Gen. 12:1-3 is a biblical principle re: who Israel is in God’s plan for the world! God spoke of more than Abram populating that great nation! God also promised He would **ble**ss those who bless you**** and to **cu**se him who curses you****. Per Kirk Cameron, the “you” is not speaking of descendants of Abram. IT IS!!

We need to know that the blessing/curse promise is repeated in Scripture: Gen. 22:17; Gen. 18:18; Gen. 15:1-6; Gen. 27:29-30; Num. 24:8-9; Rom. 11:1-5 – God has not cast away His people!

The book of Genesis provides us with the key to what God is planning and the means by which He is going to accomplish His purposes!

Gen. 1:1a – *In the beginning...* The beginning of what? *In the beginning God....* Our God is ETERNAL. God has NO beginning and NO end. God is ETERNAL from before creation! SO – what “beginning” is this?

Gen. 1:1 - *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* This “beginning” in Genesis 1 tells us that God created within time and space. It appears that God created time and space and the heavens and the earth simultaneously.

What came before Genesis 1:1? Eternity past!

Scripture passages that tell us about eternity past:

- John 1:1 – *In the beginning* (prior to creation) *was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* John essentially wrote, “When the **beginning** began the **Word** was already there.” The Word, Jesus, existed before creation or even time.
- Rev. 13:8 – in the book of Revelation we read that Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. How massively significant is this description of Jesus as the Lamb... slain from the foundation of the world – His redemption for us. “Redemption”

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means being bought out of the marketplace. Who were those bought and sold in the marketplace? Slaves who are those in bondage! Being redeemed means to buy out from bondage; to pay a price for one who is in bondage. Mankind is in bondage. To what? We’re in bondage to SIN! Rom. 3:23 - *All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.* Jesus redeemed us...He bought us out of the marketplace having paid the penalty for our sin and delivering us from bondage to sin forever! Jesus’ death on the cross for us was fixed, unchangeable, from the foundation of the world. God’s plan of redemption was set in place before He even created the beings who would be redeemed! Sin was NEVER authored by God. Sin is always the responsibility of mankind who acts with freedom of choice.

Consider: genuine love and relationship cannot be forced but must be freely chosen. The reality of sin set the stage for God’s mercy, forgiveness, grace and holiness...to be revealed alongside His compassion in providing redemption...paying the price for our sin! Through Jesus, God’s response to sin reveals the depth of His love and the great cost of grace!

- Jn. 17:24 - God the Son had a relationship of love and fellowship with God the Father before the foundation of the world. *Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.*
- I Pet. 1:18-20 - The work of Jesus was ordained before the foundation of the world. ... *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. ²⁰ He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest (revealed) in these last times for you.*
- Matt. 25:34 – during the judgment of the nations following the tribulation, following Armageddon, ...*then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*
- II Tim. 1:9 - ...*Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.*

- Micah 5:2 - *But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting* (lit. from the days of eternity).
- Psa. 90:2 - *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting. You are God.*
- Isa. 53:10 - *But the Lord desired to crush Him, causing Him grief; if He renders Himself as a guilt offering...offering Himself as a sacrifice!* Agreement made between God the Father and God the Son in eternity past.

Genesis 1:1a - *In the beginning God...* Haven't we heard/read logical reasons to believe in God? Lee Strobel in his book, "The Case for A Creator," makes a good case for God's intelligent design! Yet, at the very outset, the Bible does not make elaborate arguments 3

for the existence of God. In the beginning God...PERIOD!!! God Exists!! ENTER FAITH!!!!

Gen. 1:1 - *In the beginning God created....* The Hebrew reads *Bereshit bara Elohim*. *Elohim* in Hebrew is "God". The *im* ending of *Elohim* tells us that this word is a plural word. At the outset we know that God is a plurality! *Bara* in Hebrew is "create". *Bara*, the verb, is in the **singular**.

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"God"- a plural noun, "created"- a singular verb. NOT grammatically correct! We are being told, however, that in the action of creating there is UNITY within that plurality Who is God! MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, the very first verse in the Hebrew Scriptures introduces us to the revelation of God's triune nature: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – and He is ONE.

We are going to attempt to read the text with no hindsight. We are going to TRY to read the text with what was transpiring in that day. We need to grasp the message that He, the **original author, GOD, intended** to communicate to His readership. This way of studying Scripture is known as Authorial Intent which is understanding GOD'S intent in delivering His message. We want to understand what the Author, God, desired His audience to comprehend at the time of writing. AND – we need to recognize that God is not offering us...multiple choices in Scripture!

Who wrote Genesis? Moses! Was Moses there when God created? NO! How did Moses write about the creation? The Holy Spirit inspired Moses. HOW?

II Pet. 1:20 – Peter is speaking of the prophetic word in Scripture – that it is confirmed because...*no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*)

Gen. 1:1-2 - *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* The heavens encompass the atmospheric heaven, the planetary heaven, and heaven - the abode of God.

God made the universe unimaginably large – displaying Who He is!!!! Our galaxy contains over 100 billion stars; the Bible says that God calls them all by their names ([Psalms 147:4](#); [Isaiah 40:26](#)). The heavens also contain nebulae, an enormous cloud of dust and gas occupying the space between stars and acting as a nursery for new stars. Nebulae are estimated to be more massive than 10,000 suns. Our galaxy, the Milky Way, with over 100 billion stars, and countless nebulae, is not the only galaxy.

Gen 1:2 - *The earth was without form, and void.* We need to know that the earth did **NOT become** without form and void. *Without form* means formless, empty space, nothingness. *The earth was without form...* At this point in God's creation of the earth, it had not yet taken shape. *And void* - it was empty; it was not occupied; not yet inhabited by created life forms.

...and darkness was on the face of the deep ...the Hebrew word for *darkness* in the context does NOT mean evil! *Darkness* in the Hebrew means no light; there was yet to be light!

Gen. 1:2 - *And the Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) was hovering* (fluttering, moving, shaking) *over the face of the waters.* The Holy Spirit participated in the creation!

“Elohim” – Not only did God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit participate in creation...so did God the Son...

Gen. 1:3 - *Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.* God spoke a word...
Let there be light, and there was light.

John 1:1-4 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.* (When the beginning began God was already there with the Word!) ³ *All things were made through Him* (through the Word), *and without Him* (without the Word) *nothing was made that was made.* ⁴ *In Him* (the Word) *was life, and the life was the light of men.*

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John 8:12 - *Jesus said, I am the light of the world! He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.'*

Gen. 1:1-3 points to the truth that there was, always has been, and always will be a relationship among/within God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is how God so loved the world.

Can you understand how Gen. 1:1-3 fits into the one story of Scripture from just knowing these three verses? Observations:

What does all that we have noted teach us/tell us about His creation? It's intentional and good. Creation has a purpose as it was created by God Who has a purpose and a plan. The broader story of Scripture, which unfolds through the rest of Genesis and the entire Bible, can be seen as God's unfolding plan to restore and bless the world He created.

QUESTIONS

What was new to you re: Gen. 1:1-3?

What do you want to remember from this lesson?

What was new to you re: how we are to understand Scripture?

Have you already been understanding the Bible literally?

As you read Scripture, are you understanding that God is gradually unfolding His message?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 3 with the Bible references.

Find examples in Scripture of verses/passages you can understand literally while you might've been understanding them symbolically /metaphorically in the past.

Read Week 4's handout when you receive it.