

Creation, a Biblical Theme



SABBATH—JANUARY 19

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Genesis 2; Matthew 19:4–6; Psalm 8; Job 38:1–21; Job 42:1–6; Isaiah 45:18; Acts 17:22–31.

MEMORY VERSE: “I saw another angel. He was flying high in the air. He came to tell everyone on earth the good news that will always be true. He told it to every nation, tribe, language and people. In a loud voice he said, ‘Have respect for God. Give him glory. The hour has come for God to judge. Worship him who made the heavens and the earth. Worship him who made the sea and the springs of water’ ” (Revelation 14:6, 7, NlrV).

GENESIS 1:1–2:3 IS THE FOUNDATION FOR MANY CREATION VERSES IN THE BIBLE. Some verses pointing to Genesis 1 and 2 are clear. But others are not so clear. A good example is Hebrews 4:4: “Somewhere he [God] spoke about the seventh day. He said, ‘On the seventh day God rested from all his work’ ” (NlrV). This is a quote from Genesis 2:2.

This week we will study different verses that point back to the Genesis story. We also will show how other Bible writers understood the Genesis story to be a real example of human beginnings.

SUNDAY—JANUARY 20**CREATION IN GENESIS 2
(Genesis 2:4)**

Genesis 1:1–2:3 is the first story of God creating our world. It is the foundation of all the other truths that we, as Christians, believe.

But the Creation story does not end there. From Genesis 2:3 to the end of the chapter, we are given more details. For example, we learn more about the creation of Adam and Eve. So we should interpret (explain the meaning of) Genesis 2:4 as the introduction to a deeper history of the creation of Adam and Eve. Genesis 1:26–29 is a short summary of the same event.

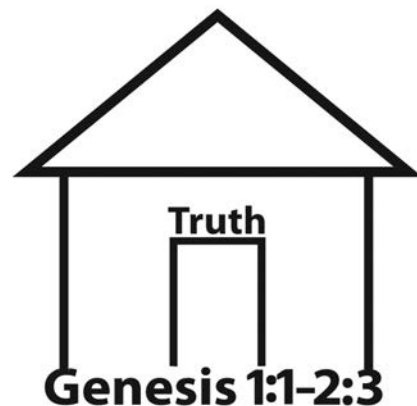
Some modern Bible thinkers have argued that there are problems between Genesis 1 and 2. But this would have been a surprise to Moses and the other Bible writers. If the stories were different, Moses would never have written them. They were so close together. The problem is not with the verses. It is with those who find differences where there are none.

Read Matthew 19:4–6. How does Jesus support the historical truth of Genesis 1 and 2?

In answer to the Pharisees' question about divorce, Jesus quotes from both Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24. This shows that Jesus Himself considers both to be a discussion of the same historical event—the Creation of the world and people. How much more proof do we need that Genesis 1 and 2

agree with each other about Creation? We are not here by chance. We are not here by accident. We are people made in the image (likeness) of God. And the Genesis Creation story, as shown in chapters 1 and 2, is the true history given from God about our beginnings.

Read Genesis 2. How does it help us to better understand what it means to be human, to be made in the image of God, and to be given free will?



All other truth we believe rests on a foundation of Genesis 1:1–2:3.

MONDAY—JANUARY 21**CREATION IN THE PSALMS
(Psalm 8)**

Read Psalm 8. What connections do you find with Genesis 1?

Read Psalm 104. Note how this psalm praises God for His goodness as seen in both Creation and in His watchcare. Notice the links with Genesis 1 in the following

verses from Psalm 104: verses 2, 5, 7, 9, 14, 19, 25.

Note how the psalm's series seems to follow the series of Genesis 1. Examples in poetic form are clearly given throughout the verses. And the message of the psalm clearly includes the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. And also the fact that creation depends on the Creator. The psalm shows very clearly that the Genesis story should be accepted as true.

Study the examples from Psalm 24:1, 2; Psalm 33:6; Psalm 74:16, 17; and Psalm 89:11 that agree with Genesis 1.

The Psalms are full of praise for the Creator. Sometimes this is shown in nearly the same language in Genesis 1. At other times the language is more general. But in all cases, the description of Creation is nearly the same as in Genesis 1. These descriptions also remind us how Genesis helps us to better understand our beginnings as sons and daughters of God.



All creation depends on the Creator for life.

TUESDAY—JANUARY 22

CREATION IN THE BOOK OF JOB (Job 38:1–21)

Read Job 38:1–21. Study the topics about creation in Job 38:1–12, 16, 19.

It is important to remember what the book of Job is about. Terrible things happen to Job. And Job is struggling to understand how such bad things could happen to him, a faithful follower of God. From chapter 38 through chapter 41, the Lord continues to talk about His creative power while trying to answer Job's puzzling questions.

Read carefully Job's answer to the Lord in Job 42:1–6. Why does Job answer as he does? And what can we learn from his answer that can help us to trust God when something bad happens to us?

Job is not able to explain why things happen to him. But this leads him to recognize the greatness of God and to trust Him, no matter what happens to him.

We also find ourselves unable to answer many questions about Creation. So, Job's example should encourage us to trust God, no matter what. After all, many questions about everything in life will remain unanswered, at least for now. But we will have an eternity to better understand what we cannot understand now.

The point is that today we can

understand creation so much better than Job ever could. And no matter what happens, we should learn to trust in God's wonderful love and power.

Today we are living after the Cross. So, we have an understanding of the Creator and the crucified (put to death on a cross) Savior. Because of this understanding, we have something that Job never had. So how much more, then, should we trust in the Lord's goodness toward us, knowing what He did for us?



Many questions in life will remain unanswered until we get to heaven.

WEDNESDAY—JANUARY 23

CREATION IN THE PROPHETS (Isaiah 45:18)

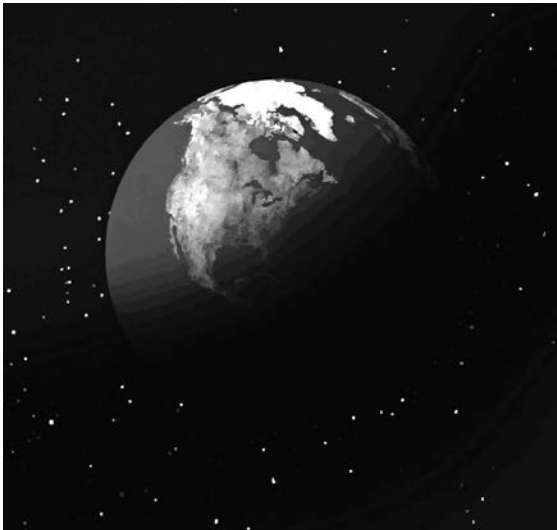
Isaiah 45:18 shows God's plan to prepare a place for humans to live. In other words, He made the earth a good

place for life, and this was no accident.

Think about the earth and what makes it a good place for human life. How does the earth compare with the other planets in our solar system? First, there is plenty of water. There is some proof of water on Mars. But there are no bodies of water on this or on any other planet aside from Earth. Another special feature of Earth is the atmosphere, which is about 21 percent oxygen and 78 percent nitrogen. Other planets have atmospheres but none has the right balance of oxygen and other gases. Only Earth has an atmosphere suitable for life. Also, the temperatures on Earth are good for life. They are not the same as those on any of the other planets in our solar system. There are many reasons for this difference: our distance from the sun, our atmosphere, the mass of Earth, and the speed of Earth as it turns on its axis. All this makes the lengths of our days and nights right for life. All these things together make Earth the only known planet suitable for supporting life.

How do the following verses tell of the events described in Genesis 1? Isaiah 44:24; Isaiah 45:12; Jeremiah 51:15, 16; Amos 4:13; Jonah 1:9; Zechariah 12:1.

Think about what the right beginnings mean to us in a world that, in itself, offers no hope without Jesus Christ as Creator.



Earth is the only planet we know that is suitable for life.

THURSDAY—JANUARY 24

CREATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (Acts 17:22–31)

Read Acts 17:22–31. What are the results of this sermon? After Paul introduces his topic, what does he tell these “wise” men in verses 24 and 25? In verses 26–28, what does Paul say is the relationship (connection) between the Creator God and humans?

The audience here no doubt included the two groups of thinkers known as Stoics¹ and Epicureans.² The Stoics believed that there was design in nature. But the Epicureans did not.

1. Stoics—Stoics believed that wisdom, self-control, and good all lie within the soul of a person. Stoics also believed in freeing one’s soul from passion or emotion that comes from bad judgment and from reacting to things in life in the wrong way. A Stoic achieves this freedom from passion through examining his or her own thoughts and living a life of virtue (goodness and purity). This helps free the mind from suffering.

2. Epicureans—Epicureans believed that tranquility—or the freedom from fear and pain—brought the highest happiness to one’s life. So, they avoided anything that would cause them fear or pain, such as overeating, drinking too much wine, or having too much sex.

Both groups did not know of the true God. But their arguments about design were nearly the same as many of the arguments still discussed in our day.

The important point here is that Paul witnessed to nonbelieving thinkers by arguing that the Lord was the Creator of all things and all people. Paul was a believer, unlike these people, but he went on to say that they shared something with him. They all came to life from the same God. And Paul tried to build his argument from that point. So, we can see that Creation is an important theme in the Bible.

Look at the following verses: Matthew 19:4–6; Mark 2:27; Luke 3:38; John 1:1–3; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Hebrews 4:4; James 3:9; 2 Peter 3:5; and Jude 11, 14. What is interesting is that each one of these New Testament authors speaks of the Genesis Creation story. This gives more proof that all the Bible writers accepted the Creation story.

Read Revelation 4:11 and Revelation 10:5, 6. What do the heavenly people and angels say about God’s creatorship?

Creation was not an accident. It was done by God’s will. For example, the verses in Revelation 10:5, 6

speak of Exodus 20:11. Once again, as in John 1:1–3, John shows that he knew of, and believed in, the Creation story. How foolish it would be for us to think differently!

FRIDAY—JANUARY 25

ADDITIONAL STUDY: The Bible is a book about God and His relationship to us humans and our world. The events of Creation week are very special because they came from God. And they are outside the study of science for two reasons. First, they are singularities.³ Science has a difficult time dealing with singularities. This is because they cannot be done again and tested in different ways several times. Second, the Creation events were the acts of God alone. They were special, direct acts of God. Science does not accept any explanation that depends on God's direct action. Because the Creation events are the direct acts of God alone, science is not qualified to study them.

Our opinion of beginnings has an important connection with our understanding of who we are. Understanding our beginnings is so important that God placed it as the first subject in the Bible. And the message of the Bible is based on the history of the Creation story. To claim that we can learn the true history of our world

through science is to not believe in God's direct acts. This is an error that has led to more error.

“Men will try to explain from natural causes the work of creation, which God has never shown. But human science cannot search out the secrets of the God of heaven. Science cannot explain the great works of creation. They were a miracle of God's power. In the same way, science cannot show how God came into life.”
—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy [Special Message From God]*, volume 1, page 89.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Creation is a main theme throughout the entire Bible. Is there any proof that Bible writers had different ideas of Creation? Or is there any proof that they showed doubts about the truth of any part of Genesis? Why is this answer important?
- ② What reasons do you think someone might give to reject (turn down) the idea that nature is designed?
- ③ Jesus supported what Moses wrote (Luke 16:29–31), including the story of Creation (Mark 2:27, 28; Matthew 19:4–6). Knowing of this background and the example of Jesus, what should our feeling be about the story of Creation?

³ singularities—things that happen only once or one time.