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SETTING THE SCENE

OUR aim in these ten studies is to explain what the Bible teaches. Of course, we would like you to believe the Bible, but before you can make that decision, you need to know what it says.

Coming to a *Ten Keys* study is like being invited into a house and shown around its rooms. We want you to experience the world of the Bible and to see how it all connects together.

You won't be told what to believe, but you will discover what the Bible teaches, and you will learn about the living God who introduces Himself through the Scriptures.

We begin our study in Genesis, the first book of the Bible. Genesis literally means "beginnings." And in the book of Genesis we discover the beginnings of the universe, animals, the human race, marriage, the family, nations, governments, music, agriculture, cities, and languages.


We don't know exactly *when* these events took place, but the Bible does give us a hint as to *where* they occurred. The Garden of Eden was near the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (Genesis 2:14). These rivers may have altered their course, but assuming that they are the same as those in the days of Adam and Eve, the original Garden of Eden was somewhere in the vicinity of modern-day Iraq.

The events that took place in the Garden of Eden are our first key for unlocking the Bible.

POSSIBLE LOCATION OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN



KEY NUMBER ONE: THE GARDEN

DATES	EVENTS	BOOKS OF THE BIBLE	WORLD HISTORY
	Creation	<i>Genesis</i>	
	The Flood		Construction of pyramids begins in Egypt (2650 B.C.)
2000 B.C.	Abraham	<i>Job</i> <i>Genesis</i>	Metalworkers create bronze, ushering in Bronze Age
	Isaac		
	Jacob		
1500 B.C.	Four Hundred Years of Slavery in Egypt	<i>Exodus</i>	
	Exodus from Egypt (Moses)	<i>Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy</i>	Egyptians begin using parchment for writing
	Entrance into Canaan (Joshua)	<i>Joshua</i>	
1000 B.C.	Three Hundred Years of Chaos (the Judges)	<i>Judges</i> <i>Ruth</i>	King Tut buried with fabulous treasures in Egypt
	King Saul	<i>1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs)</i>	
	King David		
500 B.C.	King Solomon	<i>Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel and the Minor Prophets</i>	First Olympic Games held at Olympia in Greece
	Divided Kingdom (930 B.C.)		
	Fall of Jerusalem and exile		
4 B.C.	Rebuilding of Jerusalem (Ezra, Nehemiah)	<i>Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther</i>	Plato born in Greece
	Birth of Christ		Great Wall of China completed

FOLLOWING ALONG

INTRODUCTION:

The whole Bible is one story that points to Jesus Christ.

I. God Is the Creator.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

- A. The Creator is the owner.
- B. Being created gives your life meaning and purpose.
- C. Being created in God's image gives you unique value.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image." (Genesis 1:26)

II. God Gives Good Gifts.

- A. God gives His presence.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day. (Genesis 3:8)

- B. God gives a place. (See the map on page 10.)

Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. (Genesis 2:8)

- C. God gives a purpose.

Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. (Genesis 2:19)

D. God gives a partner.

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." . . . The LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. (Genesis 2:18, 22)

III. Human Beings Have Become Alienated from God.

A. God gave one command.

*"You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."
(Genesis 2:17)*

B. The first man and woman chose the knowledge of evil, and evil became a power in human nature.

C. The two were excluded from God's presence.

*So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden.
(Genesis 3:23)*

IV. God Has Made the Way Back.

A. God consigned the enemy to destruction.

God said to the serpent, ". . . Cursed are you." (Genesis 3:14)

B. In God's mercy, Adam's curse was deflected.

"Cursed is the ground because of you." (Genesis 3:17)

C. Jesus came to become a curse for us.

Christ redeemed us . . . by becoming a curse for us. (Galatians 3:13)

DISCUSSING TOGETHER

1. What have you inherited from your parents for which you are thankful?

2. What difference does it make whether you were created by God or are an accident of history? What are the implications of each?

3. How do you explain the great pain, suffering, and strife that we see in our world today?

4. How have you seen God's hand in providing a place, a purpose, or a partner for you?

5. Would you like a greater sense of God's presence in your life? Why or why not?

Building the Story

THE GARDEN:

God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they chose to disobey Him, gained the knowledge of evil, and were evicted from Paradise.

Looking Ahead

If you would like to prepare in advance for session two, read the Ten Commandments found in Exodus 20. As you read, consider why God might have given these particular commandments to His people.