

WHEN did the Bible's story happen?

The Bible begins with a detailed narrative of the creation event when time began. Genesis, the first of the Bible's 66 books, tells us about the creation of everything you and I know—everything, that is, except God Himself.

Our Creator was not created. God has always been. He is timeless—eternal. He is also changeless and unbounded by physical space. The universe he created was so perfect that it is hard for us to imagine how wonderful it was.

God inspired a man named Moses to write about the creation event. The narrative Moses wrote is all true. God's Word never lies to us or deceives us because God cannot lie.

The first human creatures were pure and holy, like God. We don't know how long God's creation existed before the first people - Adam and Eve - committed the first sin. When sin happened, everything changed.

Sin destroyed life, God's most precious gift. Because of sin, every living thing eventually dies.

As a result, death became the enemy of all living things. God told Adam and Eve that they would die if they ate the fruit God told them not to eat. God meant it. Adam and Eve's rebellion shattered their relationship with God. It also spoiled their relationships with each other and ruined their approach to life. Sin caused Adam and Eve to turn their attention inward on themselves instead of toward God and their relationship with Him. That wrong focus wrecked their happiness and their hope and peace. From then on, every human being would struggle to understand and find peace with God.

Evil continues to ravage our world today. We are living in the middle of a devastating spiritual hurricane named Sin. Look around. The tragedy of sin is everywhere. Look inside your own heart, where sin hides and festers. The wild hurricane winds of sin are tearing us apart, planting seeds of hatred, violence, lies, fear. Sin will continue to do its damage until Jesus returns to judge the world.

The answer to the question *when did the Bible's story happen* is that it happened during the worst storm in human history—
a spiritual storm taking place in every human soul.
This hurricane's name is Sin.

Jesus used the metaphor of a hurricane to describe the environment that people have been dealing with since the first sin. In a parable, he told his followers about two men who built new homes for their families. Note what made one man wise and the other a fool.

Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put

them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash. (Matthew 7:24-27)

Our Creator gave to his human creatures the ability to make moral choices. We can foolishly decide to build our lives on ideas that are driven by sinful thoughts. Or, we can build on the truths that God has revealed in his Word. One choice secures safety and peace. The other leads to destruction and regret.

What to look for when you read the Bible

Notice how often the Bible talks about the foolishness of thinking we are equal to God, or that we do not need Him to achieve peace. This foolishness is not the kind of shaky foundation godly parents want for themselves or their children. A solid foundation uses the spiritual building material called **faith**. Faith is our trust that God's Word is absolutely true and it is His communication with us.

Pay close attention to God's promises. Consider the implications His promises have for you and the other members of your family. The more you read the Bible, the more familiar you will become with these promises, and they will come to mind when you - or your children - need to recall them.

More to think about

Look at the words from Matthew 7.

- Why do you think Jesus began the lesson by reminding his followers to hear his words and put them into practice?
- What is the foundation for wise living?
- How can we put Jesus' words "into practice?"

Prayer

God talked to you in His Word. Now you can talk back to Him through prayer. Some people prefer printed prayers, like the one below. It is also a good idea to learn how to speak to God in your own words. Do what works for you. God invites you to "talk back" to Him in prayer!

Lord Jesus, help us build the foundation for our lives on the truth of your Word. Amen.

Suggested activity

As you begin reading the Bible, begin a list of the many promises God makes to us in his Word. Each time you encounter a new promise, add it to your list.

Here are three texts to begin your list.

- Romans 10:13
- John 15:7
- Matthew 28:20