

HONOUR OF KINGS & LANTERN ENGLISH

ANCIENT HISTORY I - LESSON ONE

*It is the glory of God to conceal a thing;
but the **honour of kings** is to search out a matter. Proverbs 25:2*

*Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:
Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.*

*We will not hide them from their children,
shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,
and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.*

*For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers,
that they should make them known to their children:*

*That the generation to come might know them,
even the children which should be born;
who should arise and declare them to their children:
That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments:*

*And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation;
a generation that set not their heart aright,
and whose spirit was not steadfast with God. Psalm 78: 1 - 8*

Acknowledgements:

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ANCIENT HISTORY I c. 3932 BC to c. 1000 BC

IMPORTANT NOTE:

All dates in this curriculum are approximate. No human-made timeline can be 100% accurate. The Bible timeline, based on the King James Version, provides a framework for events and is the foundation for world history, as God created the world and recorded its events. Secular events must fit within this Biblical framework.

Most secular historians rely on ancient Egypt for dating world events, but the Egyptian timeline is uncertain, with multiple versions (ultra-short, short, middle, long). Therefore, pre-Christian secular dates are best treated as approximate.

The secular dates in this text were determined using synchronisms—contemporary events and people—fitted into the Biblical timeline. The timeline mostly follows the ultra-short chronology but not exactly. Supplementary secular resources may not align, so focus on the sequence of events rather than exact dates.

Preface

What Is History?

Imagine that you are a young investigator searching for the truth about the past. That is actually very close to the real meaning of the word history. The English word *history* comes from a Greek word, *ιστορία*, which means *inquiry*—the act of searching for information and examining it carefully. That Greek word itself comes from another word meaning judge. In other words, history originally meant looking for information and deciding whether it is true.

When we study the past, we must do the same thing. Every book, document, and story we read must be examined carefully. We must ask questions and think about whether the information is trustworthy.

For this reason, the readers of this book should understand something important about the author's view of history. The author believes that the Bible is the only completely accurate source of history, because God Himself is the author of it. Other historical sources may contain true information, but they were written by human beings. Because of that, they can sometimes be mistaken. All scripture references in this text are from the KJV 1611. With that in mind, let us begin our study of history at the very beginning.

Lesson One: The Creation of the World

c. 3932 BC



The story of history must begin at the very beginning. The first sentence of the Bible tells us how the world began: “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.”

These words appear in the opening line of the book of Genesis, and they declare plainly that the universe did not come into existence by accident. It was created by God.

Today, not everyone believes this. Many people have proposed other explanations for how the world began.

Yet disagreement does not change what the Bible records. For thousands of years, these words have stood at the beginning of Scripture, telling us how all things first came to be.

Most of you already know something of this story. Perhaps your parents told it to you when you were young. Maybe you heard it in Sunday school, or perhaps you have read it for yourself in the Bible. But since we are beginning a study of history, we must start where all history truly begins—with the creation of the world.

The best way to learn this account is to read it directly from the Bible. If you have a Bible nearby, open it to Genesis chapters 1 through 3. Read those chapters carefully and notice the many details they contain. When you have finished, return to this book and continue our study.

The Seven Days of Creation

The Bible tells us that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh.

On the first day, God created the heavens and the earth. He also brought light into existence and separated the light from the darkness.

On the second day, God made the firmament, which He called Heaven.

On the third day, God gathered the waters together so that dry land appeared. He called the dry land Earth and the gathered waters Seas. On that same day, He caused grass, herbs, and fruit trees to grow upon the earth.

On the fourth day, God placed the sun, moon, and stars in the sky to give light to the earth and to mark the passage of days and seasons.

On the fifth day, He created the creatures that live in the seas and the birds that fly through the air.

On the sixth day, God created the animals that live upon the land. Finally, He created the first two human beings: Adam and Eve.

On the seventh day, God rested from His work and set that day apart as a special day of rest.

The Garden of Eden

After creating the first man and woman, God placed them in a beautiful garden called Eden. There, Adam and Eve were to live, care for the garden, and enjoy the good world God had made.

In the center of the garden stood two special trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God told Adam and Eve that they were free to eat from every tree in the garden except one: the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

For a time, everything was peaceful. But one day, the devil appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent. The serpent tempted her to eat the fruit that God had forbidden. Eve took the fruit and ate it, and afterward she gave some to Adam, and he ate it as well.

Because they had disobeyed Him, God removed Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. In this way, He prevented them from eating from the Tree of Life and living forever in a sinful state.

Thus, the first chapter of human history began with both creation and the fall of mankind.

Stories from Around the World

You may know the story of creation quite well. Yet, there is something interesting that historians have long observed.

Many cultures around the world also tell stories about how the world began. These stories are often called creation myths. A myth is a traditional story that people once believed explained how the world began, even though it is not historically true.

These stories developed in many cultures that worshiped false gods. Over time, parts of the true story of creation were changed, forgotten, or mixed with new ideas. Yet, something curious happens when we read these myths. Many of them contain details that sound surprisingly similar to the account found in the Bible. Let us examine a few examples from different parts of the world.



Creation Stories from Other Cultures

The Babylonian Story



The people of ancient Babylon believed that the world was created by a god named Marduk. Their creation story was written on seven clay tablets.

Marduk was sometimes called the “Son of the Sun.” He was described as radiant and glorious and was said to possess many different names. His father, Ea, was known as a wise god.

According to the sixth of these tablets, Marduk created human beings and animals. He also built homes for the other gods.

The Bantu Story from Africa

Among a Bantu tribe in Africa called the Fans, there is another story about creation.

In the beginning, they say, there was a god called Nzame. Yet Nzame was believed to exist in three parts: Nzame, Mebere, and Nkwa.

Together, these three created the world and filled it with life. As they admired their work, they decided to make a ruler for the earth.

At first, they created animals such as the elephant, leopard, and monkey, but they believed something greater was needed. So they created a being in their own image named Fam, whose name meant power. Fam was told to rule the earth.

But Fam soon became proud. He mistreated the animals and stopped worshiping Nzame. Angered by this, Nzame destroyed the world with thunder and lightning, leaving only Fam alive because he had been promised immortality.

Afterward, the earth was renewed. A new layer of soil covered the old one. From this, soil grew trees whose leaves became fish and animals.

Finally, Nzame created a new man named Sekume, who would one day die. Sekume made a woman named Mbongwe from a tree. These people were believed to have both a body and a soul. When the body died, the soul continued to live.



The Mi'kmaq Story



The Mi'kmaq people of North America told a story about a creator called Gisoolg, whom they called the Great Spirit.

Gisoolg created the earth and placed it in the path of the sun. The sun, called Nisgam, was said to give light and warmth to the world.

After the plants and animals were created, Gisoolg sent a bolt of lightning to the earth. The lightning shaped a man out of sand named Glooscap.

Another bolt of lightning gave Glooscap life.

At first, he could not move and could only watch the world around him. Eventually, he stood up, turned in a circle seven times, and thanked the creator for giving him life.

The Mayan Story

The Maya of Central America believed that two beings named Tepeu and Gucumatz created the world.

Whatever these beings imagined came into existence. As they thought of mountains, trees, animals, and the sky, each one appeared. But the animals could not speak or praise their creators. So the gods tried to make human beings.

First, they made people from clay, but these figures fell apart when they became wet. Next



they made people from wood, but these wooden people caused trouble and forgot their creators. Because of this, the gods sent a great flood to destroy them.

Finally, with the help of several animals, the creators made four new people, who became the ancestors of the Quiché people.

The Chinese Story



In ancient China, people told stories about rulers called the Three Sovereigns.

These rulers were said to be wise and virtuous kings who greatly improved the lives of their people. Because of their wisdom and goodness, they were believed to live very long lives and rule during an age of peace.

They were sometimes called the Heavenly Sovereign, the Earthly Sovereign, and the Human Sovereign.

After them came five powerful emperors. During the reign of one of these rulers, heaven and earth were said to have been separated. During another reign, humans were formed from yellow clay.

The Scandinavian Story

In the cold lands of northern Europe, the people of Scandinavia told stories about the god Odin, whom they called the All-Father.

Yet even Odin was not believed to be the first being to exist. According to their stories, the beginning of the world was a vast empty space called Ginnungagap.



To the south lay a fiery region called Muspell, while to the north stretched a frozen land known as Niflheim.

When the heat of Muspell met the ice of Niflheim, the melting frost formed a giant named Ymir. Later Odin and his brothers killed Ymir, and from his body, they fashioned the world.

From two logs found upon the shore, they created the first man and woman, Ask and Embla, giving them life and breath.

Why Are These Stories Similar?

Did you notice that many of these myths contain ideas that sound similar to the Bible?

- a creator with three parts
- humans formed from dust or clay
- creators who wanted people to praise them
- rulers who lived very long lives
- creators who breathed life into humans

Why do such similarities appear in stories from places so far apart?

According to the Bible, all people descended from the same first parents: Adam and Eve. As their descendants spread across the earth, they carried with them the memory of the creation story.

But over many generations the story gradually changed. Some details were forgotten, others were altered, and new ideas were added. In time, these altered accounts became the creation myths told by many cultures.

How Stories Change



You may have played a game called Telephone.

In this game, one person whispers a message to the next, who whispers it to another. By the time the message reaches the final person, it often sounds quite different from the original.

Something similar can happen when stories are passed down through many generations. Small changes may be made each time the story is told, until eventually it becomes very different from the original account.

A Clever Trick

There may also be another reason why these stories resemble the truth. Imagine that someone wished to convince you that a piece of wood was really an apple. They might carve the wood into the shape of an apple and paint it red. They might even add a stem and place it in a bowl with real apples. From the outside it would look real—but inside it would still be wood.



Apples and Pears - fake or not? by Wendy Merz

The Bible teaches that the devil sometimes works in a similar way. When he wishes a lie to appear believable, he makes it resemble the truth. Some details remain the same, but other parts are quietly changed.

In fact, he used this very method in the Garden of Eden when he spoke to Eve. By twisting God's words, he made a false idea sound almost true.

And that is why, when we study history, we must always examine our sources carefully and compare them with the truth found in God's Word.

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ANCIENT HISTORY I - LESSON ONE

STUDENT NAME:

DATE:

ASSIGNMENT 1:

Step 1: Read each comprehension question carefully.

Step 2: Answer every question using at least one complete sentence.

Step 3: Make sure your answer fully addresses the question being asked.

Step 4: Use correct capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and spelling in all of your responses.

Step 5: Review your work and make any necessary corrections before submitting it.

Comprehension Questions:

- 1) How did the world begin?
- 2) Who created the world?
- 3) What was the name of the first man and woman?
- 4) Where did they live?
- 5) What were they commanded not to do?
- 6) Who tricked Eve into disobeying God?
- 7) Why were Adam and Eve removed from the Garden of Eden?
- 8) Who were the ancestors of everyone who has ever lived?
- 9) Name three civilizations with creation myths found in this lesson.
- 10) Why are so many creation myths similar to the record found in the Bible?