Genesis

"Once upon a time."

We've all heard these familiar words. They tell us that a story is just beginning — the stage is being set. After all, every good story begins somewhere. And the great story that's all about Jesus is no different. Actually, there is one big difference: this story starts at the beginning of time. That's when God created the heavens and the earth. Maybe we don't think about that enough.

Everything we have ever seen, touched, smelled, heard, and tasted is the result of God creating all things out of nothing. And because He created it all, He also owns it all. He is the King above all kings. This Creator King made the first man and woman. Think about it: God spoke

everything into existence, except for humankind. The Lord stooped down and hand-crafted the first human couple. He gave them everything they needed, but He also gave them commands.

We know what happened, of course. The serpent deceived Eve, she ate, and she gave the fruit to Adam. He ate, too. That's where it all went wrong. Every human being who has been born since then is a sinner, with the exception of Jesus. And speaking of Him, how do we see Christ in Genesis? Well, He shows up at the beginning. We read the first promise of the gospel in Genesis 3:15. Speaking to the serpent (who is the devil), the Lord said, "*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*"

From the start our God was gracious to sinners (and Genesis has no shortage of them!). The first 11 chapters fly through generation after generation. Century after century passes into the rearview mirror. And then, in chapter 12, it slows to a snail's pace. Why? Because the main characters are finally here. Genesis is the story of how the Lord set apart a people for Himself. He promised that One Seed of the woman would come. Then He revealed Himself to one man: Abram. Chapters 12-

50 encompass only four generations. God promises all of them that He will be gracious to them, and that through their family line the One promised in Genesis 3:15 will come.

The book ends with the descendants of Abraham shepherding sheep in Egypt, which makes sense because this book was written to the Exodus generation of Israelites. It was a prologue, telling them how, instead of the so-called gods and goddesses of Egypt, the Lord made and rules over everything. It tells of how God had set them and their ancestors apart for Himself, and how they eventually reached the Promised Land.

Once upon a time...

WEEK 1

GENESIS 1 – 25

Our Great Father in heaven, we praise You for Your wonderful power over all things. You spoke and created everything out of nothing. You sustain all things. If You withdrew Your upholding hand, all of creation would fade into nothingness. But beyond this, we also see Your goodness and love to us. You responded with grace and mercy when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. You promised a Seed who would come and redeem us, defeating Satan in the process. You are the promise-keeping God, and we know that You have kept Your Word. Jesus Christ lived and died and rose again for us, and everyone on earth has been blessed in Him. We read about Your faithfulness to Abraham and Isaac, and we know You will remain faithful to us, too. May your name be praised, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

AMEN.

- ☐ *Day 1:* Genesis 1–4
- ☐ *Day 2:* Genesis 5–8
- ☐ *Day 3:* Genesis 9–12
- ☐ *Day 4:* Genesis 13–17
- ☐ *Day 5:* Genesis 18–20
- ☐ *Day 6:* Genesis 21–23
- ☐ *Day 7:* Genesis 24–25