



Sample – *TruthQuest History: Beginnings* (*Creation/Old Testament/Ancients/Egypt*)

Enjoy this sample! How does it work? *Easily! Naturally!* Just as you discuss life with your kids as an innate part of parenting, simply gather on the couch and together read aloud the commentary which begins each lesson. It won't ask kids to “passively” accept a worldview “download;” rather, the commentary's subtle hints at biblical principles will have them “actively” hunting for truth—little by little, lesson by lesson. By the end of each guide, the lightbulb will be full-on! The kids *will* absorb innumerable brain-facts; but more importantly, they'll develop spiritual eyes to seek God's powerful truths at work in history. This will show convincing proof that He is, and always has been, real *and* right! They will no longer think (as we were taught) of “history” as merely human names and dates (utterly devoid of culture-healing power), but will instead relish the engaging, eternal, worthwhile, inspiring, life-changing, unforgettable heart-story of God and mankind!

After the commentary has been read and discussed, each child is ready to dig into the historical event/personage being studied by enjoying a great book for their age level (from our lists here, or whatever resources are at your library). Thanks to your “priming” time in the commentary, they can probe almost any book and find surpassing lessons. Alternatively, you may wish to read aloud a single book for all to enjoy. Too, Dad can launch a great historical-fiction read-aloud at evening time—the older book gems are especially thrilling adventures—for everyone's enjoyment *and* his participation in the kids' learning/thinking/believing. (*Starred books were in-print at time of writing, but the older the book, the better, usually.)

Some lessons include a (strategically-placed) *ThinkWrite* exercise, deepening their spiritual insights through writing. Most lessons have them simply talk, read, and think...for these require time, peace, and relationship. Because “out of the heart the mouth speaks,” you'll hear their learning bubble up in conversation, play, etc. Hands-on activity resources are cited at many junctures. Feel free to use them, or not, as desired. You may also enjoy the companion notebooks/lapbooks/timelines created for *TruthQuest History* by AJTL, but all are optional. Walking and talking together, reading God's word: this is how Jesus taught the disciples the most important truths of all times, and enabled them to turn the world upside down. That is good enough for us! He created families as the place for teaching the young, and He authored the ultimate Book. So, family discussions and riveting reading are the heart of the matter!

4. Day One...*Numero Uno!*

Okay, I'll stop my musings, and we'll get started with the Main Event...Creation! Savor the words, God's words, below.....slowly and aloud. Hear them roll around the room, and feel their eternal import. They throb with life, with power, with truth, with love, with stunning intelligence, and unmatched artistry, for He who *is* the Word surely knows how to tell His story!

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. (Genesis 1:1-3)

Yes, God is quite the “script-writer,” because He somehow shows us *in the very opening scene* of the Greatest Story Ever Told, the most important things! *How brilliant!*

God tells us that He is!

Yes, in just the first four words of Genesis, He immediately shows us—as we discussed briefly above—that He was before everything; that He pre-existed, that He goes all the way back “from everlasting” and all the way “to everlasting!”¹⁴ It can be hard for us—who are stuck in time—to realize that He doesn't need a beginning (a time-based moment of coming into existence), but it also gives us a thrilling glimpse into the timeless world of our eternal future! Mankind yearns for that timelessness now.¹⁵ He dreams of a “thousand-year *reich*,”¹⁶ makes sturdy granite statues of himself, and hopes for a long-lived dynasty so that his genes are on the throne in succeeding generations. But He who created time, is naturally outside of it. No wonder He says that He was, is, and will be.¹⁷ He would later explain it simply: *I AM*.¹⁸ Indeed, many see His mighty name, *Yahweh* (YHWH), as meaning “self-existing.” *More goosebumps!* In fact, each of His names is a different snapshot of Him, but that is another topic altogether!

So, what do you think of this? I heard a sermon claiming that the Hebrew version of Genesis 1:1 contains, right smack in the middle, a two-letter marker which is not translated into our English Bibles because it is a non-word. The two letters? The Hebrew “a” and “z.” Interesting, for the Lord closes the book of Revelation by saying that He is *alpha* and *omega*¹⁹ (the Greek “a” and “z”). So at the very start and close of His Word, God trumpets this good news: *He is the beginning and the end!* Just after writing this, I read the biography of an American writer who spoke of a particular hollowness in her pre-Christian life—“the heaviest thing of all is to have no beginning and no end.”²⁰ But, with Him, we connect to true history!

God tells us that He is Creator!

He also showed us—in these first words of the Bible—that He is Creator. Everything came about by Him. Without Him there is nothing. *So He has authority over it!* Thus, we have a thrilling and clear-cut **cosmogony**, an understanding of the origins of the universe. The world struggles to whip up a coherent cosmogony of its own whenever it rejects God's eyewitness report of Beginnings, but we get to *bask* in these mighty words of God about the beginning of human life and history....

Cosmogony

¹⁴ Psalm 90:2.

¹⁵ This is a theme of *Severe Mercy*, by Sheldon Vanauken, a man later influenced by C.S. Lewis.

¹⁶ A common theme of Adolf Hitler.

¹⁷ Revelation 1:8b.

¹⁸ Exodus 3:14, for example.

¹⁹ Revelation 1:8a, 21:6, 22:13.

²⁰ Price, Eugenia. *The Burden is Light!* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1970), 32.

*All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*²¹

*For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible... All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.*²²

*By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*²³

This is the most thrilling stamp of approval on the existence of us and our world: we were specifically made to be who and where we are, and that is no small thing, as you'll later see!

God tells us that He is Light!

Yes, God's Word is just beginning, but He is already showing us something very *specific* about Himself, and in such a clever and dramatic way! (This reminds us that history is the story of *Him revealing Himself to us, and allowing us the opportunity to respond.*) So what's He revealing now?

*"The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the work of the Creator."
--Louis Pasteur*

Well, did He first create a sun to bring the formless earth out of darkness? No! There was simply light-energy at His behest...without it coming from a celestial body! There was light before there was a sun, because He *is* light and He wants you to *know* that! In Him there is *no darkness!*²⁴ Just as He doesn't just say true things, but actually *is* truth, likewise He does not just create light, but actually *is* light! In her book (cited below), Mrs. Ganz tells of the great fear she felt in the total darkness of a cave. I had the same experience once. But wherever God is, there is light. And that light was now (in Genesis 1) on this formless earth; His Spirit was moving over the deep. So, there just *had* to be light! He was here! It is only where He is not, that there is no light.

GOD IS LIGHT!

If you've ever experienced *total* darkness, you know how important and life-giving light really is. Without it, there is no vision, no clarity, no life, no food, no energy. It is another pillar of the universe, and we can celebrate this in our God!

God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. (Gen. 1:4-5)

²¹ John 1:2, NKJV.

²² Colossians 1:16-17, NKJV.

²³ Hebrews 11:3, NKJV.

²⁴ I John 1:5.

Again, Mrs. Ganz points out that by separating light and darkness into day and night, God was also initiating something unique: that thing called *time* which we discussed above! And, oh, how time surrounds us with its might! In fact, as we saw, that it is hard for us to even speak without using words which relate to time. It permeates our language, our thoughts, our goals, our very lives on this planet. It makes possible *cause*—and, then—*effect*. I'm telling you, great-big-giant forces are being set into motion! And it is only the first day of Creation!

Dig in!

I haven't cited it throughout, since it greatly repeats the Word of God itself and has extra-Biblical content, but if you wish to include "Jewish Antiquities," by Josephus, as we work through this guide, feel free. I'm told that the version edited by Paul L. Maier is very good. Its sections are brief and quite readable, but they are not partitioned or numbered, and thus citing them here is not feasible. If you want to read it, just keep the book open beside you as you work through this guide; you'll be able to follow the flow quite easily.

- **Holy Bible: Genesis 1:1-5* All ages
 Or, **Child's Story Bible*, by Vos, Ch. 2 (Gr. K-2)

- **Genesis: A Commentary for Children*, by Nancy Ganz, Ch. 3 Gr. 3-10

- **Story of the Ancient World*, by C. Miller & H.A. Guerber, Ch. I Gr. 3-10

 Beginning of the World, by Masahiro Kasuya Gr. K-2

- **Berenstain Bears Discover God's Creation*, by Stan, Jan & Michael Berenstain Gr. K-2
 Made especially for a Christian publisher.

- Creation*, by Jo Spier Gr. K-2

- **Creation Song*, by Anna Scott-Brown Gr. K-2

- **Creation Story in Words and Sign Language*, by John Audia Gr. K-2

- **Glory*, by Nancy White Carlstrom Gr. K-2
 Simple picture book expresses praise of all Creation for our God! Carlstrom is the beloved author of the "Jesse Bear" series.

- **I Can't Make a Flower*, by Margaret Spivey Gr. K-2
 Child realizes that only God can create!

- **Let the Whole Earth Sing Praise*, by Tomie DePaola Gr. K-2
 Strong, short verse with simple folk art.

- Seven Days of Creation*, by Leonard Everett Fisher Gr. K-2

- **This is the Day!* by Nancy White Carlstrom Gr. K-2
 Children wonder at the many marvels of Creation.

- **Don't Mess with Moses: Peculiar Poems and Rib-Tickling...*, by Marty Nystrom Gr. K-3
Lighthearted, energetic poems, that begin with various days of Creation.
- Genesis: The Story of Creation*, by Allison Reed Gr. K-3
- **Creation Story for Children*, by Helen & David Haidle Gr. K-6
- **At Break of Day*, by Nikki Grimes Gr. 1-3
Focuses on the *Us* in Genesis 1, that the Trinity created, in tender picture book.
- **God Created*, by Mark Francisco Bozzuti-Jones Gr. 1-3
- **King Without a Shadow*, by R.C. Sproul Gr. 1-4
A human king learns of the King Who *is* Light, due to His holiness!
- **Gennady Spirin's Creation*, by Gennady Spirin Gr. 2-6
Unusual art style from Russian painter expresses his view of Creation.
- **God's Mighty Acts in Creation*, by Starr Meade Gr. 2-6
Daily devotionals based on Creation.
- **Real Story of the Creation*, by Paul L. Maier Gr. 2-6
I am told that this has lovely illustrations, and you know Maier is a Christian author!
- **What the Bible is All About for Young Explorers*, by Blankenbaker/Mears, Ch. 1-2 Gr. 2-6
This gives kids a quick and easy overview of each book of the Bible through simple drawings, short blurbs, and summaries. You may wish to follow this resource as you work through; if so, I will list each chapter as we come to it. (Intro, Genesis)
- **Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation*, by Dennis Peterson Gr. 5-12
One of the Creation books most often seen in educational catalogs. Please choose your preferred resource, as there are too many to list. If you do use an overview book such as this, please read incrementally as we work through the succeeding days of Creation here.
- **Amazing Story of Creation*, by Duane Gish, Ph.D. Gr. 7-12
One of the Creation books most often seen in educational catalogs. Please choose your preferred resource, as there are too many to list. If you do use an overview book such as this, please read incrementally as we work through the succeeding days of Creation here.
- **Creation Science: A Study Guide to Creation*, by Felice Gerwitz & Jill Whitlock Various
A study guide for those who wish to study in this way at this time.
- **God's Amazing Creation*, by Kay Arthur & Janna Arndt (Discover 4 Yourself) Various
If you would like to add in inductive Bible study for the kids, this covers Genesis 1-2.

Audio/Visual:

- **Newton's Workshop: World Building 101—Days of Creation* Various
This addresses all the days of Creation; we are just on Day One here.
- **What in the World's Going On Here?* by Diana Waring Various
This tape set goes on to much later history, but begins with Creation, so you may want to listen to the early tapes. Many say this gives a fascinating, comprehensible overview, and thus would be preparation for the deeper probing we will do here.

Activities:

Have you ever tried to shut out all the light in a room? It is hard to do! Give it a whirl, and you will see! The tiniest beam of light will find a way to charge through. And have you noticed how this one ray of light arrests your attention, more than all the darkness around it?! But what is darkness? Is it something? No, it is the lack of something. It is the lack of light. That is how powerful light is! How powerful He is!

- **Bible Colour and Learn* books, by Day One Publishing Various
There are many which apply throughout this history guide: *Old Testament, Book of Genesis, Story of Abraham, Story of Jacob*, etc.
- **Bible Discover and Colour* books, by Day One Publishing Various
These feature the plants, animals, birds, and places of the Bible.
- **Bible Stories Coloring Book*, by Dover Various
This uses medieval images, so you may prefer one with a different style.
- **Days of Creation*, by James & Katherine Hughes Various
The kids try to paint each day of creation with this kit.
- **Genesis for Kids*, by Doug Lambier and Robert Stevenson Various
The subtitle explains: “Science experiments that show God's power in Creation!”
- **Old Testament Days*, by Nancy Sanders Various
Covers the Old Testament period, beginning with Abraham, so we will mention it again when we reach that point. Because it is in a popular series, and because you can dabble in it at will, I am also mentioning it here.
- **Stories from the Old Testament Coloring Book*, by Dover Various
- **Ultimate Sticker Book: The Old Testament*, by Dorling Kindersley Various

Art:

- **Rembrandt: The Old Testament* Various
Various biblical paintings done by the great master, Rembrandt. With art books, parents should decide appropriateness. I've not seen this particular edition, but the biblical paintings of his which I have seen were very respectful of God's Word.

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