

Jesus, Creator of Heaven and Earth



SABBATH—DECEMBER 29

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 19:1–3; John 1:1–3, 14; Colossians 1:15, 16; John 2:7–11.

MEMORY VERSE: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1, NlrV).

ONLY A PERSON GREATER THAN THE UNIVERSE COULD HAVE CREATED THE UNIVERSE. And that Person is the God who is shown in the Bible. He is the God whom we worship and serve because He *is* our Creator.

We also learn that this God created the universe. He made those billions of galaxies (star systems) across the space of the cosmos (the orderly universe). And He is the same One who came to earth to live among us as a human. And, surprise of all surprises, He Himself accepted the punishment for our sins.

Sometimes we hear of things that are “too good to be true.” What could be better for us than to know the wonderful truth of our Creator’s love? It is a love so great that He came down in the person of Christ and joined Himself with each of us with ties that never can be broken.

In answer to such a wonderful truth, how are we to live our lives?

SUNDAY—DECEMBER 30**IN THE BEGINNING (Genesis 1:1)**

There are many deep truths in Genesis 1:1. One of these truths is that the universe itself had a beginning. That idea might not seem so odd to us today. But most people believe that creation took place over long periods of time (evolution).¹ In the 1900s, the idea of the big bang² was introduced. That is when people started accepting the idea that the universe had a beginning. Until then many believed that the universe had always been around. Many people did not accept the idea that the universe had been created because that suggested some kind of Creator (God). (In fact, the name *big bang* suggests that the universe was not created by God.) But the proof that the universe had a beginning has become so strong that almost all scientists have accepted it—at least for now until the scientists change their minds.

What does Hebrews 11:3 tell us about God and the creation of the universe?

As with Genesis 1:1, Hebrews 11:3 is full of mystery. There are things that we cannot explain with our present knowledge. But the verse does seem to tell us that the universe was not formed from pre-existing matter.³ The universe was created by the power of God's word.

Both matter and energy were created by God's power.

Creation from nothing is known as creation *ex nihilo*.⁴ Humans can create many things. But humans cannot create something from nothing. We can change the form of pre-existing matter. But we have no power to create *ex nihilo*. Only the great power of God can do that. This is one of the greatest differences between God and humans. This reminds us that our very life depends on the Creator.

In fact, the verb *created* in Genesis 1:1 comes from a Hebrew root word that means that God alone has created us. Only God, not humans, can do that kind of creating. (See also Romans 4:17.)

Why is the Creator God the only possible reason for the Creation? Bring your answer to class on Sabbath.



The universe was created by the power of God's word.

1. evolution—a 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.

2. big bang—the scientific theory (unproven idea) that the universe began with a huge explosion.

3. pre-existing matter—matter or material that was already there.

4. *ex nihilo*—creation of things from nothing.

MONDAY—DECEMBER 31**THE HEAVENS DECLARE
(Psalm 19:1–3)**

How have you experienced the truth of Psalm 19:1–3 and Romans 1:19? How has modern science helped us to better understand the power and wisdom of God as Creator?

Not just any kind of universe would be able to support life. In fact, it seems that the universe must be well designed for life. First, the building blocks of all matter are atoms.⁵ These atoms must be strong enough for things to be created from them. How strong atoms are depends on the forces that hold the parts of the atoms together. Atoms have particles in them that attract (pull together) and repel (push apart) each other. These pulling and pushing forces must be carefully balanced. If the pulling forces were too strong, only large atoms would form. Then there would be no hydrogen. Without hydrogen, there would be no water and, thus, no life. If the pushing forces pushed too strongly, only small atoms would form, such as hydrogen. And there would be no carbon or oxygen. Without oxygen, there would be no water and no life.

So, the atoms must be strong. But they must be able to work with one another in order to form many different chemical compounds.⁶ There must be a balance between the forces that hold the molecules (two or more atoms)

together and the energy required to break up the molecule to set chemicals free to support life.

In other words, the world also must have been well designed in order for life to go on.

The atom is just one of the many examples that show how well God put the universe together. This has led many scientists to say that the universe is designed by a God who is very wise.

For example, the range of temperatures must be just right for life. Our distance from the sun, its turning speed, and the atmosphere must all be in perfect balance. Many other details of the world also must be carefully designed. Truly, God's wisdom is shown in what He created.



God's wisdom is shown in what He created.

TUESDAY—JANUARY 1**THE POWER OF HIS WORD
(Jeremiah 51:15, 16)**

Read Jeremiah 51:15, 16 and Psalm 33:6, 9. We know of God's great wisdom. But what great act of God

5. atoms—the smallest particles of a substance that can exist (be) by themselves or be combined with other atoms to form a molecule (two or more atoms).

6. compounds—the joining of several things in order to make other things.

is brought up in the Creation? How was this act shown in Creation? More important, what does this truth mean for us?

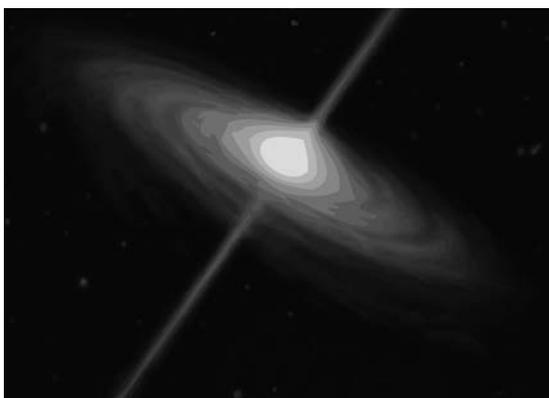
We cannot know exactly how God did the creating. But we are told that it was done through His powerful word. All the energy in all parts of the universe were created by the word of God (Jesus). All the energy in all our fuels came from God's power. All the gravity around the universe, every star moving in deep space, and every black hole came from God's power.

Maybe the greatest amount of energy is within the atom itself. We are very impressed by the power of nuclear weapons. With this power a small amount of matter is changed into a large amount of energy. But scientists tell us that all matter holds large amounts of energy. Suppose a small amount of matter can make the great energy of a nuclear weapon. Then think about the amount of energy stored in the material of the entire world! But that is nothing compared to the energy stored in the matter of the universe. Imagine how powerful God must be to bring the universe to life.

Many scientists believe that anything God may do in His creation is limited by the "laws of nature." But the Bible says that this idea is not true. God's power has not always followed the patterns that we call the "laws of nature." This is because God is not limited by natural law. Instead, God decides on how much natural law is needed.

For example, one of the fundamental laws of nature is the law of conservation of matter and energy. This law says that the total amount of matter and energy in the universe always stays the same. But how could the universe appear from nothing if this law were true? This means that God's creative word is not limited by the laws of science. God is Ruler over all His creation and is free to do what He wants to do.

Think (the best that you can) about the size of the universe. Think about the great power needed to create it. And then think that the God who has such power loves us, even died for us. How can you learn to receive comfort from this wonderful truth?



Every star and black hole came from God's power.

WEDNESDAY—JANUARY 2

JESUS, CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH (John 1:1–3, 14)

Read John 1:1–3, 14; Colossians 1:15, 16; and Hebrews 1:1, 2. How

do the New Testament writers recognize the Creator? What does the answer suggest?

John speaks of Jesus as the Word (“Logos”). He makes Him equal to God. Jesus is the One who created all things. In John’s day, the word *logos* was commonly used to suggest the act of creating. John’s readers would recognize *logos* as an act of creating or even as a creator. John used this well-known idea to represent Jesus. John points to Him as the true Creator. Jesus, the Logos, became the God-man who lived among us. He was at the Creation in the beginning. He also was the One who created the universe. This means that we could read Genesis 1:1 as, “In the beginning, Jesus created the heavens and the earth.”

Paul’s words in Colossians 1 agree with those of John in pointing to Jesus Christ as the Creator. This means that all things were created by Him. But Paul adds two more great things about Jesus. First, He is the seen image (Person) of the unseen God. In our sinful condition, we cannot see God the Father. But we can see Jesus. If we want to know what God is like, we can study the life of Jesus (John 14:9). Second, Paul calls Jesus the “firstborn” of creation (Colossians 1:15). “Firstborn” here means position, not birth. The firstborn was the head of the family and the heir (receiver) of the property. Jesus was the “firstborn.” This is because He is our Creator and God-man. So, He is the rightful Head

of the human family. Jesus was not a created being. Instead, He was One with the Father from eternity.

Hebrews 1:1, 2 brings up the same points as the verses in Colossians. Jesus is the chosen Heir of all things and is the One who created the whole world. In addition, Jesus is the perfect example of the Father’s nature. This is another way of saying that Jesus is the image of God.

How would you answer if someone were to ask you, “What is your God like?” What proof could you give for your answer?



Jesus, the Logos, or Word, is the One who created all things.

THURSDAY—JANUARY 3

THE CREATOR AMONG US (John 2:7–11)

What do John 2:7–11; John 6:8–13; John 9:1–34 show about the creative power of God?

Each of these miracles gives us an example of God’s power over the physical world that He Himself created.

First, what kind of method would be required to change water directly into wine? None that we know of. This showed an act outside of the laws of nature.

In the miracle of the fish and loaves, Jesus started with five loaves and two small fish. He ended with enough to feed a large crowd and have 12 baskets of leftovers. All the food was made of atoms and molecules. At the end, there were a lot more atoms and molecules of food than when Jesus started to feed the crowd. Where did the additional molecules come from, if they were not created by a miraculous act of God?

And what physical changes happened to the blind man when he was healed? He was blind from birth. His brain had never been trained to “see” pictures from the messages sent by his eyes through his optic (of the eye) nerves. So, his brain had to be trained in order to understand this information, make pictures, and interpret (explain) their meaning. Next, there was something wrong with his eyes themselves. Perhaps some molecules were damaged at birth. Or perhaps some mechanical damage had occurred that prevented his eyes from working right.

We do not know what caused the man’s blindness. But the words of Jesus caused molecules to form in the right places to enable the blind man to see and recognize images (pictures) that he never had seen before.

Miracles are wonderful when they happen, but what is the dan-

ger of making your faith dependent upon them? Upon what must our faith depend?

FRIDAY—JANUARY 4

ADDITIONAL STUDY: The work of Creation can never be explained by science. What science can explain the mystery of life?

“The theory that God did not create matter when He created the world is not true. In the creation of our world, God did not depend on pre-existing matter. All things obeyed the Lord Jehovah’s voice. And they were created for His own purpose. The heavens, the earth, and all things are the work of His hand, and they came to life by the breath of His mouth.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Testimonies [Special Messages] for the Church*, volume 8, pages 258, 259.

“Just how God made the world and what is in it He has never shown to men. Human science cannot search out the secrets of God. We can no more understand God’s power than we can understand how He lives.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs [Leaders of Israel in Bible Times] and Prophets [Special Messengers]*, page 113.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① In class, discuss your answer to Sunday’s final question.
- ② Science discusses the perfect balance of forces in nature that makes it possible for us to have life on earth. For

example, we need the right amounts of oxygen and hydrogen to be able to breathe air and live. If the amounts are not in the proper balance, we die. Science calls these balances “lucky accidents,” which is an insult to God’s creatorship. Why do you think it is better for us to believe that God Himself created these right balances instead?

③ Consider the love of the Creator as He created Adam and Eve and gave them a beautiful garden home while knowing that He Himself would suffer and die on Calvary. What do we

learn about God’s love from the decision that He made to go ahead with the Creation anyway?

④ How does the big bang theory compare with how the Creation is described in Genesis 1:1? Might the big bang be a description of how the universe came to life at God’s word? What issues or problems do you find in this idea? Why would it be dangerous to connect our religious beliefs to any scientific theory? (Why is this especially true when science changes its theories so often?)