

Finding God's Way



By
Andrew Drapper

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If you do not have someone to help you through this book or to answer any questions that you may have... Do please contact me Andrew Drapper or my wife Ruth and we will be glad to help you or to find someone near you who may be able to help. You can contact us through our web site www.bible-matters.com.

INTRODUCTION

The Bible is a book that was written by about 40 different authors over a period of around 4000 years. Although it was written by people with backgrounds as diverse as shepherds to kings, and prisoners to doctors, it has **one story running through it consistently without contradiction**. It covers the account of God's dealings with mankind and His plans to give us an abundant life.

If you are not familiar with the Bible it can be rather daunting to start to read. **This course is designed to be an introduction to the most important theme of the Bible: Just how can we find God's way to live?**

The Bible is a collection of 66 books in two big sections. The first 39 books are in a section we call the Old Testament. The other 27 books are in the New Testament. The New Testament tells us about the life of Jesus. The Old Testament tells us about the beginnings of the world and lays the foundation for Jesus' Coming. You may have heard stories like 'Noah and the Ark' or 'Daniel in the lions den' these are true accounts from the Old Testament.

Each of the **66 books** is divided up to help us find our way to the bit we want to read. Most of them are divided into **chapters** and **verses**. So to find a particular passage you first look up the book title, then the chapter, and then the verse.

Take a look at the sample on the right. This is part of the book of Mark. Try to find Mark, chapter 1 and verse 4. You should find it says "John did baptise in the wilderness..."

Many people and books would write this as Mark 1v4 or Mark 1:4.

I trust you will have a great time working your way through this course and that it will bless you.

Chapter Verse → **MARK** ← Book

CHAPTER 1

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY ONE

There are many scientists who claim to know how the world began. Some of them even claim to know what happened in the first few fractions of a second of the universe. But do they? Or have they just been making stuff up?

Science, true science, deals with what we **KNOW**, that which we can **repeatedly test** and **measure**. The problem that scientists have is that they were not around at the beginning of the universe and therefore they cannot know what happened. They can only guess and speculate, based on what they think may have happened. (We will not go into all the problems that there are with the theory of uniformity, etc, but there are real problems with the guesses that they base much of their work on.)

If a policeman, who was not at the scene of a crime, wants to know how the crime was committed, he will try to find a **reliable eye witness**. Someone who was there when it happened. An eye witness **KNOWS** what happened. The policeman will also want to know if there is any scientific evidence to support this account.

In the Bible, God, (who never lies), claims to have been there when the world began. **We have a reliable eye witness.**

In this study we are going to have a look at how God says it all began. By the way, if you want to know if there is any scientific evidence to support God's account I suggest that you take a look at the Answers in Genesis at www.answersingenesis.org.

HOW THE WORLD BEGAN

The creation account is recorded in the first book in the Bible called Genesis.

Genesis chapter one

Day one

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. ²And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. ³And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. ⁴And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” (Genesis 1:1-5)

Day two

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. ⁷And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so. ⁸And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.” (Genesis 1:6-8)

Day three

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so. ¹⁰And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was* good. ¹¹And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. ¹²And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. ¹³And the evening and the morning were the third day.” (Genesis 1:9-13)

Day Four

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: ¹⁵And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. ¹⁶And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also. ¹⁷And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good. ¹⁹And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.” (Genesis 1:14-19)

Day Five

“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. ²¹And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. ²²And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. ²³And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.” (Genesis 1:20–23)

Day Six

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. ²⁵And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

²⁶And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. ²⁸And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

²⁹And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so. ³¹And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” (Genesis 1:24–31)

(On the seventh day God rested.)

WHO MADE THE WORLD?

In its first verse, the Bible makes the clearest statement about who made the universe or "heaven and the earth." In Genesis 1v1 it says "...God created the heaven and the earth." At this point the Bible does not try to argue about who God is or where He came from, it just assumes that God exists. We will do the same. God has always existed, He was around before any of this universe came into being, and will be around after it has all come to an end.

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Psalm 90:2)

HOW DID HE MAKE IT?

Many times the Bible talks about God creating by speaking. For example Psalm 33v6 "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth". Seven times in Genesis chapter one we read of God speaking to create, (see v3, v6, v9, v11, v14, v22 & v24). God simply expressed His will and it came into being. In fact the Bible says that He is still sustaining or upholding the creation, even today, by His word. We find this in Hebrews 1 v3 where, speaking of Jesus it says

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" (Hebrews 1:3)

WHY DID HE MAKE IT?

'Why' is a question that often comes up in our lives. "Why do people suffer?", "Why did my xxx have to die?", "Why was I born?" etc. So, if God made the world and made it by His word or by expressing His will, WHY did He make it?

Here are some of the reasons that He made the world.

- He made it because He wanted to. Not because He needed to, for He had no need of creation.

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; v25: Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;" (Acts 17:24-25)

- He made it because it gave Him pleasure.

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Revelation 4:11)

- He made it because He has a plan, and every part of the creation has its place in that plan, even the wicked.

"The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Proverbs 16:4)

- He made it because His plan was to have a people who would be His, loving and serving Him.

(It might help you as you read this passage to know that 'Holy' does not mean to be old, boring or like an angel, but to be special for God's use.)

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: v5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," (Ephesians 1:4-5)

There is no accident or mistake in creation. As we have just seen, before the foundation of the world, that is before any of this universe was made, God knew what He was doing. He made all creation from the mighty stars to the tiny atom, even you and me, for a purpose. All of it according to His own will.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, v10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" (Isaiah 46:9-10)

SO WHAT ?

You may be saying "All this, 'God made it' talk is very interesting, but what has it got to do with me?" Let us have a look and see what it should mean to us that God made all things.

If God made everything, it all belongs to Him.

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. v2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." (Psalm 24:1-2)

Therefore you belong to God.

If everything belongs to God, He can set the rules.

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29)

In fact, that is in part what the Bible is: it is God's manual for life. Much more than just a rule book, it is a book on how to get the very best out of life.

If God made it all for a purpose, then life is not meaningless. It is all part of His plan: you are part of His plan. Even the bits that look like disasters work out to the good of His people.

"...all things work together for good to them that love God, ..." (Romans 8:28)

The best bit of this is that there is purpose in your life!

When God created you and me, in fact all mankind, He made us in His image. You will find this in Genesis 1v26 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." Since God made us in His image we reflect His character. You are, therefore, very special.

Being made in God's image, you have some idea that there is a right and wrong. God is totally just and therefore He will one day judge us all according to His record of all that we have ever done, thought or said.

Here are three passages from the Bible that do not sound like very good news, but good news is coming soon.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. V12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Revelation 20:11-12)

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." (1. Corinthians 4:5)

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. v37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matthew 12:36)

HOME TASK

Memorise

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker." (Psalm 95:6)

Have a go at answering these questions.

I have included the full text of the Bible references in this study. If you do not have a Bible do please let me know and we will endeavour to send you one ready for the homework on Study Two.

If you have any problems, do not worry, ask the person who is leading you through this study or e-mail Andrew or Ruth at www.bible-matters.com

You can also download 'Bible Explorer' a bible for the computer FREE <http://www.bible-explorer.com>

There are now many, many Bible translations into English. We very strongly recommend using the KJV (King James Version) also known as the AV or (Authorised Version).

1. What should we give to God because He is the creator of all things? Have a look at Revelation 4 v11 to find the answer.

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Revelation 4:11)

2. If everything belongs to God, what effect should this have on your life?

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29)

3. If God sets the rules, should we know them? YES / NO You can read God's Ten Commandments in Exodus chapter 20.

"And God spake all these words, saying, v2 I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

v3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

v4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. v5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a

jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;v6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

v7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

v8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. v9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: v10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: v11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

v12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

v13 Thou shalt not kill.

v14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

v15 Thou shalt not steal.

v16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

v17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's. (Exodus 20:1-17)

4. If there is purpose in your life, what is it?

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

5. If God is going to judge you by your thoughts, words and deeds, how will you be found?

PERFECT / IMPERFECT

This is a study about finding Good News, but first we must lay the foundation. Wait until Study Three - that is where the good news really starts.

HOW IT ALL WENT WRONG

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY TWO

Have you ever noticed how things often just go wrong? You wind your garden hose up and put it away neat and tidy, but when it comes out again it is all tangled. You tidy your children's bedrooms and the next moment they are all a mess again.

You do not have to work at making things go wrong, it happens all by itself. Or does it? **Somebody must have to do something.** Your hose has been moved several times, the children played in the bedroom. It did not happen by itself.

In the same way, things did not go wrong in our world just by chance, **the world was messed up on purpose.**

In our last study we saw that God created everything and that He made it by His word. We saw that He made the world because He had a plan to have a people to love and serve Him, and that it brought Him pleasure. We also said that because it all belonged to Him, He could set the rules we are to live by, and He will judge the way that we live, by those rules. But, best of all we found that there is purpose in our lives. Everything was so good that at the end of the creation account it says

"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good..."

Genesis 1 v31

So how did it all go wrong? That is the question we are going to answer in this study.

HOW IT ALL WENT WRONG

Let us start by reading Genesis chapter 3 versus 1-19.

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? ²And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ³But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. ⁴And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁵For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. ⁶And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

⁷And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. ⁸And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. ⁹And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou? ¹⁰And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself. ¹¹And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? ¹²And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. ¹³And the Lord God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

¹⁴And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: ¹⁵And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

¹⁶Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

¹⁷And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; ¹⁸Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ¹⁹In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

(Genesis 3:1-19)

THE TEST

God had already planted a garden for Adam and Eve.

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. v9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. v10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." (Genesis 2:8-10)

God gave man a plentiful supply of food and pleasant work to do. He was to dress, or tend, the garden and he could freely eat of every tree of the garden.

"And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. v16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:" (Genesis 2:15-16)

But there was one exception to this; he must not eat of the tree that was in the middle of the garden.

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17)

They must not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and if they did, they would die.

God gave Adam and Eve a simple rule. They must not eat of one tree. JUST ONE. They could freely eat of all the other trees. Why should they not eat from that tree? Not because God was mean, but for their own good, so they would not die. This rule was a test, a test of their love and obedience.

THE TEMPTATION

We saw in the introduction that things do not just get messed up all by themselves: someone messes them up. It was exactly the same with the world. Adam, Eve, and Satan all played their part in messing up the world. Eve was looking at the forbidden fruit, "the woman saw that the tree was..."(Gen. 3:6a), Adam let himself be led astray, "...and he did eat" (Gen. 3v6b), and Satan, he tempted them into disobeying God.

Let us have a quick look at how Satan tempted them.

First, Satan questioned whether God had ever spoken,

"Hath God Said?" (Gen. 3:1)

When that did not work he said that God was not telling the truth,

"Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4)

He then implied that God was mean and did not want the best for them. He hinted that God knew that the fruit would be good for them to eat, and that God was keeping it from them.

"God knows that ... ye shall be as gods" (Gen. 3:5)

Satan will tempt you in just the same way.

He does not change his tactics much: he is still using the same arguments today. He is still questioning whether God has spoken and whether what God has said is true. But above all, Satan is saying that God is mean and that going against God's rules will be fun or good and that you ought to do it.

THE TRESPASS

There is nothing wrong with being tempted to break God's rules. God will not judge you because someone tempted you. It is breaking God's instructions or rules that is wrong. As we saw in Study One, this breaking of God's rules can be in word, thought, or action.

Adam and Eve were tempted to do wrong, but the temptation did not ruin the world. The problem came when they DID wrong.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (Gen. 3 v6)

This is what the Bible calls SIN or sinning.

Sin literally means 'to miss the mark', like an archer missing the target. In the Bible, sin is always missing God's way of living. Sinning, is transgressing or going outside of the law of God.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4)

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

Sin always has an affect. God said that if they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would die, (Gen. 2:17). This was more than just the dying of Adam and Eve's bodies, though this began that very day. It was the death of the perfect way of life, which God had made for them. It also includes the death of innocence as from the time of Adam on, no one has been innocent. You do not need to teach a child to be greedy or to have a temper, etc, it now comes from their nature.

The Bible records the effect that Sin had on Adam and Eve. You will see the same effects in your life even today.

They felt guilty, naked and had to hide from God and each other.

"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. v8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden."
(Gen. 3:7-8)

Eve would have pain in child birth, and would be in submission to her husband.

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Gen. 3:16)

Adam's lot is trouble and hard work. Even the nature of the earth changed, never before had there been thorns or thistles.

"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; v18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; v19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."
(Gen. 3:17)

The greatest effect was that death had entered into the world.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12)

This death was in the relationship between God and man.

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." (Gen. 3:8)

And the death of the physical body as well.

"...till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3:19)

All the troubles of our world can be traced back to this one terrible day in history. Today we still suffer from the time when sin came into the world, through Adam and Eve. Not only do we live in a damaged world, but you are controlled by sin. Let us look and see what sin does to you.

The Bible teaches that all people are sinners.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

This includes you.

The Bible also teaches that we are controlled by either sin or obedience.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"
(Romans 6:16)

We all start controlled by sin.

Adam and Eve were told that they would die if they disobeyed. Still today the wages of sin is death.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

(You might like to know that the name 'Christ' is the same as 'Messiah' and means "the anointed one" and was the one the Jews had been waiting for to be their saviour)

In fact the Bible says that you already are dead in your sin.

"And you, being dead in your sins..." (Colossians 2:13)

Because we are all sinners, we are all guilty and on our way to judgement.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement"
(Hebrews 9:27)

That includes you and me.

In the next study we shall be looking at God's solution to this problem, so keep going.

HOME TASK

Memorise

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Have a go at answering these questions. If you have any problems talk to your teacher or if you are doing this course on your own e-mail me at www.bible-matters.com.

1. Satan questioned whether God had spoken, (Gen. 3 v1). Today lots of people will say that the Bible is not God's word. Whose propaganda do you think they are repeating?
2. If the Bible says that all have sinned, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." what does this say about you, and me?
3. What is the result of sin in your life and what is God's answer through Jesus Christ? Your memory verse should help you with this question.

I do hope that this has been helpful and look forward to sharing the next study with you.

JESUS, GOD'S ANSWER

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY THREE

In our first study we saw that God made all things, and that He made them good. In fact they were perfect, nothing was wrong with them.

Then in our last study we saw how everything went wrong, or how it was made to go wrong. We saw that it was "sin" (breaking God's rules) that made things go wrong. This sin means that we are in trouble. Not only trouble now, with crime, sickness etc, but we are in trouble with God as well.

However, God loves us. He made us and does not want us to suffer, and He does not want to have to judge us for the wrong that we have done. So, He has a plan.

In this study we are going to begin to look at God's plan to save us from sin.

JESUS, GOD'S ANSWER

(As you read this it will help if you know that the term 'The Word' is like a nickname for Jesus.)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
²The same was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life; and the life was the light of men. ⁵And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. ⁷The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. ⁸He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. ⁹*That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. ¹¹He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹²But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: ¹³Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-14)

The earth and mankind were all part of God's plan. He created the earth for a purpose, and He was not going to be defeated by Satan or wayward mankind. He had already planned that He would send Jesus into the world to deal with the problem of sin.

WHO IS JESUS?

Probably the most important answer to the question 'who is Jesus?' is that Jesus is God. In the passage that we have just read John says of Jesus

"In the beginning was the Word, (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1)

Paul calls Jesus 'the great God'.

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" (Titus 2:13)

Jesus is often called 'The Son of God'; this does not mean that He is God's baby, at least not in the way that we know it. Jesus was a baby born to Mary, not as a child of Joseph her espoused, but as the child of God. But this was not the beginning of Jesus; it was Him

moving from having been only spirit to being a true man. The term 'Son of God' relates more to His relationship with God the Father than as God's child.

If you want to know more about how God can be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit then you can ask the person leading you through this book or you can e-mail me at andrew@drapper.com.

AS GOD, JESUS IS:

- **Creator of all things.**

"All things were made by him (Jesus); and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3)

- **Sustainer of all things.**

"Who, (Jesus) being the brightness of his, (God the Father) glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" (Hebrews 1:3)

- **Has all power.**

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18)

- **As well as being God, Jesus is also true man.**

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" (1 Timothy 2:5)

- **He had a normal birth of a woman.**

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7)

- **Jesus has not always been a man; He became a man to save us. The Bible calls this becoming man being 'made flesh'**

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

"Beheld his glory" means 'we have seen him.' John and many of the other writers of the Bible actually knew Jesus.

AS A MAN, JESUS:

- **Grew**

"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." (Luke 2:40)

- **Was hungry**

"Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered." (Luke 4:2)

- **Wept**

"Jesus wept" (John 11:35)

(that is the whole verse. It is the shortest verse in the Bible!)

In other words Jesus was a genuine 'man'.

SO WHAT DID JESUS DO?

Jesus was involved in the creation of the world and much more throughout history, but let's just look at his life on earth, as a man. He was born and grew up, each year going to the temple in Jerusalem. When He was twelve, He was lost by His parents for a short time. Apart from this we know very little until He was thirty. It is likely that Joseph died before Jesus reached thirty as we never hear anything about him. We can also guess that Jesus worked with Joseph learning his trade, but we really do not know.

When He was thirty Jesus called twelve men to follow Him and taught them many things, preparing them to be His representatives after His death. He also taught great crowds of people, healed many of them and freed many others from evil spirits.

Above all, at the age of thirty-three He was killed by crucifixion, (that is they killed Him by nailing Him to a cross or tree), and three days later He rose from the dead.

WHY DID HE COME?

And how did He solve the world's problem with sin?

The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Therefore, we should die. This is not just the coming to an end of your life on earth as you know it today. Not just the death of your body. There is a second death that we are all destined for. A death of eternal punishment.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. v15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:14-15)

If we were not to suffer this death bodily and eternally, someone else would have to pay the price for us.

"... one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. v51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; v52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." (John 11:50-52)

For that person to be able to take our place, he would have to be free from sin. Someone who had no sin would be the only one who could pay the price for our sin or he would be dying for his own sin. Only a divine or God offering would be able to pay the price for ALL people.

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps v22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Peter 2:21-22)

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15)

This is where Jesus came in. As we have just seen He had no sin and died taking our sins on Himself.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:" (1 Peter 3:18)

He took our sins that we might have His sinlessness or righteousness.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Jesus has died once for our sin, taking away the punishment that should be ours.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24)

But we have to receive the gift of life that is now offered to us.

We will look more at what we have to do in our next study. However, if you want to get right with God now you may e-mail me at andrew@drapper.com with your phone number and I can speak to you more, or you can ask your teacher how, or have a look at the next study right now.

HOME TASK

Memorise

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

Have a go at answering these questions.

If you have any problems, do not worry, ask the person who is leading you through this study or e-mail Andrew or Ruth at www.bible-matters.com

1. What is the most important answer to the question - Who is Jesus?
2. List three things that show Jesus is a man.
3. List three things that show Jesus is God.
4. In your own words write how Jesus dealt with man's sin.

SALVATION, YOUR RESPONSE

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY FOUR

Some time ago I looked at doing some cleaning work, professionally cleaning ovens, toilets, kitchens, bathrooms etc. To do this I used professional quality products. Manufactures make these products, janitorial supply warehouses sell them, I bought them, but until I put them to use they did no cleaning for me.

It is much like this with our sin. God has a plan for our salvation, Jesus died to make this forgiveness, this freedom from sin available to us, but until we take hold of it for ourselves and have the sin cleaned out of our souls, we are not one bit cleaner.

SALVATION, YOUR RESPONSE

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. v37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? v38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. v39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. v40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. v41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:36-41)

We have seen that God made the world good, in fact "very good", but that between Adam, Eve, and Satan, it was messed up and that to this very day the world is corrupted. We have looked at the effect that sin, (the transgressing or breaking of God's rules), has on us, in separating us from God, and condemning us to eternal punishment. We have also seen that Jesus came to free us from sin. Having said this, why is not everybody now free from sin?

The answer is that, although Jesus has paid sufficient for all sin to be forgiven.....

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:15)

...not all have appropriated, or asked for it. You must respond to the free gift of God. He will not force it on you.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23)

So how do we get hold of this free salvation?

A decision must be made.

God has already been working for your salvation. He planned the way of salvation; He came to earth as Jesus and died paying the price for your sin.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3)

And now He has been working in your heart, prompting you to seek Him. The fact that you are doing this course shows that He has put the interest in your heart to seek the things of

God.

You have begun to respond by giving time to look into the message of salvation that God has given to us in the Bible. But there is a big decision that you have to make.

We will look at it in three steps.

1st — Believe.

You first need to come to the point where you say "Yes, I believe that Jesus is God, and that He died for my sins, and I need Him to forgive me".

(As you read these next two verses it might be helpful for you to know that Baptism is a simple public sign or act that says you are a follower of Jesus)

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? v37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36-37)

This 'believing' is not just believing IN God, believing that HE exists. Even Satan and the devils believe that.

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19)

It is believing ON Him, a putting of your trust in Him to be your saviour.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12)

2nd — Repent.

The people that we read about in Acts chapter two at the beginning of this study believed in Jesus and believed in their need to be forgiven, that is why they called out "what shall we do?" Peter took them on from just belief to repentance.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" Acts 2 v38

Repentance literally means to change direction. In the Bible it is used to mean to stop living for yourself by your own ideas and to start living for God and by His rules. This is a turning from what is wrong in your life. The verse that best describes repentance is:

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" 2 Chronicles 7 v14

You may find that there are some things that you will need to put right. You may have to confess wrong words or actions that you have had. You may even have to put right past sins: stealing, cheating etc.

Take a look at the following verses.

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. v9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham"

Luke 19 v8-9

(Zacchaeus was not saved by what he did, what he did was a sign that a change had happened in his life.)

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" Ephesians 4 v28

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3rd — Be Baptised.

They already believed, then Peter told them to repent, then he told them to be baptised. Baptism as we have already said is a public and personal action showing that you have put your trust in Jesus Christ as your Saviour.

Why do we need to be Baptised? First it is as an act of obedience. The Bible says you should be baptised, therefore we should obey. Second, it will help you and others to remember that there is to be no turning back now. Third, it is a public confession of your faith in Jesus Christ.

"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: v9 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" Luke 12 v8-9

Now YOU must decide

There is nothing that I or anyone else can do to help you into the Kingdom of God. You know that God made the world good, but that our sin messed it up; that this sin has the punishment of eternal death, but that Jesus came and died to take away our sin. Now YOU need to decide! Will you turn away from Jesus, put it off or will you call on him today?

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation". 2 Corinthians 6 v2

Call on Him to give you life and life more abundantly.

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"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. v10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. v11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" John 10 v9-11

Home Task

Memorise

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21

Will you ask Jesus Christ to become your saviour? If Yes:

Just tell Him!

Tell Him that you believe that:

He made the world and made it good

You are a sinner and need to be saved from sin and its consequences.

He died to pay for your sin and to be able to forgive you And ask to be forgiven

Now tell someone, the person who is leading you through this book, your pastor, your parents, even me, Andrew. Send me an email from www.bible-matters.com and use the contact page.

Then ask to be baptised.

Ask for someone to lead you through a discipleship course.

If No:

Do you need more help?

Ask the person who is leading you through this book, if they can not answer your questions they may know someone who can or email me at andrew@drapper.com

Just not interested? That's your choice! You're on your own. I would not want to stand in your shoes when God judges all people, and you can not say I did not know, not now.