

## How the Story Begins (and Ends)

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Gen 1:26-31 and Rev 21:1-5a

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Synopsis:

The Bible isn't a book of wise words and moral maxims, although there is much wisdom and morality in it. It is a story, a take on universal history.

The Bible is a story with a beginning and an end, where God creates a good world in which we have a responsibility, and then rescues and redeems it through Jesus Christ after we have corrupted it.

It is my desire that you find your story within God's story.

### I.

#### **Tell Me a Story**

Gen 1:1 In the beginning . . .

We all love stories:

“Once upon a time, a long time ago there lived young woman named Cinderella.”

“It was the best of times and it was the worst of times”

“Call me Ishmael”

\*What's your favorite story?

-Goldilocks and the Three Bears

-The Three Little Pigs

-Red Riding Hood

???

We love stories because we *live* stories

E.g. Barb made me watch *Marley and Me*

Skyler went to the vet this week, 11 teeth pulled

\*I know the end of the story!

Stories have a beginning and an end, just like our lives

E.g. Birth and Death

visited birth story: Adelle Frances Burt (Gabe/Callie)

visited another nearer death in hospital

\*Let me suggest to you that we read the Bible as a story, the larger story in which we find our story

### II.

#### **Elements of a Story**

Gen 1:26 Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image.”

Good stories have certain elements:

Characters:

Cinderella, step-mom, step sisters, fairy godmother

God, creation, humans, animals

Setting: created world (contingent and rational)

Plot: humans are to have dominion (steward)

Good stories have elements of world view:

1. Where are we?
2. Who are we?
3. What's wrong?
4. What's the solution

\*Each of us answers these questions!

III.

**God's Story**

Gen 1:31 God saw everything he had made, and indeed it was very good

READ Gen 1:26-31 NOTICE: How it begins

God = not us, not creation

Beginning = not ongoing

Create = through a word spoken

Image = steward who bears image

Job = subdue, dominion

Bless = intention to do good

Good = versus mixed, bad, or no good/evil

ANE Stories: Background for Gen 1-11

Enuma Elish:

Marduk and Tiamat fight = violence

Humans an afterthought = slaves

Memphis creation:

Atum begins with sex act = sex

Gods and humans same = no holiness

Greek creation:

No real creation

Gods are like us (Zeus plots)

READ Rev 21:1-5a NOTICE: How it ends

New heaven/earth 1-2		= broken creation healed
God dwells here	3	= Not us but with us
Good restored	4	= hearkens back to Gen
Creator acts again	5	= hearkens back to Gen

\*Begin with a good creation; we break it; God restores it

IV.

**Our Story**

Rev 21:3 See, the home of God is with mortals

What's your story?

-Every human must answer this question

I invite you to live in the Bible's story

- Read your story in light of Bible story
- Invite Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior
- Begin to hear the Holy Spirit speaking into your life
- See all things from the perspective of God's story