

# Creation: Making the World



## SABBATH—JANUARY 5

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Genesis 1:1, 2; Isaiah 45:18; Genesis 1:3–5; 1 John 1:5; Revelation 22:5; Genesis 1:6–8; Genesis 1:9–13; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 2 Peter 3:5; Job 38:4–6.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “The LORD created the heavens. He is God. He formed the earth and made it. He set it firmly in place. He didn’t [did not] create it to be empty. Instead, he formed it for people to live on. He says, ‘I am the LORD. There is no other LORD’ ” (Isaiah 45:18, NlrV).

**BEGINNING IN GENESIS 1, THE BIBLE SUPPORTS THE IDEA THAT GOD PLANNED AND DESIGNED EVERYTHING.** God started with a planet that was unformed and unfilled. Then He spent the first three days preparing the world for life and the last three filling it. This week’s lesson focuses (gives careful attention to) on those first three days of the Creation week.

Some Bible experts are opposed to the idea that God would plan and design the world. They argue that God just left nature alone to “be itself” and to develop without any help from Him. This is a common theme among those who believe and support “theistic evolution.”<sup>1</sup> But such ideas do not agree with what the Bible teaches. The universe itself does not have the power to create. The creation is not independent of God’s control. Instead, creation is God’s way of showing His love to the creatures (living things) that He has made.

1. theistic evolution—the belief that God created the world and then let living things develop naturally.

**SUNDAY—JANUARY 6****WITHOUT FORM AND VOID  
(Genesis 1:1, 2)**

**What does Genesis 1:1, 2 teach us about the earth as it was before the Lord began creating life on it?**

The Bible starts the story of Creation by saying that God is Creator. It then describes what the world is like when God begins to prepare it for living things. When the story begins, the planet is already here but it is unformed, unfilled, dark, and wet. The next verses describe how God first creates a world to live in and then fills it with living things. The first verses do not tell us when the rocks and water of the earth first appear. They only tell us that the world was not always fit for life. In other words, the world becomes fit for living things only because God acts to make it so.

**What does Isaiah 45:18 teach us about God’s plan for Creation?**

When the earth was first made, it was not fit for life. The Bible says nothing about the time period that passed between the creation of the rocks and water and the creation of the environment and the creatures. Some Christian thinkers believe the creatures might have been made right after the earth was made. Others think that a long period of time may have passed between when the rocks of the earth were made and when the environment and the creatures were made.

The simple fact is, we do not know. But it is really not that important. The important point is that the Lord was not dependent upon things that had been there. Through the power of His Word (Jesus), God created a world that is fit for us to live in.



The earth was unformed, unfilled, dark and wet, and unfit for life.

**MONDAY—JANUARY 7****LET THERE BE LIGHT  
(Genesis 1:3–5)**

**What do these verses teach us about the first day of Creation?**

Many points can come from these verses. First, God created light. Second, the light was “good.” We may wonder why the verse says that God “saw” the light. Is there any doubt that God sees everything? The point is that the light made by God was good, even to God. We know that the light was good because God Himself judged it to be.

Another point is that God divided the light from the darkness. Neither

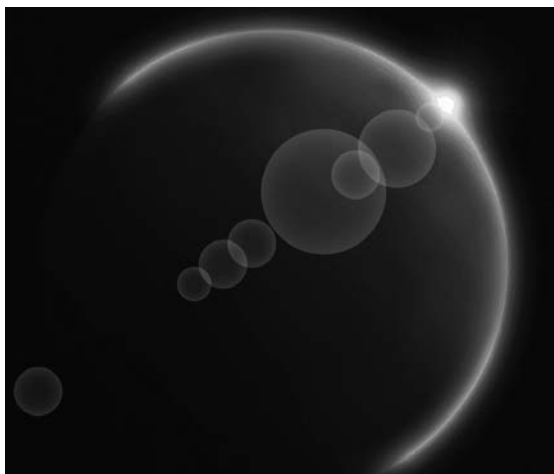
of them makes any difference to God's activity and knowledge. (Read Psalm 139:12.) This is because both light and darkness are under God's control. So, God gave names to the dark and light parts of time, calling them "day" and "night." God has the right to give names to periods of time because He is the Creator of time. As Ruler over time, God is not limited by time. Rather, time depends on God.

Another point of these verses is that there was a period of darkness and a period of light that together made a day. Much has been written about the meaning of "day" in the Creation story. We will study this question later. But we note here that the first day was made of a period of darkness and a period of light. It is the same way that we keep track of days now.

Also, light is one of the things that shows the presence of God. His presence is often connected with light. (Read 1 John 1:5; Revelation 22:5.) We do not need to suppose that light was invented (made for the first time) on the first day of Creation. This is because we know that God was there before the earth was created. At Creation, light was introduced to the dark planet.

**You may ask, "But, how could there be day and night before the sun was made on the fourth day of the Creation story?" Moses surely knew the connection between the sun and daylight. But Moses wrote what he did about the light and darkness on the first day. God**

**must have given Moses knowledge about Creation that we do not understand. This is the kind of knowledge that cannot be understood by studying the natural world. Why should we not be surprised that some things about Creation remain a mystery?**



God divided the light from the darkness.

## TUESDAY—JANUARY 8

### THE HEAVEN CREATED (Genesis 1:6–8)

God created a huge space above the earth, decided on its special work, and named it heaven. The work of the space (heaven) was to divide the water below from the water above it. Today, we would probably call it "sky." This sky contains the atmosphere. The atmosphere is a part of our environment. And the space beyond our atmosphere is where the sun, moon, and stars are.

The atmosphere appears to be part of the "heaven" that was formed on the second day of Creation. The

atmosphere makes it possible for water to move upward. This means that water can evaporate and enter the atmosphere. Then it can be carried to any place on the earth. Then it can be brought back to the earth through the mist (Genesis 2:6) or as rain.

God named the space above the earth the firmament (sky), showing His rulership over it. This act of naming suggests that God is Ruler over space. Space does not limit God's actions in any way. This is because God created and still rules space. Just as with the lighting of the world on the first day, the creation of the atmosphere and space was completed before the end of the second day. This means there was another dark period of evening and a light period of morning.

Many thinkers have discussed the meaning of the word *firmament* (atmosphere and space). The Hebrew word *raqia* is sometimes used to mean a sheet of metal that has been hammered into a thin sheet. So, from here we get the word *firmament*. Critics have argued that the old-time Hebrews really believed there was a hard surface above the earth. So, they argue that the Bible story is wrong. But this is wrong reasoning. The use of the word *firmament* simply means the sky above. It is both the atmosphere and space itself. We only have to read the Bible to know what it is saying. For example, in Genesis the birds are described as flying on "the face of the firmament" (Genesis 1:20, NKJV). In another place the firmament is where the sun and moon

are (Genesis 1:14). Clearly, the birds do not fly in the part of the *raqia* where the sun and moon are.

**The Creation story is mysterious. But one point comes through very clearly. Nothing is left to chance (accident). Why is that point important for us to know?**



God created the atmosphere that we breathe on the second day of Creation.

## WEDNESDAY—JANUARY 9

### SPACE FOR LIVING (Genesis 1:9–13)

**Try to imagine the wonderful, creative power of God as He is creating. How do these verses give the answer to the old question, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?"**

Before this time, the earth is covered with water. To make living space for the humans, God changes the surface of the earth to make places

that receive the water and form seas. This lets large bodies of dry land appear. This involves a third division (separation) in the physical appearance of the earth. (The first division is between light and darkness. The second division is between waters above from waters below. And the third division is between dry land and seas.)

Also, for the third time, God gives names to the things that He has divided. The dry land is called “earth.” The gatherings of waters are called “seas.” Once again they show God’s rulership (rule) over space. God examines the arrangement of land and seas and says that it is “good.”

A second Creation event is recorded for the third day of Creation. The dry land makes a space for God to place a food supply for the living things soon to be created. God calls forth plants from the dry land (earth). Grass, herbs, and fruit trees are named. These are to be the sources of food for living things on earth. The verse does not say how many different kinds of plants were created. But it does say that there were many different plants from the beginning. In fact, from what we see today, we know that there must have been a great many living things. Also, the Bible is clear that there is no single parent here from which all plants came from. Instead, right from the start, there are many different plants. This fact goes against the idea that there was a single plant parent that

all living plants today once came from.

**Look at the many different fruits and vegetables. How do they present powerful proof of God’s love for us? Why is it foolish to think that all these things came about through evolution?<sup>2</sup>**



On the third day God causes dry land to appear and plant life to grow.

## THURSDAY—JANUARY 10

### GOD’S ALL-POWERFUL WORD (2 Corinthians 4:6)

**What do 2 Corinthians 4:6; Isaiah 55:11; and 2 Peter 3:5 teach us about the power of God’s word?**

The Bible teaches that God created out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) by the power of His word. The Hebrew people were the only ones in all the world who believed this during Bible times. Many other creation stories written during that time tell of war and struggles in

<sup>2</sup> evolution—the theory (unproven idea) that the differences between modern plants and animals exist because of changes that happened by a natural process over a very long time.



creation. For example, the ancient Babylonians had a creation story. In their story the monster Apsu and his partner Tiamat make many gods that they then try to destroy. But Tiamat is killed in the battle. Her body is divided into two parts, one that forms the heavens and the other that forms the earth.

Modern men have also created a popular story of creation through war. According to this story, God willfully created a world in which the things necessary for life would be very limited. This caused wars between the living creatures. The result was that weaker creatures would be removed by the stronger. Over time, according to this modern story, living things grew stronger and stronger. Finally, they made humans and all other living things with all of them coming from a common parent. This story is called evolution.

But, the “gods” of evolution are not the same as the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible is the Defender of the weak. He is the generous Giver for all creatures. Death, suffering, and other evils were not caused by God. Instead, they came as a natural result of rebellion (war) against His good rulership. The gods of evolution use war to remove the weak and build up the strong. Even worse, they are responsible for death and suffering. Really, death and suffering are their ways of creating.

So, Genesis 1 and 2 cannot agree with the theory of modern evolution. From the very beginning, evolution opposes the Bible story of Creation.

**FRIDAY—JANUARY 11**

**ADDITIONAL STUDY:** The Bible does not say it. But we have good reasons from the Bible to believe that the universe was around long before life on the earth began. First, in Job 38:4–6, God says that there were living beings (angels or people) who shouted for joy when God formed the world. This suggests beings who lived in the universe before the earth was created. First Corinthians 4:9 may speak of the same group of beings. Second, the serpent (snake) was present in the Garden of Eden before Adam and Eve sinned. In Revelation 12:9, the serpent is another name for Satan, who was thrown out of heaven. Jesus said that He saw this happen (Luke 10:18). Ezekiel 28:14, 15 describes the covering cherub (Lucifer), who is perfect at first but later rebels (fought against God). These verses suggest that there was a period of time before Satan’s rebellion and that Satan lived in the universe also. These verses also show that Adam and Eve were not the first beings created.

“As the earth came forth from the hand of its Maker, it was very beautiful. Its surface was covered with mountains, hills, plains, and with noble rivers and lovely lakes. But the hills and mountains did not have sharp peaks, as they now do. These sharp, ragged peaks were buried beneath the fruitful soil. There was a rich growth of trees and plant life everywhere. There were no dan-

gerous swamps or barren deserts. Beautiful shrubs and flowers grew everywhere. The hills were topped with trees taller and greater than any that are now on earth. The air, unspoiled by pollution, was clear and healthful. The entire landscape was more beautiful than the decorated grounds of the best homes. Angels viewed the scene with delight and admired the wonderful works of God.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs [Leaders in Bible Times] and Prophets [Special Messengers]*, page 44.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- ❶ Point out as many things as you can that show that the world is designed by God.
- ❷ What reasons can you give to show how the theory of evolution cannot agree with the Bible teaching of creation?
- ❸ Without a doubt, there are parts in the Genesis Creation story that we cannot explain. But why is that not a good reason for refusing to accept it as the truth about how the world was created?