

## THE STORY OF GOD'S BOOK, PART I



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**ONE** of the most wonderful stories of all is the story of God's Book. I want to tell you this story so you will understand more about the Bible and know how wonderful it is. All the stories I have told you are in the Bible, but maybe you would not be able to find them, so I want to tell you how to find the stories and other wonderful things in the Bible. The whole Bible is a book, but it is made up of many parts and each of these parts of the Bible is also called a "book."

The very first "book" of the Bible is called Genesis.

Each one of these books of the Bible is divided into what are called chapters; and the chapters are divided into verses. To understand this you will have to look at a Bible and see for yourself. I do hope you have a Bible! The Bibles we have now are much nicer than

Bibles used to be. At one time they were written on long sheets of paper and rolled up into what are called scrolls.

Of course, I have not yet told you all the stories of the Bible. Those I have told you are all found in the first half of the Bible, which is called the Old Testament. One of the stories I told you was about Abraham. You remember God made a wonderful promise to Abraham, telling him that through his family all the people of the world would be made happy.

Now I'll tell you how to find that promise in the Bible. It is in Genesis 22:18. This means the 22nd chapter of Genesis and the 18th verse. Now look in the first "book" of your Bible, called Genesis. Then look for chapter 22. Look through the chapter until you come to 18, and that will be the 18th verse. When you find it, this is the way it will read: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice."

Now isn't that wonderful? The word "seed" just means children, or grandchildren. After awhile we will learn that Jesus was the "seed" of Abraham. Jesus will bless all the world when he is King over all the nations. I'll tell you about that later on, but now I want you to get acquainted with the Bible and learn how to find in it all the interesting stories which God has put there, and the wonderful promises he has made. I think the best way to do this is to tell you something about all the books in the first half of the Bible. Isn't that a good idea? All right, here they are:

**GENESIS** The name Genesis means "in the beginning." It tells of the creation of the earth and the sun and the moon, and all the other things that God made. It also tells the story about Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, and explains that because they didn't do what God wanted them to do they died, and that all their children died. That is why people die now. You can find the first twelve stories I have told you in the Book of Genesis. If you remember those stories you will have a very good knowledge of this first book of the Bible.

**EXODUS** This is the second book of the Bible. The name Exodus means "going out." It was given this name because it tells about the

children of Israel “going out” of Egypt. I hope you have read the stories of the wonderful way in which God used Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. All these are in the Book of Exodus. It begins by telling of the birth of Moses, and that his mother hid him in a basket in the waters of the river Nile. You had better read these stories over again sometime. Exodus also tells about the laws that God gave to the Hebrews and how God’s house, which was called the tabernacle, was built.

**LEVITICUS** The third book of the Bible tells about the family of Levi. There were twelve families or tribes of the Israelites, and the family of Levi was the one which God selected to do his work for him. The priests who served God in the tabernacle were of the family of Levi. So this third book of the Bible is called Leviticus because it tells about the way the family of Levi and the priests were to serve God. It also relates how they taught all the other Israelites to serve God.

**NUMBERS** The fourth book of the Bible is called Numbers because it tells of the numbering, or counting, of the people of Israel. This is a history book. It acquaints us with the experiences of the children of Israel from the time they left Egypt until they were ready to cross over the river Jordan into the Promised Land. This was a period of forty years.

**DEUTERONOMY** This is the fifth book of the Bible. Its name means “giving the Law the second time.” In this book there are three wonderful sermons by Moses. These sermons were preached just a little while before Moses died. In them Moses reminds the children of Israel about the Law which God had given to them, and how important it was for them to obey that Law. The closing chapter of this book tells about the death of Moses.

**JOSHUA** This is a history of what Joshua did when he was the leader of the children of Israel. I hope you remember the stories I told you about Joshua—how he led the children of Israel across the river Jordan, and conquered the Promised Land.

**JUDGES** This book is a history of the children of Israel during a period of four hundred and fifty years, when they were ruled by what the Bible calls judges. That was before the Israelites had a king.

**RUTH** The Book of Ruth is the story of a very good woman whose home was in the land of Moab, but later she went to the land of Israel and married an Israelite by the name of Boaz. It is a very beautiful story.

An Israelitish woman whose name was Naomi, together with her husband, left the land of Israel and moved to the land of Moab. They thought they would be more prosperous there. They had two sons, and after awhile, these two sons married women of the land of Moab. One of these women was Ruth. Soon after that, Naomi's husband and both her sons died. She was very sad and lonely, and decided to return to the land of Israel. Ruth went with her. When they arrived in Israel, Ruth went to work in a harvest field belonging to Boaz, a relative of Naomi. After awhile Ruth married Boaz. They had a son, who was the forefather, or ancestor, of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

**SAMUEL 1 and 2** There are two books in the Bible named after Samuel the prophet. These books tell about the birth and life of Samuel. If you have read the stories about Samuel, you will know that he was the prophet of God who chose Saul to be Israel's first king. He later appointed David king to take the place of Saul. These two books also tell the story of both Saul and David up to the time Saul died and David became the king in Israel.

**KINGS 1 and 2** These two books give the history of Israel during the time that kings reigned over them, beginning with King David, and ending with Zedekiah, their last king. It was Zedekiah who was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and taken to the city of Babylon as a prisoner. The Bible says that he would not see Babylon, and he didn't, because he was blinded by the soldiers who captured him. These books also tell the experiences of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, some of which I have related to you.

**CHRONICLES 1 and 2** These two books contain stories of the Israelites that were not written in the first and second Books of Kings. They also are Israel's history books down to the time when King Cyrus of Persia overthrew Babylon and let the captive Israelites return to Palestine, their homeland.

**EZRA** This book is named after a priest who served the Israelites during the time they were captives in Babylon, and tells more of the history of the Israelites following the capture of their last king, Zedekiah. After the Israelites had been in Babylon for seventy years they were allowed to go back to the land of Palestine, which was their home, and Ezra was a very important leader among them at that time. Ezra was asked to build the house of God, the temple at Jerusalem.

**NEHEMIAH** This book is named after a servant of God who wrote nearly all of it. It is about Israel during and after the time they returned to Palestine following their captivity in Babylon, and tells how Nehemiah rebuilt the walls around Jerusalem after the Israelites returned to Palestine.

**ESTHER** This book records the experiences of Esther, a Jewess, who became the wife of Ahasuerus, a king of the Medes and Persians during the time the Israelites were captives in Babylon. One of the king's chief servants, Haman, was jealous of Esther's cousin and foster father, Mordecai, and was a bitter enemy of all the Jewish people. He coaxed the king to issue a permit for all the Jews to be slain. Esther, the queen, used her influence with the king. He changed his mind, and the Jews were saved. Later Haman was put to death as an enemy of the king.

**JOB** The Book of Job is the life story of a very faithful servant of God, who was one of his prophets. Satan, God's enemy, said that Job did what God asked him to do because he was always rewarded for it. Satan also claimed that if God allowed Job to suffer, Job would no longer do what God asked him to do. The story explains that God allowed Satan to bring trouble upon Job. Because of this, Job really did have a great deal of trouble. His children were all killed in a storm. All his cattle died. Then he became ill, and boils broke out all over him. Then Job's wife turned against him.

What a lot of trouble!

But the story says that Job still trusted God, and did what God wanted him to do. Then Job's health returned. Other children were

given to him. His wife loved him again, and the Lord gave him all the cattle he needed so that he was richer than ever before.

When we read the story of Job it makes us think of the story of Adam and Eve, and the trouble which came upon them and upon their children. Just as it was with Job, so it will be with Adam and Eve and all their children. They will receive back again all that they lost.

**PSALMS** The Book of Psalms contains the beautiful writings of King David and other servants of God. Psalms mean “hymns.” David was a musician who played the harp, and he was also a poet. In the poetic Psalms which David wrote, he expresses his love for God, and thanks God for all the wonderful things he had done for him. Chapter 23 of the Book of Psalms, which we call the 23rd Psalm, is one of the most beautiful of all the Psalms. If you have read the story of David, you know that at one time he was a shepherd boy who cared for his father’s sheep. When writing the 23rd Psalm, he was thinking of God as his shepherd, and of how tenderly God cared for him.

As a prophet, God caused him to write of many wonderful things that would be done for the people when Jesus becomes King. In the 46th Psalm, David records God’s promise that the time is coming when there will be no more wars.

In the 72nd Psalm and the 8th verse, David writes about King Jesus, and says, “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” In the 12th verse of this Psalm, David says that Jesus “shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.”

**PROVERBS** This is a book of wise sayings nearly all of which were written by King Solomon. If you have read the story of King Solomon, you will have learned that he was a very wise man, because God gave him wisdom. Some of Solomon’s wisdom is shown in the Book of Proverbs. In chapter 3, verses 5 and 6, the king very wisely wrote, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

**ECCLESIASTES** The name of this book means “the preacher.” It is believed to have been written by Solomon. Like the Book of Proverbs, it contains many things which are good for all of us to follow. One of the wisest things that Solomon says in this book is this: “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.”—Ecclesiastes 12:1

This is indeed a very wise thing to do.

I hope that the more you read the Bible, the more you will remember God, and that he is the Creator. The word creator means “one who makes things,” and God made everything—the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the earth; and he made us, and we should remember him and love him all of our days.

**THE SONG OF SOLOMON** This is another book of the Bible which was written by King Solomon. It is also called “The Song of Songs,” or “Canticles” by some people. It is a story of love, as the love of a husband for his wife. It is a very good lesson to show God’s love for us, or the love of Jesus for those who serve him.

**ISAIAH** The name of this book is that of its writer, the Prophet Isaiah. It contains the wonderful things God inspired him to write. The Prophet Isaiah warned the people of Israel that God would punish them for their wrongdoing. Isaiah also recorded many wonderful promises of God which describe the good things he plans to do for the people of the whole world.

Isaiah 11:6,7 (which means the 11th chapter of the Book of Isaiah, verses 6 and 7) reads like this: “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.”

Isn’t that a beautiful promise?

Do you remember the Bible story I told you about Adam naming all the animals, and that they obeyed him because he was made king over them? Well, Isaiah explains that the time will come when all the animals will be tame again, and that they will obey man just as

they did in the Garden of Eden when Adam gave names to all of them. That will be a grand time!

Isaiah 35:5,6 states another blessed promise of God. It reads:

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall writers break out, and streams in the desert.” God will make this promise come true when King Jesus rules the world.

**JEREMIAH** This book bears the name of another of God’s prophets. God asked Jeremiah to write a great deal about the sins of the people of Israel, and also to warn them that they would be punished for their sins.

I hope you have read the story, “God Gives Laws to His People.”

Moses was the leader of the Israelites at the time of this story. God gave them his laws, but they didn’t obey them very well. Because they did not do what God wanted them to do, they finally did not have a king of their own to rule over them.

Besides, for hundreds of years they were kept out of the land which God gave to them. But God revealed to the Prophet Jeremiah that the time is coining when he will give them a new Law and that then he will forgive their sins. That new Law which God will give the Israelites is called a “new covenant.” Jeremiah 31:31-34 tells all about it.

**LAMENTATIONS** The word “Lamentations” means “mourning,” or feeling very sad. This book was also written by the Prophet Jeremiah, and he tells of all the trouble that had come upon the people of Israel because they had not done what God wanted them to do. But the prophet trusted God and knew that after awhile God would bless the Israelites and also all other people in the world.

**EZEKIEL** Ezekiel is the name of another of God’s prophets, and he wrote down many wonderful things that God asked him to write. He told the people of Israel that the time would come when they would be driven out of the land which God gave them, and that they would have to find homes in different places all over the earth. God also told Ezekiel to write that the Israelites, after a long, long time, would



be brought back into the Promised Land, and now this is coming true.

**DANIEL** This book was written by the Prophet Daniel. It tells about Nebuchadnezzar's dream in which he saw a big statue like a man. This book also contains the story of the three Hebrews who were put into a fiery furnace, but who were not burned to death because God protected them. The story of Daniel in the lions' den is also in this book.

God inspired Daniel to write that in these days in which we are now living, knowledge would be increased. Because what Daniel then wrote is now coming true, you have schools to attend and other ways of learning many things. Years and years ago there were no public schools such as there are now.

**HOSEA** This book of the Bible is named after the Prophet Hosea. This prophet wrote that the time is coming when God will destroy death. When this promise comes true, no one will get sick and die. We know this is right because it is in the Bible.

**JOEL** Joel was the name of a man who loved God, and did what God asked him to do. In the book which is named after him he tells the people about terrible wars which were coming, and that the nations would fight each other. What God told Joel to say has all been coming true, hasn't it? Joel also wrote that God will make the nations stop fighting after awhile, and that then the people will have everything they need, and will be happy.

**AMOS** Amos was also one of God's prophets, and God told him to write that a time would come when the Jewish people would be brought back to the Promised Land. Amos wrote that if we seek to do good God will be with us and will bless us.

**OBADIAH** The Book of Obadiah is different from the other books of the Old Testament because it has only one chapter. It was written by God's prophet Obadiah, who explains that a time is coming when the holy people of God, called "saviors," with Jesus as the leading One, will be rulers over all.

**JONAH** I hope you have read the story of Jonah, who was cast overboard from a ship and swallowed by a “great fish.” This Book of Jonah tells about his experiences.

**MICAH** Micah was a prophet through whom God promised the people that a time will come when the nations of the earth will not fight each other any more, and that then they will not even learn how to fight, and that every man will have his own fruit orchard, and will never again need to be afraid of anything.—Micah 4:1-4

**NAHUM** God had many prophets, one of whom was Nahum. God helped Nahum, so he was able to write about automobiles hundreds of years before they were invented. The first really good automobiles were made less than fifty years ago. Wasn't it wonderful that God knew about automobiles so long ago, and told Nahum to write about them? Nahum calls them chariots, and because of their bright headlights at night, Nahum said they would look like torches.

**HABAKKUK** Habakkuk is a hard name to pronounce. He loved God, and wrote many wonderful things in this book. Habakkuk 2:14 (which means the 2nd chapter of the book, and the 14th verse) says: “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

**ZEPHANIAH** In this book the Prophet Zephaniah explains that a time is coming when everybody in the whole world will worship God and serve him just the way he wants him to do. At that time there will be just one religion for everybody, and they will then know how good God really is, because he will make all his wonderful promises come true. God said, “For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent.”—Zephaniah 3:9

**HAGGAI** This is another book which is named after the prophet of God who wrote it. As is true of all God's prophets, he helped Haggai to write about things long before they came to pass. Haggai told that a time of distress and trouble was to come upon all the nations of the earth. He writes that God would “shake all nations.” Already we have seen much of this trouble upon the nations.

The prophet wrote, however, that after the trouble is over, “the desire of all nations shall come.” (Haggai 2:7) This means that a time is coming when there will be no more wars, and that the people will really have what they want, which is peace and life and happiness.

**ZECHARIAH** This book, named after the prophet who wrote it, tells a great deal about trouble that would come upon the Israelites, and also about a happy time coming when the Israelites and all other nations which then obey God will be blessed.

**MALACHI** This is the last book in the first part of the Bible, the part which is called the Old Testament. Like many of the other books of the Bible, it is named after the one who wrote it. But God directed Malachi in what he wrote. I want you to remember this about all the books of the Bible. No matter who wrote what is in these books, it was God who told them what to write.

This means that the whole Bible is God’s Book. Because it is God’s Book we know it is true.

God caused Malachi to write that unless the people would change from their wicked ways and serve him, a terrible time of trouble would come upon the nations. We are in a part of that trouble now. But Malachi also wrote that following the trouble a wonderful time of blessing would come to the people.

When you grow older I want you to read all the books of the Bible yourself. Then you will learn the many wonderful things which God has said, and what he wants us to know and to do.

In the Old Testament part of the Bible God promised to send a person to the earth who would become a great King and make everybody happy. This One was to come from the family of Abraham, which means that he was to be an Israelite. He is the One who will make all God’s promises come true.

God told the Prophet Isaiah to promise that this great One would be born as a child, and that he would become the Prince of Peace. The next story will be about him. His name is Jesus.

It was after Jesus was born that God’s servants began to write the second part of the Bible, which is called the New Testament. In the

Old Testament God makes many promises, and in the New Testament some of these promises begin to come true, and we know that all the others will come true by and by.

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***Dawn Bible Students Association***