

# Lesson 12

*God Creates the Universe*

*Unit*

**2**



**Adult**

*Student Guide*

Answers Bible Curriculum Unit I • Adult Student

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Reprinted July 2019

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Printed in China.

# God Creates the Universe

## *Lesson Focus*

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The account of God's creation—by the Word of his mouth—reveals that he is the omnipotent Creator. The evolution model of creation conflicts dramatically with the biblical creation account of Genesis . We must rely on God's Word alone for the truth.

## *Key Passages*

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Genesis 1:1; Jeremiah 23:24, 33:25–26; Psalm 69:34; Nehemiah 9:6

## *What We Learned*

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- How God's omnipotence is demonstrated in the creation account.
- How the biblical account of creation compares with the evolutionary model of the origin of the universe and life on earth.

## *Memory Verse*

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Psalm 8:3–4

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

# Recap

## Scriptural Background

Before Genesis nothing but God in eternity past existed. Genesis 1 is the beginning of the universe, time, space, history, and all of life as we know it. In addition, Genesis is foundational to the rest of Scripture. It sets the tone for God's eternal plan of redemption.

From the very first verse, Scripture assumes God's existence without trying to prove it in any way. We must avoid using arguments that attempt to prove God by demanding evidence in the natural world. Man's need to prove God implies his intention to elevate his own autonomous reason above God's Word.

Though obviously presented with very little "background," the information given to us in the early chapters of Genesis is foundational to many important doctrines, including the Trinity (Genesis 1:26), death (2:17), marriage (2:24), sin (3:6), and the gospel (3:15). The book of Genesis is to be taken as history provided by God to give us a glimpse of his majesty, wonder, creativity, and eternal purpose.

## Historical/Apologetics Background

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." This first verse in the Bible answers many questions for us, such as "Where did everything come from?" "Is there a God?" "When did time begin?" These are questions Christians often have trouble answering—not because they lack faith, but because they don't realize that answers to questions like these can be found in Scripture.

When did time begin? Time itself began when God began to create the universe—"In the beginning." He created time for man, but he himself is not bound by time. He is eternal—the Alpha and

the Omega—the beginning and the end (Revelation 1:8). God confirms this concept when he tells us that to him a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day (2 Peter 3:8).

There are many opposing views of the Genesis account of creation that manipulate God's Word to include millions of years (the old-earth view). Many will try to persuade us that the creation account must be "proven" before being believed. Realistically, however, no account of origins can be proven—it must be accepted by faith. Christians must stand firm on biblical authority—God told us in his Word what happened and how he created: "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible" (Hebrews 11:3).

Over the past 200 years, because of "scientific" developments, many Christians have attempted to merge millions of years into the Bible's account of creation. Some of the biblically compromised views that evangelical Christians hold to are listed below:

- **The day-age view:** a compromise belief that the days of Genesis 1 are actually vast ages of different lengths; based on secular dating methods.
- **The gap theory:** a compromise belief that a vast period of time exists between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 into which the geologic eras can be fit.
- **The framework hypothesis:** a compromise belief that Genesis 1 is written in a non-literal, nonchronological way; based on secular dating methods.
- **Theistic evolution:** a compromise belief that suggests God used evolutionary processes to create the universe and life on earth over billions of years.
- **Progressive creation:** a compromise belief suggesting that God has created organisms in a progressive manner over billions of years to accommodate secular dating methods.

These are all ideas that attempt to fit evolution and/or millions of years into the Bible rather than believing the Genesis account of the six days of creation.

Does the creation account matter? Is the order important? Why should we care what God created on each day? Well, if God specifically and systematically presents the order of his creation over a six-day period in his Word, we can safely say yes, it does matter.

It matters because we must be aware that evolution is prominent in our culture today—even indoctrinating our youngest children. This idea is in direct opposition to what God’s Word tells us about his amazing work of creation.

Creationists believe God’s Word as recorded. Evolutionists believe in millions of years of slow change, from non-life to simple cells, to more complex plants and animals, and eventually to the organisms that exist today, including man. Those who embrace this position must reject God’s Word because evolution does not harmonize with God’s account of creation. Here are a few examples of the more obvious differences:

<b>Evolutionary Ideas—Not True</b>	<b>Creation in Genesis—True</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Sun before earth	Earth (day 1) before sun (day 4)	Genesis 1:1
Sun before light on earth	Light (day 1) before sun (day 4)	Genesis 1:3
Earth at same time as planets	Earth (day 1) before other planets (day 4)	Genesis 1:1, 1:14–15
Sea creatures before land plants	Land plants (day 3) before sea creatures (day 5)	Genesis 1:12–13, 1:20–23
Reptiles before birds	Birds (day 5) before reptiles (day 6)	Genesis 1:20, 1:23–24, 1:31
Creation took billions of years	God created in six normal 24-hour days	Genesis 2:1–2

It is very sad to consider that many Christians feel that the age of the earth is an unimportant side issue and that discussing it detracts from the gospel message. Christians must understand that all of Scripture is foundational to our faith. If we can set aside a literal six-day creation because it is considered “unscientific” or unpopular, then what will be our basis for determining the truth of the rest of Scripture? Can we teach a virgin birth or a literal resurrection? When we read the genealogy of Christ, which goes back to Adam, can it be taken literally? Believing the historical account of Genesis 1–11 is foundational to believing the rest of the Bible and essential for understanding the gospel message.

# God Creates the Universe

## Lesson Focus

- The account of God's creation—by the Word of his mouth—reveals that he is the omnipotent Creator.
- The evolution model of creation conflicts dramatically with the biblical creation account of Genesis 1.
- We must rely on God's Word alone for the truth.

## Key Passages

Genesis 1:1; Jeremiah 23:24, 33:25–26; Psalm 69:34; Nehemiah 9:6

We are at the beginning of a new unit of study. In the last unit, we started our study through Scripture with some foundational work. Understanding the Bible and the character of God is extremely important as we start to make our way through the Bible. If we don't know that we can trust the Bible and, consequently, the Creator who reveals himself on its pages, the truths of the Bible may seem fantastical or unscientific.

- Last time, we described a framework to understand biblical history using seven words that began with the letter C. Does anyone remember the Seven C's of History?
  - Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion, Christ, Cross, Consummation.**

Today, we are going to begin walking through the Bible. We are starting with the first C—Creation. For the next several lessons we will look at the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth and all of God's creatures—including us.

## Read Genesis 1

- What type of literature is Genesis 1? Does it sound like a history account, a poem, a letter, or some other type of writing?
  - The text reads very much like an account or narrative of historical events that occurred in a specific series, not a poem or a letter.**
- Verse one tells us that God created what?
  - The heavens and the earth.**
- How did the various parts of the creation come into existence?
  - God spoke, and they appeared.**
- What does the passage tell us about God?
  - God is the omnipotent Creator of the universe. It is all a demonstration of his power and creativity.**

In Genesis 1:1, it is beneficial to know that the phrase, "heavens and earth" is a merism—a figure of speech that uses two extremes to refer to everything in between. When I tell you that someone was covered in mud "from head to toe," you know I am talking about the person's entire body. Passages like Jeremiah 23:24; Jeremiah 33:25-26; Psalm 69:34; and Nehemiah 9:6 use similar language.

Note: There is no doubt that the entirety of the universe has been created by God acting as the three members of the Trinity: God the Father in Genesis 1:2; God the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1:2; God the Son in John 1:3, Colossians 1, and Hebrews 1:2. Note: As we talked about previously, God is eternal—he has no beginning and will have no end. But his creation is not eternal—it had a beginning. Before God created, there was no space, no time, and no matter. It is very difficult for our minds to understand this concept, but it is clear from our examination of Scripture that it is true.

- This concept of Creation and how it relates to the Big Bang and Evolution may be a challenge to our thinking. That's why some Christians try to mix Creation ideas with Evolution. For example, some believe the days of creation are long ages. Some believe that the secular scientific explanations are so overwhelmingly persuasive that to reject them is to be anti-science. But mixing creation and evolution are not based on the biblical record but on human opinion. For example, as you read

Genesis 1—what we have said is a historical narrative—how many days did God use to create the universe?

1. Six days.

7. Feel free to quickly skim below through a further comparison between the evolutionary models of the origin of the universe and the biblical record. Example: In the first row, we see that the sun forms before the earth in the evolutionary view, about 5 billion years ago according to secular scientists. Looking at Genesis 1:2, we see that the earth was present on the first day. Then, in 1:16 we see the sun was created on the fourth day. Are there any points in which the order of the different views agrees?

1. No, all of the events occur in a different order in the evolutionary view.
2. Some people suggest that the days are vast periods that overlap to allow for the billions of years to fit into Scripture. Regardless, the Bible would have to be changed to accommodate the evolutionary view. They are totally incompatible.

<u>Evolutionary View</u>	<u>Biblical View</u>	<u>Biblical Reference</u>
Sun formed before the earth.	The earth was formed before the sun	Genesis 1:1, 16
Earth was originally a molten ball.	The earth was formed as water.	Genesis 1:2
Stars formed before the earth.	The stars were not formed until day 4.	Genesis 1:14–15
Dry land was present before oceans.	The dry land appeared on day 3.	Genesis 1:9–10
Sea creatures evolved before land plants.	Plants were created on day 3, and sea creatures were created on day 5.	Genesis 1:11–12, 20–23
Trees evolved long after simpler plants.	All plants were created on day 3.	Genesis 1:11–13
Reptiles evolved before birds.	Birds were created on day 5, and reptiles (creeping things) were created on day 6.	Genesis 1:20–2:25
Reptiles evolved before mammals.	Both were created as land animals on day 6.	Genesis 1:24–25
Humans evolved long after mammals.	Both were created on day 6.	Genesis 1:24–27

8. How do we know which view is true?

1. The biblical view must be true because it is found in God’s perfect Word.

9. As we read Genesis 1 as a historical account of how the universe was created, it answers a multitude of questions about how we got here. Believing in what the Bible has to say about Creation doesn’t mean you’re “anti-science,” it’s just that the biblical account always beats what scientists theorize. As we approach this topic in conversations with other people, what should be our attitude?

1. With other Christians...

1. We are called to approach discussions of doctrine humbly, pointing to Scripture, not science, to make arguments. The doctrine of creation is not a scientific argument—it is a biblical

argument. Hebrews 11:3 calls belief in God as Creator a matter of faith. We must take the argument to the Bible since the creation was a supernatural event.

2. With those who are not Christian

1. The approach doesn't necessarily change—we should not use a pile of evidence from science to convince anyone of a supernatural work by an omnipotent Creator. There are surely aspects of the creation that point to God as Creator (Psalm 19 and Romans 1), but the act of creation was supernatural and is received by faith in what God has revealed in the Bible.

10. If we suggest that the account of creation in Genesis 1 is a myth or an allegory, what other doctrines (teachings) would become mythical or allegorical— what doctrines find their basis in the first few chapters of Genesis?

1. Marriage, man created in God's image, the entrance of sin into the world, the need for a Savior, and others. For example, if Adam is a mythical figure, then the argument of Romans 5:12–17 leads to the conclusion that Jesus is a mythical Savior.

11. How can understanding that God created the entire universe in six days by simply speaking it into existence help you to trust him?

1. Knowing that he is all-powerful should give every believer great assurance in what God is capable of doing in the future. He can accomplish all of the things that he promises us he will do.

### **Group Prayer Time**

- Praise God for his absolute power and control over his entire creation.
- Thank God for giving us a clear account of how he created our world.
- Ask God to help each person to look to the Bible as the absolute authority in their life.