

# in the beginning

Genesis 1 – 4

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# Introduction: Good Book Guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home or in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, mums and tots, students, businessmen or teens. That’s why we’ve designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the “big picture” of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to appropriately apply what we have discovered to our lives. Let’s take a look at what is included:

- ↔ **Talkabout:** most groups need to “break the ice” at the beginning of a session, and here’s the question that will do that. It’s designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ↓ **Investigate:** the Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. **The Leader’s Guide** contains **guidance on questions**, and sometimes ☑ additional “follow-up” questions.
- ⋮ **Explore more (optional):** these questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to fit it all together like a jig-saw.
- **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you’ll keep coming across **apply** sections. These are questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. 🗨 **Getting personal**, is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have learned.
- ↑ **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God’s word—in line with His concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader’s Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God’s word.

# Why study *Genesis*?

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

**Genesis 1 v 1**

We all like to know where we have come from. Our origins are the foundation of our identity and individuality. So we often introduce ourselves to people by mentioning not only our name but also where we are from: "Hi, I'm Jeff, from Stockport". This is often followed up fairly quickly by a comment about our job, or the fact that we are retired or looking for work.

But as Christians we should perhaps think about changing the way we do this. After all, our identity is in Christ now that we are saved. And our origins lie in God. That's what Genesis 1 – 4 is all about—our origins. The writer recorded these chapters, guided by the Holy Spirit, in order to teach us about God and His wonderful creation of the world. Maybe we should introduce ourselves like this: "Hi, I'm Jeff, a unique creation made in the image of God, and a fallen sinner who has been saved by Christ". It might lead to some interesting conversations!

The first few chapters of Genesis have drawn more attention and controversy than many other parts of the Bible. Christians and non-Christians alike read these chapters for information about the world. Consequently, there are many different interpretations. Most of us have probably had a conversation about how the world began. Even among Christians there are many differences of opinion. At best these lead to healthy debate, but at worst they can cause serious damage to relationships between Christian brothers and sisters.

However, the author didn't write these chapters to stir up controversy but to teach us about God. These studies aim to get to the heart of what the passage is saying about our Creator. Our goal must be to let the Bible passages set the agenda and to go where each chapter leads us, rather than to come to them with our own convictions and try to get the Bible passage to fit. In this way we will learn some wonderful things about God and perhaps some surprising things about His world.



Genesis 1 v 1-25

# GOD CREATES



## talkabout

1. What do you like to do that is creative? Music, cooking, sport?

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We can all be very creative at times, but none of us can create a universe out of nothing. But God can. You may be very familiar with this passage of the Bible. If so, pray now that God will help you to see the truths in it once again.



## investigate

### ▶ Read Genesis 1 v 1-2

2. What does verse 1 tell us about how the universe was made?

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3. What was the world like before God set to work on it?

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➔ **apply**

4. Think of people you know who are atheists, or who live without any thought or knowledge of God. Compare the life of someone who truly believes these opening verses of the Bible. What differences might you expect to see?

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🗨️ **getting personal**

Is the way you live your life any different from someone who believes that the universe came about through blind chance? How might someone realise, from watching the way you live, that you believe God created the universe? How quickly would that become clear?

⬇️ **investigate**

➤ **Read Genesis 1 v 3-13**

5. Fill in days 1-3 in the table below.

Day	Formed	Day	Filled
1		4	
2		5	
3		6	



**▶ Read Genesis 1 v 14-25**

6. Now fill in days 4-6. These three days tell us how God *filled* the earth.
7. What is the recurring pattern in the account of each day?  
List all the phrases that are repeated in these verses.

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8. What is God's conclusion about all that He has made?

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**explore more**

optional

Read **Job 38 v 1-11; 40 v 1-14; 42 v 1-6**. (If you have time, read the whole of these chapters.)  
When Job truly understands that God is the only One who has created the universe from nothing, how does he see himself and how does he respond to God?



## **apply**

9. What is your overall reaction to this passage? In what ways might you be tempted to doubt God's word here?

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10. What is your conclusion about creation? How similar is it to God's?

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- How is our belief or doubt reflected in the way we live?

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## **getting personal**

How do you need to change your view of God's power after reading about His amazing creation?

How do you need to change your view about God's good design for life, the universe and everything?

## **pray**

- Thank and praise God that He is a powerful Creator, and pray that you will live in the light of that truth.
- Ask Him for help to trust that His design is good.

