

the **Bare**  
**Bones**  
BIBLE® HANDBOOK  
FOR TEENS

JIM GEORGE



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS

EUGENE, OREGON

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Due to the intentionally brief treatment of each book of the Bible as presented in this handbook, disputed dates, themes, or authorships are not discussed. For such information, please consult more comprehensive reference works that are designed to take such various views and details into consideration.

## **THE BARE BONES BIBLE® HANDBOOK FOR TEENS**

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Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

[www.harvesthousepublishers.com](http://www.harvesthousepublishers.com)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

George, Jim, 1943-

The bare bones Bible handbook for teens / Jim George.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-7369-2386-6 (pbk.)

1. Bible—Introductions. 2. Bible—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 3. Christian teenagers—Religious life. I. Title.

BS475.3.G473 2008

220.6'1—dc22

2008030791

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**Printed in the United States of America**

08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 / LB-NI / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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# Welcome to the Bible!



## The Bare Bones Bible Handbook for Teens

### *A Personal Letter to You*

Welcome to this fun and easy to use book about the greatest book ever written—the Bible! It’s the only book in the world written by God, and it contains a history of His saving grace, which extends to you today.

Even though the Bible is an ancient book, its truths are as real and meaningful today as they were thousands of years ago. If you’re looking for help for your life and your future, the Bible has all the answers.

I wrote *The Bare Bones Bible Handbook® for Teens* just for young people like you because of something that happened in my own life experience. I grew up going to church. At age six I invited Jesus Christ to be my Savior, and became a Christian. I went to church regularly, was a part of my youth group, even the leader of it. I memorized the names of the books of the Bible and 600 verses to win an award at church. But guess what? Even though I knew about the Bible, I didn’t really understand it, and I wasn’t using it in my daily life. How could I ever understand everything in a book that big?

Only later did I come to realize that the Bible is simple, and I want you to know that too. God wrote the Bible for everyone. He wanted people of all ages to understand it so it could make a positive difference in their lives. He wanted to make our lives easier and better. Most of all, God

wants us to enjoy a forever relationship with Him, which happens when you know and accept His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as Savior.

I hope and pray this book will help you to know and love God's Word. Every book of the Bible has a personal message to you today, a message you can use now. So dive in! Enjoy learning more about the book God wrote to help you. It's God's gift to you!

Your friend,  
*Jim George*

# The Old Testament

# The Historical Books



The first 17 books of the Bible trace the history of man from creation through the birth and destruction of the nation of Israel. In the first five books of the Bible, Israel is chosen, redeemed, and prepared to enter a promised homeland. The remaining 12 historical books record the conquest of that land, a transition period in which judges ruled over the nation, the formation of the kingdom, and the division of that kingdom into northern (Israel) and southern (Judah) kingdoms, and finally the destruction and captivity of both kingdoms.



# Genesis

*In the beginning God created the  
heavens and the earth.*

(1:1)



**Theme:** Beginnings

**Date written:** 1445–1405 B.C.

**Author:** Moses

**Setting:** Middle East

The Hebrew word for *Genesis* means “in the beginning,” and that is exactly what *Genesis* is all about. As the first book of the Bible, *Genesis* lays the foundation for everything that is to follow, including the key truths God wants you to know in order to make sense of your life. Throughout the pages of *Genesis* you experience the awesome power of God in His creation, the holy judgment of God in the flood sent to punish the disobedience of humanity, and the tender mercy of God in His protection of Noah and his family from the flood. You also witness the fantastic grace of God as He sets in motion His plan to save mankind, first through the founding of the nation of Israel, and ultimately through the sending of Jesus Christ. *Genesis* is filled with key moments that form the very basis of history.

## The Skeleton

### ► Chapters 1–2 *The Creation*

God creates the earth out of nothing, a perfect home for Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. He places them in the perfect Garden of Eden and blesses their relationship.

► **Chapters 3–5** *The Fall and Its Aftermath*

The perfection of God’s creation is spoiled when Satan tempts Adam and Eve to disobey God and try to become like gods themselves and take control over their lives. When they give in to this temptation—referred to as “the fall”—they damage their relationship with God, are put out from the Garden, and must live outside the original blessing God intended for them. (However, even in the midst of this calamity, God is already setting in motion His long-term plan to redeem humanity and bring man back into a close relationship with Him.) Following the sin of their original parents, the human race sinks into violence, wickedness, and self-destruction.

► **Chapters 6–11** *The Flood and a New Beginning*

In His displeasure with man’s wickedness, God determines to destroy man with a worldwide flood. Only Noah (a godly man) and his family are spared from the devastation. From Noah’s family the earth is repopulated as they spread out and form the first nations.

► **Chapters 12–25** *The Story of Abraham*

God calls Abraham to leave his home country and travel to a promised land, and God tells Abraham he will become the father of His chosen people. To Abraham God gives many promises, one of which is that he—a childless old man—will have many descendants who will form a great nation, a people through whom salvation will come. This promise would be fulfilled in Abraham’s greatest descendant, Jesus Christ.

► **Chapters 24–28** *The Story of Isaac*

Growing old and still without a child, Abraham begins to become discouraged. But true to God’s promise, Isaac is born to Abraham and his wife, Sarah, in their old age.

► **Chapters 28–36** *The Story of Jacob*

Isaac has two sons, Esau and Jacob. Although Isaac favors Esau, the older brother, Jacob schemes to secure the privileges of the birthright from his father. In fear of Esau’s anger at being swindled out of his birthright, Jacob is forced to flee for his life. After many adventures, including a mysterious late-night wrestling match with God, Jacob finally matures into the man God intends him to be. God renames him *Israel*,

which means “He who struggles with God.” Jacob’s 12 sons become the 12 tribes of Israel.

► **Chapters 37–50** *The Story of Joseph*

Genesis closes with the account of Joseph, the favored son of Jacob, who is tragically sold into slavery into Egypt by his jealous brothers. But God has plans for Joseph and establishes him as a leader in Egypt, which makes it possible for Joseph’s family to later settle there with him and survive a devastating seven-year famine.

## Putting Meat on the Bones

In addition to the great events such as the creation of the universe, the fall, the flood, and the founding of Israel, God also wants readers to get to know the individual people who will be a part of His plan for saving the human race. The people He chooses are not perfect saints. They are, at times, deeply flawed in character and action. Genesis records that they lie, deceive others, question God, or are extremely proud—but God is able to use them anyway. This is one of the great messages of the book of Genesis: The God who created us is not finished with us. He is in the business of “re-creating” us, giving us new beginnings and helping us become the kind of people He wants us to be.

## Fleshing It Out in Your Life

Just as with Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and others in Genesis, God can do great things through weak vessels, including you. By His grace and because of His powerful plan, your mistakes and faults do not disqualify you from being part of His grand plan, a plan He is still working out in you!

When did you have a chance to start over? How did it feel? Did you make the most of it?

Can you think of a time when God used you—and your flaws—to reveal His strength and goodness?

Do you sometimes doubt God’s promises, like Abraham did? What are some ways you can get past the doubt?

## Life Lessons from Genesis

- ▶ God, the unique and awesome Creator, made you and knows you better than you know yourself.
- ▶ God created you in His image, as an expression of Himself.
- ▶ God uses normal people—the imperfect, the failures, the flawed—to accomplish His will.
- ▶ God takes evil seriously, and those who reject His love and wisdom will experience His judgment.
- ▶ God is able to turn your problems into triumphs.

## Where to Find It

<b>The story of creation</b> . . . . .	Genesis 1:1–2:3
<b>The first prophecy about Jesus</b> . . . . .	Genesis 3:15
<b>The story of Noah and the ark</b> . . . . .	Genesis 6:1–8:22
<b>Abraham told to sacrifice his son Isaac</b> . . . . .	Genesis 22:1-14
<b>Jacob dreams of the ladder to heaven.</b> . . . . .	Genesis 28:10-22
<b>Jacob wrestles with God.</b> . . . . .	Genesis 32:22-32
<b>Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams</b> . . . . .	Genesis 41:1-36

### ~ Bible Bio Profile ~ Abraham

- He was a descendant of Shem, one of Noah’s sons.
- He married his half-sister, Sarah.
- He courageously rescued his nephew Lot by defeating a powerful enemy.
- His name was changed by God from *Abram* to *Abraham*, meaning “father of multitudes.”
- He was known as a friend of God (2 Chronicles 20:7).
- His many acts of obedience and trust showed his faith in God.
- He was the father of the Jewish and Arabic nations.
- He lived 175 years.



Noah's ark was approximately 450 feet long and 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. It probably started to feel much smaller to Noah and his family after they had been on it for a while. It was their home for over a year!