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A. QUICK HELP - HOW TO PREPARE A TALK

1. Pray for God's help.

2. Read the Bible section several times.

Use **Background** to help you to understand the section.

Use **Notes** to help you to understand difficult Bible verses.

3. Try to find the main point that God is teaching us in the Bible section.

Use **Main point** to help you.

4. Pray for your people. Think how this Bible section will help them.

Use **Something to work on** to help you.

5. Write your talk in your own language. Start with the main points which the Bible teaches.

Use our notes in the **TALK** section to help you.

6. Now write a beginning and an end for your talk.

7. Check what you have done.

- Is the **main point** clear?
- Do you show them what the **Bible** teaches?
- Do you use **word pictures** to help your people understand and remember?
- Do you **connect** with the people?
- What do you hope will **change**?

8. Pray that God will speak through your words. Pray that his truth will change people.

For more help read the next section.

C. INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE STORY

(The different kinds of books and how they tell God's big story.)

OLD TESTAMENT

GENESIS

DEUTERONOMY

HISTORY

The first 5 books are called the LAW OF MOSES. They tell the story of creation... man's sin... the Exodus... wandering in the desert... to the border of the Promised Land.

JOSHUA

ESTHER

Joshua to Esther tell the story of God's people in the **Promised Land**; their idol worship... their kings... punishment in foreign countries... return to the Promised Land.

JOB

SONG OF
SONGS

POETRY

Songs to praise God. Wise words to teach how to live. (Mostly written by King David or Solomon).

ISAIAH

MALACHI

PROPHETS

The prophets are God's messengers. Many of the prophets wrote in the time of the kings. They tell Israel to come back to God. They warn of God's punishment and promise God's special plans for the future.

Some prophets wrote later, when God's people were away in foreign lands, or when they returned home.

To understand any of the prophets we must know when each one wrote. We must know where the prophet fits in the HISTORY books.

MATTHEW

JOHN

NEW TESTAMENT

HISTORY

The four GOSPELS tell the good news about Jesus' life and death. This is what the Old Testament points to. Here is the answer to how man and God can be friends again.

ACTS

ACTS

Tells us about God's new family (the church), and how the good news about Jesus spread to many countries.

ROMANS

PHILEMON

PAUL'S LETTERS

(from Romans to Philemon).

Paul wrote most of his letters to help the new churches round the world. (Romans to Thessalonians)

Letters to Timothy and Titus encourage the pastors.

Philemon is a personal letter.

HEBREWS

JUDE

OTHER LETTERS

Other apostles (Peter, James, John and Jude) wrote these. They wrote them to encourage churches in hard times.

We do not know who wrote Hebrews.

REVELATION

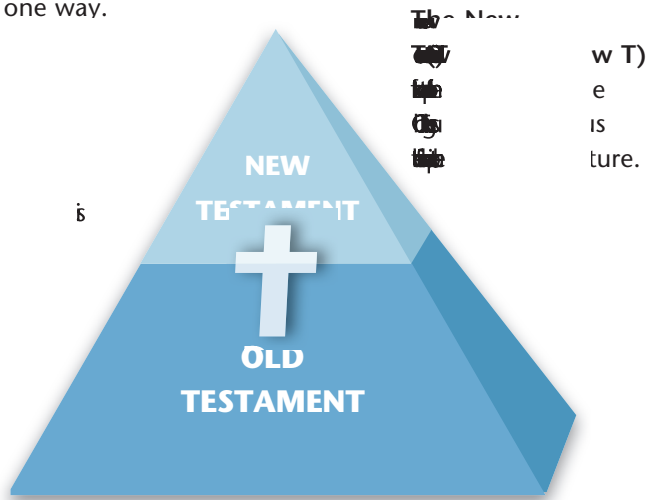
REVELATION

This tells us John's visions. It shows in picture language that Jesus has won – over death, sin and Satan. God and his people will live as friends together in a wonderful land.

GOD'S BIG STORY

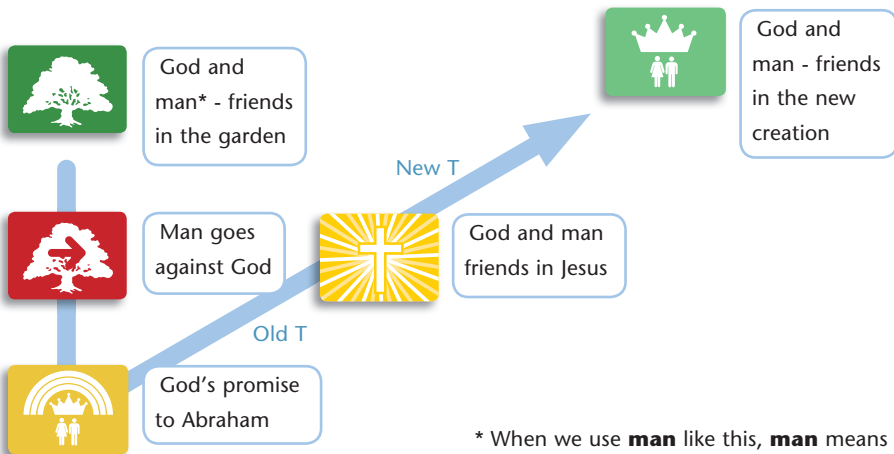
There are different ways to think about the Bible. The diagram below is one way.

The **Old Testament** is like a foundation or tells us the things we know about God and us. But the Old T is not enough on its own. It leads us to Jesus and the cross.



Story line

Another way to look at the Bible is a **story line**. It follows the story of the Bible from beginning to end. This book will follow the story line of the Bible. Here is a simple picture of it.



* When we use **man** like this, **man** means men and women, boys and girls.

The Bible tells the story of how men and women went away from God. It tells us about God's plan to be friends with his people again.

One of the most important parts of the Bible is...



Promise

God's promise to Abraham.

God promises Abraham that he will make people friends with God again. God promises them a Home Land, where he will be with them and bless them.

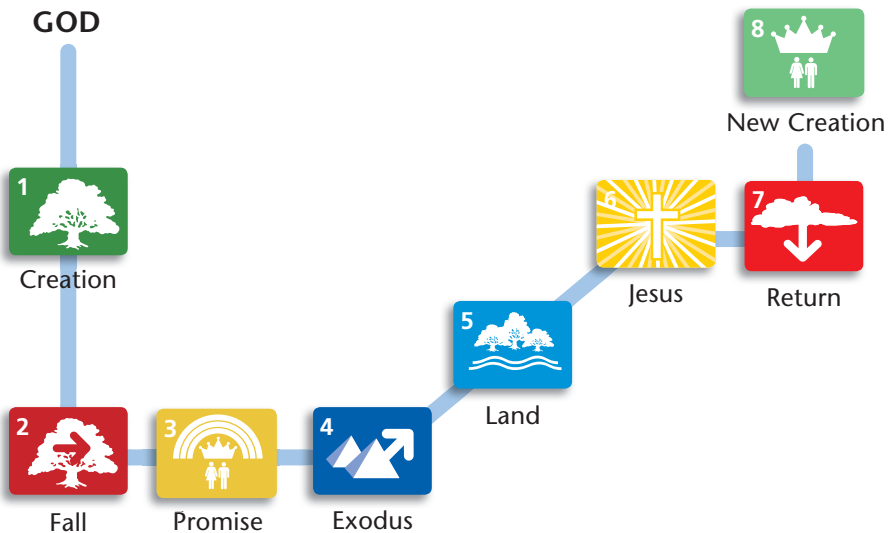
In the **Old Testament**, God gives the people of Israel a promised land. But they always sin and spoil everything. God's promise to Abraham means much more than the Promised Land of Israel. The story of the people of Israel in the Promised Land teaches us more. It makes us look for a Saviour who will bring man back to God.

In the **New Testament**, God sends his Son, Jesus. On the cross, Jesus solves the sin problem that keeps us away from God. Now people from all round the world can be friends with God.

This is how God keeps his promise to Abraham. In the end, God will be special friends with his people for ever. There will be a new heaven and a new earth – a new Promised Land.

The next page tells the same story, but shows more detail.

THE BIG STORY PLAN



This shows the eight main events in the Bible story.

It will be the plan that we follow through the book.

This shows how man goes away from God and how God brings his people back. See that **8. New Creation** is higher than **1. Creation**. This is to show that God brings us even closer to him than Adam and Eve were in the garden. The new creation (a new heaven and a new earth) is much better than the first creation was!



Creation

God creates everything good.

God creates the first people. He is friends with them in a beautiful garden.



Fall

Man sins and now cannot be friends with God.

Adam and Eve go against what God told them. The Bible calls this sin. Sin brings death into the world. Now man cannot be friends with God. God sends him away.



Promise

God's special promise to Abraham.

God promises Abraham that he will make people friends with God again. God promises them a Home Land, where he will be with them and bless them.



Exodus

God rescues his people from Egypt.

The people of Israel are from Abraham's family line. God says that they are his special people. They become slaves in Egypt. God rescues his people from Egypt. They travel to the Promised Land.



Land

God blesses his people in the Promised Land.

God brings his people into the Promised Land. They defeat the enemies. God blesses them. But they worship false gods. God gives them trouble from the nations round them. In the end, enemies take God's people away to foreign lands. They return, but they still sin. They need a Saviour to save them from their sin.



Jesus

God sends Jesus to save people everywhere.

Jesus comes to die on a cross and rise from the dead. This is the only answer for our sin. Now God and man can be friends again.



Return

Jesus will return to end the world and judge everyone.

People who follow Jesus are friends with God. But it is not easy to follow Jesus. The devil is against us. We look forward to the time when Jesus will come back. He will make everything right.



New
Creation

God's people will be perfect friends with God for ever.

God will punish everyone who has not trusted Jesus. God will send them away from him for ever, to hell. God's people will live with him in the new heaven and new earth. They will love and serve Jesus for ever. God's promise will come true completely.

PLAN FOR THIS BOOK

Main event

Talks

Extra



Creation

1 God the Creator

Satan and Spirit World



Fall

2 Man's sin and fall
3 The Flood – judgement and rescue



Promise

4 Promise!

The story so far



Exodus

5 Rescue – Saviour
6 Rescue – Sacrifice
7 Rescue – Enemy judged
8 10 Commandments
9 Tabernacle – God with us
10 Unbelief

Sacrifices in Old Testament
Exodus Map + Timeline
Old T laws + Tabernacle



Land

11 Promised Land
12 False gods
13 God's King!
14 A song of trust
15 Prophets - judgement + hope
16 Return!

Story so far + map

Story fill-in
Kings of Israel and Judah
Songs and wise sayings
Prophets
Story so far



Jesus

17 Jesus – promised Saviour
18 Jesus – came to die
19 Jesus – risen
20 Jesus' church
21 A letter to encourage

Coming of the Holy Spirit
The good news goes out
Story so far + New T letters



Return

22 Jesus' return
23 Judgement Day

Revelation



New Creation

24 Promise kept – New Creation

Final summary

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

1. Talks

The TALKS show how the Bible tells God's story. Each TALK is about an important truth that God wants us to know.

Start at the beginning and teach one TALK each week. Then your listeners will start to understand God's wonderful story.

- This will be very important for **believers**. It will help them to see how the Bible fits together.
- It will also be important for people who are **not yet Christians**. These truths are what they need to know. It is God's story, which saves!

See how there are eight main Bible events, with eight pictures. This gives us the outline or bones of the story. For some of these (like CREATION) there is just one TALK. And for some Bible events (like EXODUS), there are many TALKS. This is because God has many different things for us to learn from these main events.

To help your people, draw a big picture to show the eight main events. Every week, remind them where you have got to on the picture.

2. Extra pages

The EXTRA pages are mostly to help **you**. They help you to get a better understanding of God's big story.

Sometimes you may want to teach your people these things too. Be careful not to give them too many facts to learn. It may confuse them.


Or, you may want to do EXTRA studies with a group of people who learn well. You could meet with them one day each week.




1

GOD THE CREATOR

▣ Background

 **Genesis 1-2.** Many cultures have stories about how the world began. But Genesis 1-2 is different. God gives us the truth. Genesis 1-2 tells us what really happened.

 **John 1:1-3.** This shows us that Jesus ('the Word') was there in the beginning. Jesus is God. The Father created the world through Jesus (Colossians 1:15-17).

▣ Main point

God created the world.
God created us.

★ Things to work on

1. When we say 'God', what do people understand? Do they have their own ideas? In your country, are there many 'gods', or many ideas about God?

You may need to explain that God is different to all these ideas. He was there before the sea, mountains and trees! He was there before people made 'gods' from wood and stone. God was there before the spirits. God is someone who we can know. He made us like him in some ways (Genesis 1:27). This is so that we can know God.

2. Some Christians worry about how the Bible fits with science. The important thing is to believe what the **Bible** says. It tells us of a real Adam and Eve, the first people. They were not made from animals - they were made special, in God's image (like him). Science often changes, but God's word never changes! Often we find that science does agree with what the Bible says.

▣ Notes

Genesis 1:2. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is one God, but three persons. Genesis 1:26 does not say: 'Let me make man in my image.' God says: 'Let us make man in our image'.

Genesis 1:26. 'in our image'. This means 'like God'. This does not mean that we are the same as God. It means that we can think and talk, feel and love, as God does. Animals cannot do this!

Genesis 1:26-28. God told the man (and woman) to **rule over** his world. He made it and we must care for it. This does **not** mean men should fight to have power over each other. It does **not** mean that men should use their power to hurt women.

➔ PREACH: Genesis 1:1

GOD

 **Genesis 1:1**

⊕ Shut your eyes and try to imagine that there is **nothing**. No trees, no earth, no sky, no air, no you. One day it was like that. Except there was not **nothing**. There was God. God always was there. And this God made everything.

- Think how great God is. What does God's work tell us about him? (He is good. He does not need us, but he wanted to create us. His words have more power than the whole world...)

[Talk more about what God is like. He knows everything. He has all power. Life comes from him. God made everything; he made all the spirits. (See next page.)]

⊗ *Worship this Creator! There is no other God.*

GOD CREATED

 **Genesis 1:1**

⊕ Think of something that you made. What did you use to make it with? Did you copy someone's idea? Was it hard work? Did you need help? Did you make mistakes? Could you make a better one now?

- How is this different from how God created everything?

God created everything out of nothing. He spoke and it was there! God made all the animals and plants just right! [Use an example to show God's wonderful design.] God also designed them to make their own baby animals and plants. A tiny seed grows into another tree. This is wonderful.

GOD CREATED US

 **Genesis 1:26-28**

- Who are you? Why are you here?

Genesis 1 answers those important questions. We are here because God created us. We belong to the family of people that God made like him. We are special because we can do things that God does. We can design things. We can rule over God's world. We can think and talk. We can feel and love.

- What did God make us for?

God made us to **know** him! He made us to talk to him, to praise him, to love him. God made us to live for him, and to bring him glory.

 **Revelation 4:11**

⊗ *Do you do this? God made us to honour him. Is this what you want most of all?*

EXTRA: SATAN AND THE SPIRIT WORLD



Where did the spirit world come from?

God created everything – he made it all perfect and good.

 **Genesis 1:31**

This includes the spirit world:

 **Colossians 1:15-16**

God was there before the spirits – He is the one who created them (even Satan and the evil spirits)!


God created the spirits for him – to serve him.

So why do we fear the spirits?
They are only created beings.

We should fear only the Creator
God – and worship only Him.

Where did evil and Satan come from?

The Bible does not tell us clearly how evil came into the perfect world that God made. But some verses help us to understand:

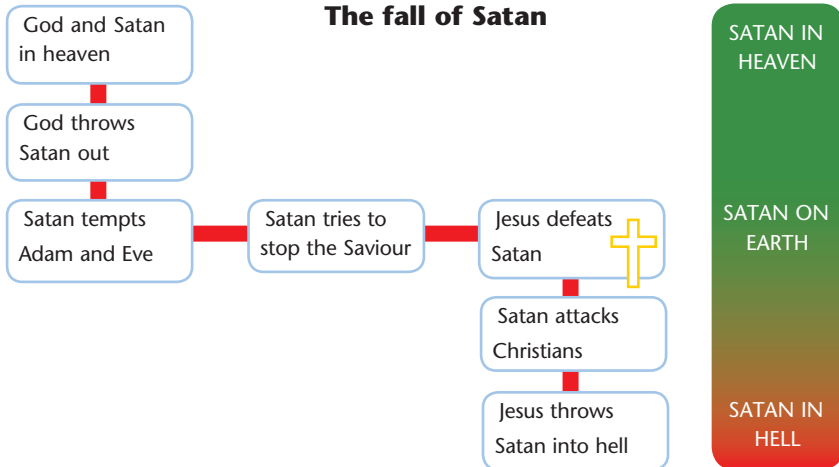
 **Revelation 12:7-9.** This takes us back to the beginning.

There was a war in heaven. Some of the angels led by Satan chose to fight against God. They wanted to have God's place. They wanted to be boss.

That could never be! So God threw Satan and the bad angels out of heaven.

Remember, that many spirits – the angels – did not rebel against God. (They still serve God and his people.)

The fall of Satan



So God created Satan as an angel, but he and many other angels went against God. God threw them down to the world. Now Satan wanted to turn the man and woman away from God. Satan came to Eve in the garden as a snake and tempted her. He said that she and Adam could be like God.

What success does Satan have?

Satan has already lost. No one can fight against God and win!

God promises what will happen in

 **Genesis 3:15**

A man who comes from Eve will crush (destroy) Satan's head. This is the first time that the Bible points forward to Jesus. On the cross, Jesus destroyed the enemy, Satan.

 **Hebrews 2:14-15**

Jesus' death defeated the devil. Jesus sets believers free from the fear that Satan brings us.

Jesus' death on the cross is part of God's wonderful plan to bring man and God back together. Part of that plan is to destroy the devil.

 **1 John 3:8**

Jesus, the Son of God, came to destroy the work of the devil. Praise him!

What does Satan do now?

Before Jesus came, Satan tried to stop the Saviour from coming. But Satan failed. Now he is angry against God's people. He hates and attacks God's

Satan's power is limited

- Satan can only do what God allows. God is always in control. This is clear from the story of Job (Job 2:1-10).
- Satan and the evil spirits can only be in one place at a time. They are not like God! They only know some things.

people. Satan does all he can to turn men and women against God.

You can see this spiritual battle clearly in the New Testament. Satan tries to hurt the church. He tempts Christians away from God.

Jesus gives his people the weapons for the fight. As we trust Jesus, **we can stand** against Satan.

 **Ephesians 6:10-20**

What will happen to Satan?

Satan only has a short time.

When Jesus returns, he will send Satan for ever to the place that he deserves.

 **Revelation 20:10**

We can look forward to that day. Jesus will send Satan to hell for ever.

Then the sin and death that Satan brought into the world will be no more.

 **1 Corinthians 15:54-57**