



Genesis 1:1 *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

There is nobody in this physical or the spiritual world that does not know this verse. It has been repeated over and over for thousands of years. Even Darwin and Richard Dawkins could recite and give the verse number. This is how the Bible begins by declaring God did it. It is no different than someone bursting into a room and declaring “I’m here!” The Wizard of Oz opens with Dorothy Gail right at the beginning of the story. You know right away that she is one of the main characters. The Bible has no secrets. It is plain as day. This is the story of God and His creation right from the beginning.

I have spent hours listening to a pastor give reasons why Jesus is in the Old Testament. Yet, if Jesus is all we look for then we miss so much. Yes, Eve was promised a saviour that will crush the head of the deceiving serpent. The Old Testament is riddled with hints of this man who they call the Messiah or Christ. It is all over the Old Testament as plainly as God made the heavens and the earth. Yet, Noah has a story to tell. So does King David and Nemiah while building a wall. For thousands of years this old set of books was all they had. They did not know who Jesus is to us today. Welcome to the Old Testament.

Narrative

This book we call the Bible has a beginning as Jewish history and law. It is amazing that over half the Biblical timeline is wrapped up in just the first eleven chapters of Genesis. That includes the creation account; the flood; and the tower of Babel. Within all this is Adam and Eve

and the fall of humans from grace. We see that repeated with the incident at the Tower of Babel. God cast out the people and confused their language all over the world. The Old Testament is largely about time in the desert and captivity. The descendants of Adam and Eve experienced the knowledge of good and evil the hard way. Yet, through it all God is finding ways to return His created caretakers back to himself.

The Old Testament begins with information and narrative. On a map it is the “*here you are*” sign. After chapter 11 of Genesis, we focus on one man (Abram) and his descendance. This family tree will morph into a nation called Israel. People love to say that the old Bible is boring and hard to read. Yet, it is filled with so many things you would not expect like poetry, rape, incest, war, and love. It does not paint the Jewish people in a positive light. From Isaac to Joseph, we have a line drawn towards a saviour promised to Eve. Big names like Noah, Moses, David, and Jonah are portrayed as imperfect men who were entrusted to save the people. The whole Old Testament is a calling back to God by prophets, messengers, and angels. This is the Old Testament: law, prophets, history, and a journey to the promised land.

Intent

The intent of the Old Testament is broken up into sections. The first five books portray history and law called the Pentateuch. God Spells it out how creation began. Why so few words on the creation? Honestly, it is about three words: God did it! From there we have humans trying to be God. This set of historical books tell the story of imperfect humans trying to outsmart the perfect God. Through the book of the Judges, we have humans failing while God rescued them over and over. Then we enter the accounts of the Kings. These Kings fail while the prophets try and steer them in the right direction.

The poetry and wisdom sections are there for instruction. How would God have us live? What is smart and what is common to man. There is a set of themes in the Old Testament that convey culture and the evolution of a nation. Sin and disobedience are given always given consequences. It is woven into the fabric of creation. Yet, diets change and people advance. Rules about conduct and compassion do not change. Yet, through the ages we have moved away from slavery and gender bias. People are catching up with the Bible. God has always given women status in his book. However, we all play a role. What facts intrigue you in the Old Testament? Is it wisdom, story, or history? What about pillars of fire, splitting seas, or the sun standing still? The intent of God is displaying that His kingdom is not boring. In a way the Old Testament is a map screaming “we are going the wrong way!”

Characters

God, Noah, Moses, David, and a host of other influential characters

Who wrote this book?

There are around 25 authors of the Old Testament spanning around 3500 years.

Famous verses

- i. Genesis 1:1 dedication to the Lord and friendship
- ii. Deuteronomy 6:4
- iii. Psalm 23:1-6
- iv. Micah 4:6

Controversies, issues, and Questions

1. **Who wrote the Bible?**
2. **Isaac or Ishmael.**
3. **Is God real?**

Connections to the New Testament

Matthew 1 (Ruth in the line of Jesus); Romans 8:1-2 Jesus is a type of kinsman redeemer