



The Story from The Musical

From Creation to Revelation, the Bible like you've never heard it before.

From Award Winning Writer:
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BIBLE IN AN HOUR - The Story

The Old Testament

Once upon a time, in fact *before* the beginning of time, there was nothing. No money, no cars, no MTV. NOTHING! Sounds like Bliss? Well no, not exactly - that was to come later.

In fact, it would have stayed as nothing if God had not decided to do something about it. Speaking into the “Nothingness” God said: “*Let there be light.*” And there was light. “*Let there be night.*” And there was night.

This God called the first day.

“Now let there be Heaven and Earth.”

This God called the second day.

“Now let there be sea.”

The third day.

“Twinkly stars and a big one called the Sun.”

The fourth day.

“Now fish in the sea.”

The fifth day.

“And lastly but not least MAN!”

The sixth day.

“Now I’m resting...”

So there you have it. In seven days God created the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Earth and Man himself. And on the seventh day He rested. Well earned I’d say.

But notice this: there was no *Big Bang*. No evolutionary process. No scientists nor Philosophers involved. No, Nothing of the sort. It all came about simply because God spoke it into Being. It had no choice. ‘Nothing’ simply had to become ‘Something’ and that ‘Something’ is what we now call the

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Universe - thank God!

So, back to the plot. Here on planet Earth, the man who God created, called Adam, found himself living in a luxurious garden in a land called Eden. It's hard to describe what the Garden of Eden must have been like in those days. If you think of the most beautiful place you've ever seen and multiply it by a million times you'd be getting closer to the truth. Some say the air was so pure back then we'd actually collapse if we took one breath of it now - such is the deterioration of our biological makeup and Planet! Apparently you could also see the colours of music in the sky. How weird is that!

Anyway, here in the Garden, Adam was given rule over all the animals and everything that grew. He also named them and read their genetic coding - demonstrating the magnitude of his intelligence (due to the pure air no doubt). Adam had everything going for him in the Garden whilst at the same time enjoying wonderful fellowship with his Creator - his Heavenly Father. And yet, deep down in a little troubled area in the region of his tummy there was something missing. (No not his belly button. Mind you I guess he probably did wonder what it was doing there since he was never born of a woman. Come to that I wonder if he had a belly button at all?) The reason why Adam was troubled was due to a curious feeling of loneliness; as though there were someone missing he'd never yet met. And God knew exactly who it was!

God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. And he slept. Now whilst Adam was sleeping God took from him one of his ribs. Then closing up the flesh in its place, the Lord God made the rib into a woman and brought her to Adam. And Adam, rubbing his eyes with sleepiness looked at the woman and said, "Wow a Woman!" They were both naked - Adam and the woman - and they were not ashamed. Adam finally found what he'd been looking for - a Wife!

Together they lived a life of bliss in the Garden: communing with the animals, tending to the plants, singing along to the beautiful colours of the music. And all the time being eternally thankful for their

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Heavenly Father in bringing them together.

Life was totally fulfilling in the Garden, so much so that God told them they would never want for anything so long as they obeyed one very simple commandment. God told Adam: *“Of every tree of the Garden you shall freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat; for in the day that you do eat of it, you shall surely die!”*

Sounds reasonable enough. I mean, Adam and Eve would not exactly have gone hungry if they hadn't eaten of that particular tree. There was plenty of food elsewhere. And why would they have wanted to go against God anyway? Hadn't He given them everything they would ever need? So, they went about their blissful lives together being grateful for every day and all that God had done for them. UNTIL, that is, the day that Eve was strangely attracted to the tree God had warned them about. Out of the blue, it seemed, Eve heard a voice calling to her: “Eve, Eve, over here. In the tree. Over here.”

“Hello”, said Eve. “How do you know my name?” she puzzled, peering into the large, fruit-laden tree.

“Because I've been doing my research and I've identified you as someone who would appreciate this dazzling offer. Here, take a look,” said the voice.

Now the Devil, in the form of a serpent, lowered himself down from the tree and drew Eve's attention to the tantalising fruit.

“Ah yes,” replied Eve, barely able to keep her eyes off the the exquisite colour and aroma of the fruit. “Very nice. But God distinctly told us we must not touch the tree nor the fruit of it else we shall surely die!”

“Die!” chided the serpent. “You will not die. On the contrary. Your eyes will be opened and you will become like God Himself knowing both good and evil. Go on, try it, try it, try...”

Unable to resist the captivating offer, Eve gave in to temptation and took a bite. She also gave Adam a bite, and he ate it too.

“Very nice,” said Adam, savouring the bittersweet taste of the fruit, “but nothing like what I would

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have expected. And hardly worth the consequences God warned us about!”

Fear came to Adams eyes as he began to realise the catastrophe of what had happened: the Serpent had deceived them!

Adam looked fearfully at the woman and threw the fruit to the ground. Their eyes were now opened to both good and evil!

One of the immediate consequences of going against God's Word was to notice, for the first time, that they were both naked. It hadn't seemed to matter before but now sin had entered their hearts they were ashamed and tried to hide themselves from God. But God was not fooled. He knew exactly where they were and asked them why they'd gone against His Word. Eve tried to justify herself for eating of the fruit by blaming the Serpent; whilst Adam did his very best to put all the blame on Eve. But it was too late, sin was now in the world: death, disease, sorrow and hatred. Frankly, it seemed, Adam and Eve had bitten off more than they could chew!

To protect them from further harming themselves God removed them from the Garden and guarded its gates with fiery Angels. Adam and Eve were now in the big outside world - lonely and fearful. And although they knew God had not abandoned them, they knew their relationship with Him was considerably strained.

Pause for thought...

Many have struggled to understand , if God created everything, why did He create evil and the potential to sin in the first place?

The most convincing explanation is that God wants to give mankind the free gift of choice. After all, God is free to choose and so why would He have made us any the less in the image of Himself? He does not want us to be Robots!

It is our free choice to love or not to love - that is our privilege and our burden! However, the rewards are unparalleled in choosing the way of obedience to God's commands.

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Each day, as in the Garden of Eden, the same Devil comes to us with any number of temptations. They may seem very plausible. They may seem irresistible, but they always lead to a greater degree of bondage to “the Serpent of Old!” - the Devil! Thankfully there is a way out of this bondage to sin: God told us He would never leave us helpless. His way out of bondage is revealed later in the story.

Generations later, God decided He'd had enough of man's evil ways. He was sorry He'd made man on the earth. Grieved in His heart, God decided to destroy every living thing. That is, except for one man by the name of Noah, who was found to be good and right in the eyes of God.

God said to Noah *“I have decided to bring an end to all living things. For the Earth is filled with violence through them. I will destroy them along with the Earth. Make yourself an Ark and I will save you and your family.”*

Now Noah was very old and lived in the desert; many miles from the sea. So, in obedience to God, the sight of Noah and his family making an Ark, (a giant boat), was not only ridiculed by those around him but was seriously misunderstood. Imagine Noah having to tell tribes of unbelievers that God had told him to build a boat in the desert and that if they didn't turn to God they would all perish in a flood. Sounds ridiculous? But these tribes of unbelievers were the descendants of Adam and Eve, who by now had considered themselves to be beyond divine authority. Sin was rife in the world and the effects of evil was everywhere.

When the Ark was finished, God instructed Noah to take a male and female of every animal onto the Ark. By the time the rains came Noah and his family, and all the animals, were safe from the destruction that was about to come. Within forty days every living creature on the face of the earth was destroyed.

Finally God caused the rains to cease and eventually the Ark and its inhabitants came to rest on a mountain somewhere in the region of what we now call Turkey. Finding themselves stuck there on the

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mountain, Noah and his family waited another sixty days for the water levels to decrease. They were, not surprisingly, desperate to leave! The animals were restless. The family were getting on top of each other and above all they were probably still suffering the effects of forty days of sea sickness!

Noah and his family left the Ark and allowed the animals to go free to find their own way in the new world. God spoke to Noah and gave him an assurance He would never destroy all living creatures. He gave Noah and his family the sign of the rainbow of His continuing promise to restore what had been lost through Adam and Eve.

Many years later, that promise continued to unfold with the help of another Righteous man called Abraham. Now Abraham came on the scene because, incredibly, the good will, peace and harmony of the post-flood era didn't last very long. In fact in no time at all - relatively speaking - mankind was once again back to their old tricks! Sin was rife: greed, violence and pride was everywhere. Apparently not as bad as it was before but it was still bad enough for God to want to do something about it. And so God called Abraham out of his own country to establish a new Nation of people who God would call His very own. These people were to be taught and trained in God's ways of faith and of righteous living. For years Abraham and his ever increasing family, flocks and cattle wandered from place place searching for a new home. By now though Abraham and his wife were very old and being childless were unable to provide an heir to the promise of the new Nation God had promised them. So God sent messengers to Abraham telling him that he was to believe for a son. And to prove it, God pointed Abraham to the night sky telling him his offspring would be as numerous as the stars, which, to someone who had no child at all, was a bit like saying that one day man would walk on the Moon! Nevertheless, Abraham did believe God and was eventually given a son in his old age. And from that son, whose name was Isaac, arose the mighty Nation of Israel.

God had already promised them a land: a land flowing with milk and honey, but they were to suffer much before inhabiting that land. They became enslaved in the mighty nation of Egypt - a proud empire

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of Pharaohs, pyramids, mummies and sphinx's - where they were crushed and cruelly treated.

They cried out to their God, reminding Him of the promise He'd made to Abraham of a land they could call their own. They cried out to be saved from their captivity. And God heard their cry and sent them their saviour whose name was Moses.

Now Moses was an Israelite who had been adopted by the Pharaohs daughter and was brought up in the Royal Palace of Egypt. An unfortunate incident occurred when, as a grown man, Moses witnessed the beating of an Israelite slave by an Egyptian soldier. In anger Moses leapt to the defence of the slave and killed the soldier. Fearing for his life Moses fled Egypt and hid himself away in the 'back of beyond' - the sprawling deserts of Arabia. For too long Moses had witnessed his people, the Israelites, being crushed under the tyrannical rule of the Pharaoh but was helpless to do anything about it. God told Moses *"Go back to Pharaoh and tell him to set my people free!"*

Unsurprisingly Pharaoh refused Moses' request - for who was Moses to Pharaoh, other than an exiled killer! Through Moses God told Pharaoh he would be punished for not obeying His commands to let His people go. There followed a whole onslaught of plagues and assaults upon the Egyptians until they finally did let God's people go.

The Israelites fled Egypt for their promised land. Meanwhile, Pharaoh once again hardened his heart and sent an army of chariots and horses to recapture the Israelites. With the huge Red Sea before them and the Egyptians chasing behind, there was no way through. The Israelites cried out to their God to save them. And once again God heard their cry. "Don't be afraid," said Moses to the people, "God has heard our cry. Just stand firm and see what He will do..."

Before their very eyes God divided the Red Sea and Moses led his people across the rocky sea bed. The Egyptians quickly followed, but their chariot wheels got stuck in the rocks and mud. Miraculously God caused the sea to come back over the Egyptian army. Their chariots, men and horses were drowned as the waves crashed around them. Once again God had saved His people from destruction.

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Victorious, Moses led his people towards the goal of their promised land; but they were to suffer many hardships in the great wilderness that stretched out before them. They became hungry - and God gave them food; thirsty - and God provided water. In fact, anything they needed God gave it to them - miraculously!

And yet they continued to struggle through the wilderness - not surprising when you think of all that sand. And then there were the Commandments God gave them through Moses. Not only were there Ten Commandments but a host of other laws implemented to keep them on the right track, such was their propensity to sin.

You'll be pleased to know though they did get into their promised land and after the odd skirmish with their neighbours they enjoyed a period of rest. And it would have stayed that way had they not slipped back once again into disobedience. The results were the same as before - famine, invasion and disease.

Even so, God was to continue with His faithfulness to the Israelites and eventually He gave them the king they so wanted: a king who would raise them above all nations and lead them back to God. His name was David.

King David was just the sort of man they needed. He was passionate for God and sought God's ways above all else. David spoke with God and listened to God. And as a result he prospered with God.

Through David God was demonstrating a simple truth for mankind; and that is.... *Relationship!*

God was not interested in a people merely trying to live by, and adhering to His Commandments, (as good as they are,) nor by simply offering sacrifices to please Him. Above all, God wanted a people who would be certain of His love for them. A people who would, quite simply, live by *faith*. It was King David who showed this kind of faith.

Many years and many Kings later, with the Israelites once again back into all sorts of disobedience, The Lord God announced through His prophets of His intention to even things out once and for all.

God's final master stroke of restoration was about to be revealed....

Pause for thought...

God gave the Law of Commandments to the Israelite people knowing full well they would not be able to fulfil them. He did this not to show them up, nor to punish them, but to demonstrate that without an intimate relationship with Him, they would never know His love for them.

It is only in knowing God's love for us and having His Holy Spirit living within us that we are able to please Him. King David was a man who demonstrated that kind of faith; a faith that was to earn him the position of 'right standing' with God - forever to be known as truly a man who followed after God's own heart.

The New Testament

Sheep. They were everywhere in those days - both in the Old Testament and now in the New Testament land of Israel.

As shepherds watched their flocks by night a most amazing thing happened. This was so amazing that even the sheep, who had seen some pretty amazing things during the years since Noah, were completely stunned! A beautiful angel, shining like the sun, told the shepherds they were not to fear for he had come to bring them great news. He told them that the Saviour King of all mankind had been born nearby in a cattle trough, and that they were to go and see Him for themselves.

"A cattle trough!", chorused the shepherds. "What's a King doing being born in a cattle trough?"

They'd heard many times in the past about a Saviour coming into the world to restore relationship between mankind and God but they'd never expected Him to be born in the dusty land they'd been scratching a living out of. This they had to see for themselves.

Sure enough, when they arrived at the cattle trough, they saw not only the baby - whose name was Jesus - but also three wise men from faraway countries who had come to bear witness to the Saviour.

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Truly, something incredible had happened in the world.

At much the same time as Jesus being born was another sent from God. His name was John. It was his job to prepare the Jewish people - the Israelites - to receive Jesus the Saviour King.

As a grown man John preached repentance to the Jewish people, living alone in the wilderness and feeding on locusts for survival. His message to the people was for them to prepare their hearts to accept their need for a Saviour - that is, The One who would introduce them to the living God who they'd offended so often in the past. Jesus was of course this Saviour.

During one of John's baptising sessions in the *River Jordan*, Jesus quite unexpectedly turned up to be baptised Himself. With many people in attendance John prayed for Jesus, and as He came out of the water the heavens opened and a voice was heard to say, "*This is My beloved son in whom I am well pleased*". And if that wasn't sufficient confirmation of the exact identity of Jesus' divinity, there then followed the appearance of the Holy Spirit in bodily form like a dove, who settled on Jesus' shoulders.

Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was now ready to fulfil His mission here on Earth; which is to take away the sins of the world and restore to mankind what had been lost at the Fall, that is: to restore relationship between God and man.

But, he was going to need some help!

Now, imagine it were your job to recruit helpers to save the world from destruction, where would you go to find them? To the local Synagogue perhaps? To the places of learning and teaching? Or would you, like Jesus, go to the local fishing harbour? Hmm....

What's even more surprising is that Jesus - being God's very own Son - only did what His Father in Heaven told Him to do. So, it was in fact God's idea for Jesus to choose fishermen to be His helpers in saving the world. Not only that but He also chose a fisherman's mother-in-law to be a disciple too - and a Tax Collector! To the Religious Leaders of the day, Jesus looked like nothing more than a crank and a

troublemaker.

By now, the entire region was in uproar about this Jesus - "*the self-proclaimed Saviour*" of mankind. Was He indeed the long awaited Saviour? Some believed He was, whilst others hated Him and believed Jesus to be a rebel. These were the Religious Leaders of the day - the Pharisees. They accused Him of performing so-called miracles on the Sabbath day of rest, which, they'd reasoned, had broken one of the laws God had given Moses in the Old Covenant. Others accused Him of making claims to be the Son of God, which was blasphemy according to their laws. Whilst even others pointed accusing fingers towards Jesus for hanging out with sinners - the very people He'd purported to have come to rescue from their sins. But the truth is, wherever Jesus went, lives were transformed, bodies were healed, and everyone, but everyone, had heard of Jesus - the carpenter's son from Nazareth. He sure was making a lot of trouble for Himself!

So what do we know of the Man behind the name, Jesus? And what was it about Him that touched so many people so deeply?

There was an occasion when Jesus was invited by a Pharisee to join him - together with other Religious leaders - to his house for dinner; no doubt so that they might find fault with Him. During the dinner a disturbance broke out because of a woman forcing her way into the room. This woman was well known to the Pharisees as being a sinner but had become so overwhelmed with the love of Jesus, who had forgiven her for her sins, that she just couldn't help but show it. Falling to His feet she wept with joy at having been rescued from her wicked past. With her tangled hair she wiped the tears from His feet and anointed Him with fragrant oil. The Religious Leaders were aghast at such a spectacle taking place in his home and glared at her reproachingly. Jesus, knowing his thoughts, said to the Religious Leaders that she'd shown the correct response as one who had been forgiven of her grievous sin. She'd abandoned her pride and freely worshipped the One who had given her a new life.

Jesus went on to explain that He'd come to Earth to heal those who were sick, not those who thought they were well. The Pharisees refused to believe they were in need of healing and were intent upon

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seeing themselves as totally sinless. They didn't however fool God! Jesus knew their hearts were closed to Him and had used the occasion of the sinful woman to demonstrate His relationship with ordinary, humble people.

By now Jesus knew His fate! With the Religious Leaders stirring up hatred towards Him, He knew it was only a matter of time before He would be arrested. And yet, even with this knowledge, He continued with His earthly ministry, which was to demonstrate the Father's love for the lost, the hurting and the sick.

Finally, He was arrested by the Religious Leaders who had managed to manipulate the Roman authorities to put Him to death. His method of punishment - crucifixion - is probably the most agonising death known to mankind. He was stripped naked, lashed until His back and sides were bare, and was forced to carry a heavy wooden cross to the place of His crucifixion. Once there He was nailed to the cross by His wrists and feet and was raised upright to die naked before a gawking and jeering crowd.

At midday a shadow passed across the sun and for three hours it was strangely dark. Then Jesus, looking down from the cross to the people He'd come to save, forgave them and - giving up His spirit - He cried: "*It is finished!*", and died!

They buried Jesus in a tomb, sealing the entrance with a rock and guard.

Jesus had already told His disciples that He would come alive again on the third day of His burial, but they had not understand Him.

Pause for Thought

Jesus' Ministry on Earth only lasted three years before He was put to death, but has impacted the world ever since - for well over 2000 years!

It is remarkable to read in the Old Testament of how the prophets spoke of His earthly reign - many hundred's of years before He was actually born. His lineage relating to King David was prophesied,

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together with the manner of His conception, birth and subsequent crucifixion. Even the town of Nazareth was pinpointed as the place in which He would be brought up.

It is now only a matter of time before the full measure of Jesus' prophesied Ministry on Earth will be concluded - with the return of His reign and the culmination of all things!

On the third day of His burial one of His followers, Mary Magdalene - whom Jesus had healed - came to visit the tomb but found it was empty. The heavy stone that had been placed in front of the tomb had been rolled away.

Peering inside the tomb she saw that the linen clothes Jesus had been wrapped in were lying there discarded. "Where are you Lord?", she wept. And weeping she turned round and saw Jesus but thought He was the gardener. "Where have you taken my Lord?" she asked.

"Mary, it is I - Jesus!" He replied.

Recognising Him she went to hold Him, but was told not to touch Him until she'd told the rest of the Disciples He was alive. As you can imagine, the news spread quickly throughout the whole region. Jesus had been raised from the dead!

He came amongst the disciples and explained exactly why it was He had to die, and why it was that He'd come back to life. He showed them, through the pages of the Old Testament, that the Prophets of old had talked about a Saviour to come - *One* who would save mankind from the eternal judgement upon them due to Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden. He warned them to steer clear of the Pharisee's attempts to try make themselves right with God through mere religious activities, but to put their faith solely in His own death and resurrection - on their behalf. God was not merely wanting to restore what was lost through Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden, but to introduce a reality that had never existed before, that is - relationship by choice!

Finally, Jesus left them. He ascended into Heaven and an angel told the disciples that one day He would return in the same way.

Meanwhile, the Disciples waited in Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed. As they gathered together for prayer, the promise of the Holy spirit fell upon them in great power. A rushing wind came from nowhere and filled the room. It was as though tongues of fire rested on their heads - the very power and presence of Jesus equipping them for ministry.

Filled with this new Power, the Disciples burst out into the streets where thousands of Jews from every nation had gathered together for the festival of Pentecost.

Amazed to see the Disciples' conviction and power in preaching the Gospel of Christ, some three thousand souls were added to them that day. The Christian Church was now born; fulfilling Jesus' command to go and make disciples of all the world: *to set captives free to heal the sick and to cast out demons* - in His Name.

There are now many millions of Born Again Christians around the world - and still growing!

THE END

Story by Peter J Foster. Copyright October 2009

If you are now ready to become a follower of Jesus Christ, simply open your heart and read out loud the following prayer:

"Lord Jesus, I believe that You can save me from my sin. I accept you as my personal Saviour. Please forgive me. I now turn from all my sin. Please come into my heart and live with me. Lord Jesus, I receive Your Spirit in me. I am now saved and live with You and the Father forever. Amen!"

You are now saved. Please go and tell someone of your commitment and begin enjoying your

wonderful new life.

You may like to consider going to a local church, even attending an “Alpha Course”; which is a fun, sociable and excellent way of developing your faith. You will find a course being run local to you.

Please visit their web site for more details: www.uk.alpha.org/findacourse