



# GENESIS 1–3

BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

LES BRIDGEMAN

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BIBLEBRIDGE  
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*Genesis 1–3: Bible Study Lessons, PDF*

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In the beginning  
God created  
the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

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## INTRODUCTION

The Bible is the world's best-selling book and its ideas have influenced millions of people throughout the centuries. Therefore, the Bible deserves our attention, both mentally and emotionally.

But understanding the Bible requires effort and assistance. The books of the Bible were written in ancient Hebrew and Greek 2,000–3,000 years ago. If effort and help is needed to understand Charles Dickens who wrote in English 100 years ago, how much more so with the Bible? This guide has been written to help readers understand the Bible and engage with its contents on an intellectual and emotional level.

These lessons are for you if you are looking for the following:

- an intellectual *and* devotional study of Genesis 1–3,
- interpretation challenges addressed honestly and kept in perspective,
- interaction with other parts of Scripture (Old and New Testament),
- exposure to different views, including theistic evolution, without indoctrination on the one right view, and
- personal questions to engage the heart.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

*Genesis 1–3: Bible Study Lessons* is an intellectual and devotional study of the first three chapters of Genesis for ages 15 and up. This course includes 23 lessons, 3 quizzes, 1 test, and an answer key.

Lessons usually include a brief review of a concept or fact found in the previous lesson, questions to be answered, and comments on specific verses. **Bold superscript numbers** in the lessons, quizzes, and test indicate answers in the Answer section. Please be sure to read the Answer section because it contains important information. The **footnotes** (indicated in the lessons with roman numerals) mostly contain bibliographic information.

This course incorporates many different Bible versions, but the primary translation used is the New International Version. The NIV text of Genesis 1–3 is included in the lessons, but other Scripture verses will be examined so it's best to have your Bible open as you go through each lesson. This course also incorporates free online resources. Since the internet is always in a state of flux, the instructions regarding online resources may need to be updated.

This is a self-study course so the pace of completing the lessons is up to you. There are 23 lessons and 1 test so if you do 5 lessons each week, this course will be completed in about 5 weeks. If you do 3 lessons each week, this course will be completed in 8 weeks.

How you take the quizzes and test is also up to you (e.g., open notes, closed notes, or a combination). Space is provided in the lessons, quizzes, and test for answering the questions, but if you need more space please use a personal notebook along with this study guide.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

### **General**

= precedes a definition

v(v) – verse(s)

OT – Old Testament

NT – New Testament

CEB – Common English Bible

ESV – English Standard Version

GW – God’s Word Translation

HCSB – Holman Christian Study Bible

ISV – International Standard Version

NASB – New American Standard Bible

NET – New English Translation

NIV – New International Version

NIRV – New International Reader’s Version

NLT – New Living Translation

NRSV – New Revised Standard Version

### **Old Testament Books**

Gen – Genesis

Exod – Exodus

Deut – Deuteronomy

Ezr – Ezra

Neh – Nehemiah

Ps – Psalms

Prov – Proverbs

Isa – Isaiah

Jer – Jeremiah

Ezek – Ezekiel

Hos – Hosea

### **New Testament Books**

Matt – Matthew

Lk – Luke

Rom – Romans

1 Cor – 1 Corinthians

2 Cor – 2 Corinthians

Phil – Philippians

Heb – Hebrews

Rev – Revelation

## Lesson 1: Learning to Observe

Welcome to our study of Genesis 1–3, the first three chapters of the Bible! I think you'll find these chapters fascinating, meaningful, and challenging.

1. Before we begin our study, however, we must learn how to study. While there are several ways to study the Bible, we'll use this lesson to focus on the inductive study method. An **inductive study** starts by observing details and then uses those details to arrive at general principles. For example, let's say you spent one hour watching a bird with three baby birds in a nest. During that time, you watched as the bird flew away and returned with food for the babies. You also noticed that when a predator approached the nest, the bird flapped its wings and chirped noisily. What would you conclude from your observations?<sup>1</sup>
  
2. Your study of the bird was inductive because you started by noticing details and then arrived at a general principle. A **deductive study**, on the other hand, reverses the order by beginning with a general principle and proceeding to the details. Using our example, a deductive study would begin with the assertion that the mother bird cares for her babies and then it would seek observations to support that assertion. So a deductive study starts at the top (general principle) then moves to the bottom (details supporting that principle), while an inductive study starts at the bottom (details) then moves to the top (principle). Essentially, a deductive study assumes the conclusion. When we assume something about someone we are using deductive reasoning. What assumptions have you made about someone you know that were proven to be wrong?

3. Here are the three steps to an inductive Bible study:
  - I. **Observe** – List all of the details you notice in the text such as repetition, keywords, how it begins, how it ends, etc. The question you’re trying to answer is, “What do I see?”
  - II. **Interpret** – Explain what your observations mean. If you have questions about the text you can list them here also. The question you’re trying to answer is, “What do my observations mean?”
  - III. **Apply** – Offer practical suggestions for incorporating the meaning of the text into your life. The question you’re trying to answer is, “What difference does it make?” or “How can I use this in my life?”
4. The first step is often the hardest to do well. Why is observing difficult?<sup>2</sup>
5. If you’re inclined to notice details you may find it easy to make observations. For others, making observations is difficult because it requires patience and curiosity. Why is observing important?<sup>3</sup>
6. Write out Genesis 1:1 then list at least five observations on it. (We’ll focus on this verse in the next lesson.)

## Lesson 2: In the Beginning (Gen 1:1)

**Review:** What are the three steps of an inductive Bible study?

---

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1:1)

1. The first verse of Genesis is explosive. The name of the book comes from the opening words, “In the beginning.” **Genesis** = beginning. Certain religious and philosophical teachings claim that the universe is eternal, but Genesis asserts that our universe had a beginning. The Big Bang theory, currently the dominant model in cosmology, also affirms that the universe had a beginning. Because everything in the universe is moving farther apart, the Big Bang theory asserts that everything was originally condensed at a point and then it exploded causing the outward movement. **Cosmology** = the study of the origin and development of the universe.<sup>i</sup> While the age of the universe is a highly contentious issue, Genesis doesn’t begin with an explicit date of the universe’s origin, but rather with the generic, “In the beginning.” (We’ll consider the age of the universe in a later lesson.). What is your view of the universe? Does it have a beginning or not? Why?
  
2. What difference would it make to you if the opposite of your view of the universe was true?

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<sup>i</sup> If you’re interested in engaging interviews with leading scientists and philosophers, both Christian and non-Christian, on the nature of the universe see the Cosmos section of [clostertotruth.com](http://clostertotruth.com).

3. The Genesis creation story is unique in the modern world because it doesn't give logical arguments for God's existence; it simply asserts God's existence from its first sentence. And then it goes on to state that the one God who exists, made everything. Logical arguments include the ***Kalam cosmological argument***, which asserts the following. 1.) Whatever begins to exist has a cause, 2.) the universe began to exist, 3.) therefore the universe has a cause. And of course, that cause must be outside of time and space, and therefore eternal and powerful. Another logical proof is called the ***teleological argument***, which states that since the universe appears to be designed, there must be a Designer. What do you think about arguments for God's existence? Which of the two arguments above do you find most persuasive? Why?

4. The Genesis creation story was unique in the ancient world because it didn't explain God's origin. Ancient Mesopotamian and Egyptian creation stories narrate the origin of the gods. **Theogony** = the birth story of the gods. Moses, who has traditionally been understood to be the author of Genesis, wrote "from everlasting to everlasting you are God" (Ps 90:2). In other words, God always existed.<sup>ii</sup> What do you think about the idea that God always existed?

5. The Hebrew word used for God in Genesis 1 is *elohim*. **Elohim** = God. The Hebrew verb used in Genesis 1:1 is *bara*. **Bara** = create. In the Bible, *bara* is usually focused on the creation of something new by God.<sup>iii</sup> In that sense, can humans *create* anything?<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>ii</sup> Bill T Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 49.

<sup>iii</sup> Richard E. Averbeck, *Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation*, ed. J. Daryl Charles (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2013), ch. 1.

6. The phrase “**the heavens and the earth**” = everything. That is the traditional interpretation of “the heavens and the earth.” A minority interpretation views the phrase more concretely and literally as a reference to “the sky and the land.” Technically, the Hebrew words **shamayim** and **erets** can be translated as sky and land respectively, but when placed together they are usually understood as a merism for the totality of all that exists. **Merism** = an expression of totality that uses contrasting parts. What other merisms can you think of? If you can’t think of any, look them up online and record them below.

7. Everything includes:

- all matter—even atomic and subatomic,
- the physical laws that govern all matter, and
- space and time.

Since God made everything, nothing existed before God created it. So before creation, God and only God existed. That rules out **dualism** = the eternal existence of two entities, such as light and darkness or good and evil. And that also excludes the existence of other gods. Genesis 1:1 introduces the key biblical theme of **monotheism** = the belief in only one God. And monotheism is a rejection of **polytheism** = the belief in many gods; **pantheism** = the belief that everything is god; **atheism** = the belief that God does not exist; and **agnosticism** = the belief that we cannot know if God exists. Finally, if only God existed before creation then God must have ultimately created out of nothing. **Creatio ex nihilo** = creation out of nothing. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” can keep us thinking for a lifetime.

8. Review the vocabulary words in this lesson then write out Hebrews 11:3.

## Lesson 3: Repetition in Genesis 1

**Review:** Define bara, Elohim, and creatio ex nihilo.

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1. A major part of making good literary observations is noticing what the author is emphasizing. How do you emphasize something in your writing?
2. How do you emphasize something when you are sending a text message?
3. How would you emphasize something without using bold print, italics, underlines, exclamation points and all caps?
4. The biblical authors were limited in how they could emphasize words because they didn't have access to the devices we use today like **bold**, *italics*, CAPITAL LETTERS, etc. One of the primary ways biblical authors emphasized words was by repeating them. That means that when we read the Bible we have to pay special attention to repeated words and phrases. Read Genesis 1 on the next page then highlight the repeated words and phrases.<sup>5</sup> One of the best ways to mark repetition is by highlighting the same word or phrase in the same way each time it appears. (For example, you could use a yellow highlighter for the word *light* each time it appears and a blue highlighter for the word *water* each time it appears. If you don't use different colors, use different symbols or shapes. Just be consistent by using the same color or symbol each time that word or phrase appears.)<sup>iv</sup>

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<sup>iv</sup> To work with Bible passages in a particular translation go to [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com), select the passage and translation, then copy and paste the passage onto a blank document, then print.

## **Genesis 1**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” <sup>7</sup> So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,<sup>[a]</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

<sup>29</sup> Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. (NIV)

**Footnotes:**

- a. Genesis 1:26 Probable reading of the original Hebrew text (see Syriac); Masoretic Text *the earth*

## Lesson 4: The Six Days

**Review:** List five repeated words or phrases in Genesis 1.

---

1. In this lesson, we'll focus on the six days of Genesis 1. While not everything fits neatly into the categories below, many scholars believe the six days can be divided into two main sections.<sup>v</sup> Place an appropriate heading in the empty boxes for each column. What is the main activity happening in each column?<sup>6</sup>

<b>Day 1</b> – Light	<b>Day 4</b> – Sun, Moon, Stars
<b>Day 2</b> – Sky	<b>Day 5</b> – Fish & Fowl
<b>Day 3</b> – Land and Seas & Vegetation	<b>Day 6</b> – Animals & Human Beings

2. By categorizing the six days in this way, day one corresponds with day four, day two corresponds with day five, and day three corresponds with day six. In the first three days, God prepares the place and in the last three days, God fills it with occupants. In this way, God solves the fundamental problem of verse 2: “Now the earth was \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.” God forms then fills.
3. Read Genesis 1 again then list the repeated phrases used to describe each day of creation.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>v</sup> For further study see Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1984), 39–59.

4. What is the significance of God declaring everything good?<sup>8</sup>

5. How to properly interpret the days of Genesis 1 has been the subject of much controversy. Here are four major ways of interpreting the days of Genesis 1 with support for each view.

### **Views on the “Days” of Genesis 1**

I. **24-hour days** – the days were literal 24-hour days and the events of creation occurred in the order in which they are stated in Genesis 1.

**Support:** The Hebrew word for day (*yom*) usually means a 24-hour period of time and the references to “evening and morning” at the end of each day make it clear that the author is thinking of typical 24-hour days. In addition, the statements in Exodus 20:8–11 and 31:17 support this view. Two variations of this view include: 1.) The days are literal 24-hour days with huge amounts of time between each day, called the “intermittent day” view. 2.) The days are 24 hours as we understand time today, but since time is relative, 24 hours today would mean billions of years at the start of creation.

6. Write out Exodus 20:11.

**Problem:** Many readers have struggled with chronological problems of the 24-hour-calendar day view. For example, how could there have been light on day one before the sun was made on day four? And without the sun, how could there have been “evening and morning” on the first three days? Finally, how could the plants (day three) have survived without the sun (day four)? Origen (AD 182–254) and Augustine (AD 354–430) asked these questions long ago. In his work, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, Augustine entertained the idea that, contrary to the

way it sounds in Genesis 1, God actually created everything instantaneously. He suggested that Genesis 1 was written in the way it was so that readers could grasp the totality of all that God created.

**Possible Solutions:** First, some solve this problem by suggesting that the light of day one was a non-solar, divine light. Second, others suggest that the sun was in existence prior to day four, but its light finally penetrated Earth's atmosphere on day four. Third, because of the chronological challenge and other data some prefer to abandon the 24-hour day view for one of the views below.

- II. **Age-Day** – each of the six days were ages or long periods of time. Most who hold this view affirm the sequence of events as stated in Genesis 1 (see [reasons.org](http://reasons.org)), but others don't (see [oldearth.org/progressive.htm](http://oldearth.org/progressive.htm)).

**Support:** In the Bible, the Hebrew word for day is sometimes used for longer periods of time (cf. Gen 2:4, 17; Is 34:8). And echoing the words of Moses in Psalm 90, Peter says, "With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day" (2 Pet 3:8).

7. Write out Psalm 90:4.

- III. **Analogical** – the days of Genesis 1 are real days, but they are not days as we understand them. They are God's days used as an analogy with our days. As with all analogies there are similarities and differences between the two items being compared.

**Support:** On the one hand, the evening and morning that concludes each of the six days directly corresponds with what we think of as a normal day. On the other hand, the first three days could not have been normal 24-hour days without the sun, which wasn't created until day four.

- IV. **Literary Framework** – the days of Genesis 1 did not actually occur; they are metaphorical. Specifically, the days are a creative literary device used to structure the account of creation.

**Support:** First, Genesis 1 is written symmetrically and includes rhyme, so we should interpret it as a creative piece of writing. Second, divine creation is mentioned in many other places in Scripture, without referring to the days. The point of the metaphor is to help us understand that God made everything and to encourage us to follow God's example of work and rest.

8. Which of the four views makes the most sense to you? Why?

9. Do you think that different views of the days of Genesis 1 make a big difference to a person's faith? Why or why not?<sup>9</sup>

## Lesson 5: Light, Earthquakes, and Dinosaurs? (Gen 1:2–21)

**Review:** List the names of the four different views of the days in Genesis 1.

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Now the earth was formless and empty,  
darkness was over the surface of the deep,  
and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. (Gen 1:2)

1. The Hebrew text of Genesis 1 uses rhyming as a literary device. In Genesis 1:2, the Hebrews words for formless and empty are **tohu** = formless and **bohu** = empty. Do you think translators should try to preserve the rhyming when translating into English? Can you think of a way to preserve the rhyming in this case?
2. Where did the water-covered Earth of verse 2 come from? It simply appears without explanation. While many view Genesis 1:1 as a summary statement or title for the entire chapter, some view Genesis 1:1 as a prior event to the events that occur in the rest of the chapter. If Genesis 1:1—“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” is a prior event then the origin of the water-covered Earth can be found in verse 1.<sup>vi</sup> If not, the story of creation simply skips straight to a water-covered Earth without explanation.<sup>vii</sup> How do you view the relationship of Genesis 1:1 to Genesis 1:2?
3. How long was the watery Earth of verse 2 in existence? We don’t know. So when it comes to the age of Earth, we may have an indefinite period of time in Genesis 1.

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<sup>vi</sup> For support see my blog post *In the Beginning: Genesis 1:1* at [www.bible-bridge.com/in-the-beginning-genesis-1](http://www.bible-bridge.com/in-the-beginning-genesis-1).

<sup>vii</sup> A strong argument in favor of viewing verse 1 as a summary statement and not a prior event to the rest of the chapter is that verse 1 is subordinate to verse 2 in Hebrew. Some translations make that relationship more obvious: “In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void . . .” (NRSV). “When God began to create the heavens and the earth—the earth was without shape or form . . .” (CEB). While it may seem odd to begin with watery chaos, other ancient creation stories began in the same way, such as the *Enuma Elish*.

4. The word for Spirit = **ruach**. Ruach can also be translated as wind or breath. “The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” What does that indicate about the Spirit?<sup>10</sup>

God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.”  
And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. (Gen 1:5)

5. In Hebrew, the word used for the number of day one is unique among the seven days. It is “one” so technically this is “day one” not “the first day.” The words used for the other days indicate order in a series: second, third, fourth, etc. Most English Bible versions, however, use the word “first” instead of “one” in their translation, and therefore, most readers can’t see the difference. Here are two possible implications of this difference.

First, ancient commentators believed “the words ‘one day’ served to elevate the day of Creation to something more than part of a sequence . . . it is what we call a principle, an *arche*. On ‘day one,’ then, God creates light, which He thereby separates from darkness. It is out of this light, which is the product of God’s first creating word, that all the rest of Creation comes.”<sup>viii</sup>

Second, it may indicate a forward-looking perspective. Since the second day had not transpired, the first day could not be called, “the first day.” There was no “second day” with which to compare it so it had to be called “day one.” Gerald Schroeder, an orthodox Jew and physicist, believes this distinction shows that we have a different perspective of time than the one presented in Genesis 1. While we are looking backward, Genesis 1 is looking forward from the time of creation. That may not seem significant, but Schroeder uses that observation to support his theory that the days of Genesis 1 were six literal 24-hour days and yet from another perspective they also encompassed millions of years. Time at the beginning of the universe, when the universe was much smaller, would have been experienced differently than we experience time today. Twenty-four hours back then would be the equivalent of millions of years in the way that we experience time.<sup>ix</sup>

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<sup>viii</sup> Patrick Henry Reardon, *Creation and the Patriarchal Histories: Orthodox Christian Reflections on the Book of Genesis* (Ben Lomond: Conciliar Press, 2008), 33.

<sup>ix</sup> Gerald Schroeder with Zola Levitt, *Genesis One: A Physicist Looks at Creation* (Zola Levitt Ministries: 1998), Program 1.

6. In the New Testament, Paul uses God's command to give light in a spiritual and personal way. Write out 2 Corinthians 4:6.

7. Like verse 2, verse 9 indicates that water covered the earth. While earthquakes and tsunamis create incredible devastation, they are the result of plate tectonics. And without plate tectonics, water would continue to cover our planet.<sup>x</sup>

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds. And it was so. (Gen 1:11)

8. "According to their various kinds" and similar expressions appear several times in Genesis 1. The point seems to be that God created things with distinctions and those distinctions were intended to continue.<sup>xi</sup> While some use Genesis 1:11 as support against evolution because new things appear at God's command without transitioning from other things, others find support for God-directed evolution in the fact that vegetation and living creatures come out of the land at God's command. God brings new things out of existing matter. How many times does the word "kind(s)" appear in Genesis 1 (NIV)?<sup>11</sup>

9. The assertion that God made the two great lights—the sun and moon—and the stars in verses 14–18 was revolutionary in the ancient world. Other ancient religions asserted that the sun and moon were gods that should be worshiped. In ancient Egypt, the sun god Ra, was an important

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<sup>x</sup> Dinesh D'Souza, *What's So Great About God? A Reasonable Defense of the Goodness of God in a World Filled with Suffering* (Carol Streams: Tyndale, 2013), 125.

<sup>xi</sup> For support see bible.org/netbible — Genesis 1, footnote 32.

deity. Think about hearing these verses in a setting where it was common to worship the sun and moon. How would your life be different if you grew up believing that the sun was a god?<sup>xii</sup>

10. Regarding our moon, Hugh Ross, a Christian and scientist, believes it is a miracle because it is “fifty times more massive (relative to its planet’s mass) than any other solar system moon.” And according to theoretical modeling, the formation of the moon was due to a massive collision between a body and Earth which produced many “life-favoring changes to our planet.”<sup>xiii</sup>
11. Verse 16 says, “He also made the stars.” Watch online videos of our neighbor galaxy Andromeda to get an idea of how many stars exist in one galaxy. And Andromeda is only one of more than 100 billion galaxies. When did God make the billions of planets we have discovered? Genesis 1 doesn’t explicitly say, but if Genesis 1:1 means that God made everything, then the planets must have been made in verse 1.
12. The Hebrew word for “great creatures” = *tanninim* (also used in Exod 7:9, Ezek 29:3; Jer 51:34; Isa 27:1.) Some believe it is better translated “big reptiles” or even “dinosaurs.”<sup>xiv</sup> Others think that dinosaurs are not mentioned in Genesis 1 because the account is focused on God and humans. And since most humans throughout history had no knowledge of dinosaurs, Ross writes, “dinosaurs simply would not make the cut in the creation highlight reel.”<sup>xv</sup> As a proponent of progressive creationism (see Lesson 22), Ross accepts the standard scientific dates for when dinosaurs roamed the earth at 250 million–65 million years ago.

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<sup>xii</sup> How important were these verses for human progress? Just five hundred years ago, the Aztecs believed the sun was a god that must be nourished through human sacrifice. By using modern technology we know that the sun and moon are not gods, but how did the author of Genesis know?

<sup>xiii</sup> Hugh Ross, *Navigating Genesis: A Scientist’s Journey through Genesis 1–11* (Covina: Reasons to Believe, 2014), ch. 6.

<sup>xiv</sup> Gerald Schroeder, “Top Five Religious Myths Popularly Accepted as Fact,” [http://geraldschroeder.com/wordpress/?page\\_id=79](http://geraldschroeder.com/wordpress/?page_id=79); accessed 4 Mar 2016.

<sup>xv</sup> Ross, ch. 4.

13. List two or three ideas that you found thought-provoking in this lesson then create a drawing or diagram to help you remember one of them.

## Lesson 6: The Day Two Challenge (Gen 1:6–8)

**Review:** What is unique about the description of day one?

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1. In this lesson, we'll engage the challenge presented in day 2 and consider a principle of effective communication called accommodation. Christians and Jews believe Genesis is a part of God's Word. A human wrote it—it's traditionally ascribed to Moses—but God inspired that human to write it. But if God is going to effectively communicate with humans, he will need to accommodate to human limitations. **Accommodation** = making room for a lack of knowledge or a lack of ability to understand. Have you ever been accommodating to someone else in the way you explained something? How so?
2. How would you answer a five-year-old child who asked you, "Where do babies come from?"
3. Here's another question from the five-year-old: "Where does rain come from?"
4. How does an adult communicate with a baby? Sometimes adults talk normally, but other times they talk in a different way known as "baby talk." Some biblical scholars have used that analogy to explain how God communicates with us. But the intellectual distance between an adult and a baby is nothing compared to the distance between God and us. So if God is going to communicate effectively with us, he will have to make room for us by lowering himself to our level. (Invoking this principle can be controversial because what one scholar views as accommodation to an ancient

worldview and therefore not necessary to believe today, another scholar views as a statement from God's Word that must be accepted as factually accurate.)

### **Be Nice to Old People—Really Old People**

5. Ancient people didn't have access to much of the technology that we use today. For example, they didn't have telescopes, cameras, radar, satellites, airplanes, rockets, etc. To help you relate with the distance between us and an ancient person, draw the following below:
  - a. A timeline with the following years labeled: 1000 BC, 1500 AD, the current year
  - b. A person standing above the current year, looking up at the moon and stars through a telescope. (The telescope represents the Enlightenment, which began about 500 years ago and had a major impact on the worldview of everyone who followed.)
  - c. A rectangle labeled Enlightenment around the modern person and extending to 1500 AD
  - d. Another person above 1000 BC
  - e. The ancient person looking up at the sun and moon with bare eyes only

6. We've considered the principle of accommodation because many use that principle in their explanation of Genesis 1:6–8. Highlight the repetition below.

And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. (Gen 1:6–8)

7. What do you not understand in Genesis 1:6–8?

8. Genesis 1:6–8 are difficult verses to understand for two reasons:

- I. the translation of the Hebrew word *raqia* is disputed (see below)
- II. the fact that we don't believe water exists above the sky as the verses state

**I. Raqia in English Bible Versions**

First, let's consider how Bible versions translate the Hebrew word *raqia* in Genesis 1. While some translate *raqia* with words that indicate something solid, others use words that signify an opening in space.

<b>Something solid</b>	<b>An opening in space</b>
"firmament" (NKJV, RSV)	"expanse" (NASB, ESV, NET, HCSB)
"dome" (NRSV, CEB)	"space" (NLT)
"vault" (NIV)	"huge space" (NIRV)
"canopy" (ISV)	"horizon" (GW)

## **Pro Solid**

In support of the translation “dome,” ancient people viewed the universe in three levels: heaven, earth, and the underworld. Between heaven and earth they believed a solid-like structure held back water that existed above it. This is known as the three-tiered universe.<sup>xvi</sup>

Second, the verb *raqa*, from which *raqia* is derived, means to hammer out and it usually refers to hammering out something solid like gold (Exod 39:3). Finally, there are other references in the Old Testament and other ancient literature that suggest ancient people viewed the sky as a solid dome containing heavenly lights with water above it. For example,

- “Can you join him in spreading out the skies, hard as a mirror of cast bronze?” (Job 37:18)
- “Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies.” (Ps 148:4)

## **Pro Space**

Others argue that while ancient people referred to the sky as a solid dome they knew better. That was just one of their figures of speech, just like we refer to sunrise or sunset, but we know that the sun doesn’t actually rise or set. Perhaps it was even their way of speaking poetically. Therefore, the translation “expanse” or “space” is more accurate to what the ancients really believed even though they used a figure of speech that may suggest otherwise. Hugh Ross believes this view is correct and proceeds to identify the space or *raqia* with the troposphere—the layer above the ocean where clouds form.<sup>xvii</sup>

Obviously, there’s no way for us to get inside an ancient person’s brain to know what they *really* thought, but we do know that they had to understand the world without modern scientific tools.

## **II. Water above the Heavens?**

The second reason these verses are difficult to understand is that they distinguish water under the *raqia* from water above the *raqia*. But today we don’t think of water as being above the expanse or sky.

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<sup>xvi</sup> For more information see Brian Godawa, “Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography in the Bible, Part 5,” *Biologos*, <http://biologos.org/blogs/archive/mesopotamian-cosmic-geography-in-the-bible-part-5>; accessed 3 March 2016.

<sup>xvii</sup> Ross, ch. 4.

Some think the water above the sky refers to clouds, but there are difficulties with that view. First, the Hebrew word used for “water(s)” is *mayim* and it is used for both entities above and below the raqia. Perhaps it can be argued that one is a different form of water (e.g., vapor) than the other (e.g., liquid). But *mayim* is not the typical Hebrew word used for clouds in the Old Testament. Second, since the two great lights were set in the raqia on the fourth day (vv. 14–17), and water exists *above* the raqia according to the second day, it sounds like water would need to exist above the moon and sun. Those challenges lead some to conclude that we cannot use Genesis 1 to give us an accurate scientific view of the universe. However, astronomers have recently discovered an enormous amount of water, 140 trillion times larger than all the water in the world’s oceans, 12 billion light-years away.<sup>xviii</sup> And we know that water vapor exists in the Milky Way galaxy, so perhaps the reference to water on the second day can be supported by modern-day science.

## **Conclusion**

While some believers attempt to reconcile a modern understanding of astronomy with Genesis 1:6–8, other believers view much of verses 6–8 as conveying an outdated view of astronomy, which we can no longer affirm. They argue that ancient people believed the universe consisted of three tiers with a dome-like solid-structure holding back water above. And some use the principle of accommodation to explain why this ancient astronomy is included in Scripture. Many people who come to this conclusion don’t lose faith in the message of the Bible because they don’t believe it was written to convey accurate scientific information.<sup>xix</sup>

Finally, what is the main point of verses 6–8? The main point is that God made the sky (v. 8). Both groups of believers—those who attempt to harmonize these verses with modern science and those who don’t—agree with that point. Think of an ancient person looking up and seeing the big blue canopy-like structure over their head and wondering about its origin. Now think of a person today staring up in wonder at the blue sky on a clear day (knowing it doesn’t contain anything solid). While both are looking up in awe, they can equally accept the primary message of Genesis 1:6–8: God made the sky.

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<sup>xviii</sup> Whitney Clavin and Alan Buis, “Astronomers Find Largest, Most Distant Reservoir of Water,” NASA, accessed June 26, 2017, <https://www.nasa.gov/topics/universe/features/universe20110722.html>.

<sup>xix</sup> This challenging issue appears several times in the essays found in the book *Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation*.



4. Genesis 1:26–27 expresses the self-giving nature of God. He made humans in his image and likeness. He didn't have to invest so much of himself in humans, but he wanted to. What do you think it means to be made in God's image?
5. Attempting to answer that question has stirred a lot of controversy. It's probably best to understand being made in God's image and likeness in the following ways.
- I. **Ontological (our being):** The words "image" and "likeness" were used in the ancient Near East for physical replicas, such as statues.<sup>xx</sup> When God made humans, he made a replica of himself and put them in the garden. While it's difficult to specify how we resemble God in our various components, the image of God probably encompasses every aspect of our being—spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and even physical.
  - II. **Functional:** We were made to function as God's representatives on Earth. While God rules in heaven, he has assigned a certain degree of rulership on Earth to human beings. Notice God's desire for his image-bearers to "rule" (Gen 1:26, 28). That doesn't mean we should dominate and destroy the rest of creation. Instead, we should be responsible rulers over creation.
  - III. **Relational:** We were made to be like God, therefore, we can have a special relationship with him.
  - IV. **Christological:** According to Paul, the ultimate image of God is Christ. Christ is *the* "image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15; cf. 2 Cor 4:4), so to be made in God's image means that we were made in Christ, ultimately to be like Christ (Rom 8:29).
6. Explaining the plural pronouns "us" and "our" in God's speech is difficult. Who was God talking to when he said, "Let *us* make mankind in *our* image, in *our* likeness"? Here are three possibilities: 1.) God is speaking to his angelic host, 2.) God is speaking to himself using a plural of deliberation—when a person talks about himself or herself in third person, and 3.) one member of the Trinity is addressing the other two members (e.g., Father speaking to Son and Spirit.)

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<sup>xx</sup> Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), ch. 3.

7. **Adam** = man or humanity and is also used as the man’s personal name. In Hebrew, there’s a slight difference in the way humans are referred to in verses 26 and 27: “Adam” in verse 26 and “*the Adam*” in verse 27. While many view the addition of the definite article as merely a way of referring to the aforementioned noun (e.g., *the Adam*—the one already mentioned),<sup>xxi</sup> some believe this minor difference makes a big difference. Referencing *The Guide for the Perplexed* written by Maimonides (AD 1138–1204), Schroeder argues that Homo sapiens without a human soul (“Adam”) preceded Homo sapiens with a human soul (“the Adam”).<sup>xxii</sup> In other words, he finds support for the idea of theistic evolution (see Lesson 22) in Genesis 1:26–27. Here’s Maimonides quote regarding Adam’s children prior to Seth:

Those sons of Adam who were born before that time were not human in the true sense of the word, they had not ‘the form of man.’ With reference to Seth who had been instructed, enlightened and brought to human perfection, it could rightly be said, ‘he (Adam) begat a son in his likeness, in his form.’ It is acknowledged that a man who does not possess this ‘form’ (the nature of which has just been explained) is not human, but a mere animal in human shape and form.”<sup>xxiii</sup>

8. What do you think Maimonides is saying in that passage?<sup>12</sup>

9. Some use Genesis 1:29 to support the idea that God originally intended humans to be vegetarians. While the text certainly promotes a plant-based diet, it doesn’t explicitly state that plants were the only thing humans were allowed to eat. Later, God explicitly permitted the eating of meat (see Gen 9:1–4).

10. The phrase *original sin* can be misleading. Sin is not original to creation. Original goodness precedes original sin. In the beginning everything was good and pleasing to God. If everything wasn’t

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<sup>xxi</sup> See bible.org/netbible – Genesis 1, footnote 53.

<sup>xxii</sup> Gerald Schroeder, “Top Five Religious Myths Popularly Accepted as Fact,” [http://geraldschroeder.com/wordpress/?page\\_id=79](http://geraldschroeder.com/wordpress/?page_id=79); accessed 4 March 2016.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Moses Maimonides, “The Guide for the Perplexed,” Part 1, Chapter 7, trans. M. Friedländer, <http://sacred-texts.com/jud/gfp/gfp017.htm>; accessed 4 March 2016.

originally good, then God's work of creation was flawed. The final verse of Genesis 1 says, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very \_\_\_\_\_" (v. 31). How many times does the word good appear in Genesis 1?<sup>13</sup>

11. Make a list of two or three ideas in this lesson that made the biggest impression on you then create a diagram or drawing to help you remember one of them.

12. The next lesson will begin with a quiz. Study Lessons 1–7 and memorize the following verses: Genesis 1:1, 1:27, 1:31. Remember, if you're using this as a self-study course, how you take the quizzes and test is up to you (e.g., open notes, closed notes, or a combination).

## Lesson 8: Quiz 1; Reflecting on Genesis 1

### Quiz 1 (10 pts. each, out of 70)

For items 1–3, write out the listed verses from memory:

1. Genesis 1:1 –

2. Genesis 1:27 –

3. Genesis 1:31 –

4. Define Elohim –

5. What does God create on each of the six days of creation?

6. Genesis 1:31 teaches original \_\_\_\_\_.

7. List the names of the four views of the days in Genesis 1.

**Answers<sup>14</sup>**

## Reflecting on Genesis 1

1. So far we have learned to study inductively, explored the big picture of Genesis 1, and analyzed specific verses. In this lesson, we will reflect on one teaching in Genesis 1 and then conclude our study of Genesis 1 by considering personal questions.
  
2. What is your view of matter? Is matter or physical substance, good, evil, or neutral? Is it real or unreal? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Genesis 1 is world-embracing because it affirms the goodness and reality of matter. But several other belief systems differ with this view of the physical world.
  - a. **Hinduism** – all matter is ultimately **maya** = cosmic illusion. Despite what our senses tell us, there are not many different things in the world; there is only one reality—all is one, all is Brahman. **Brahman** = the impersonal source and eternal essence of everything.
  
  - b. **Jainism** – there are two basic entities in the world, which all living things possess: 1.) **jiva** = souls (all souls are pure) 2.) **ajiva** = matter (all matter is evil). The goal of life is to free the jiva from the ajiva.
  
  - c. **Platonism** – there are two worlds: 1.) the world of **Ideas**, containing the eternal and unchanging forms (e.g., the idea of a chair or “chairness”), 2.) the world of **matter**, containing physical substances that are constantly changing and are ultimately unreal (e.g., physical chairs).
  
  - d. **Gnosticism** – all matter comes from the ignorant and proud Creator called **Demuirge**, therefore matter is evil. Certain human beings have a pure and enlightened spiritual nature.
  
4. Reflect on Genesis 1 by answering the following questions. (See the answers for question 1; questions 2–9 are personal reflection questions.)

## **Reflection Questions**

1. What are the big ideas in Genesis 1?<sup>15</sup>
2. Why do we need a beginning?
3. How do you feel when you miss the first ten minutes of a movie?
4. What do you like about Genesis 1? Why?

5. What do you dislike about Genesis 1? Why?

6. If you could witness one of the days of creation, which one would you choose? Why?

7. How does Genesis 1 make you feel? Why?

8. Take 5–10 minutes and draw anything in Genesis 1. (Or look at famous works of art on Genesis 1 online.)

## Lesson 9: Extraordinary Day Seven (Gen 2:1–3)

**Review:** Define maya. Which religion teaches maya?

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1. Write out the words of Genesis 2:1–3.

2. Chapter and verse divisions were not included in the original books of the Bible. Modern chapter and verse divisions were inserted a few hundred years ago. If it was your job to place the chapter break between Genesis 1 and 2, where would you have placed it? Why?<sup>16</sup>

3. Underline the word creating in Genesis 2:3. The Hebrew word **bara**, which we saw in Genesis 1:1, is used in Genesis 2:3. Therefore, it serves as bookends for the entire account of creation.

4. What's unique about the description of the seventh day in comparison with the description of the other six days?<sup>17</sup>

5. What does God resting show us about God?<sup>18</sup>

6. Read Genesis 2:4–25 below and highlight God's actions as you are reading.<sup>19</sup>

### **Genesis 2:4–25**

<sup>4</sup>This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

<sup>5</sup>Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth<sup>[a]</sup> and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, <sup>6</sup>but streams<sup>[b]</sup> came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed a man<sup>[c]</sup> from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

<sup>8</sup>Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup>The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup>A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. <sup>11</sup>The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. <sup>12</sup>(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin<sup>[d]</sup> and onyx are also there.) <sup>13</sup>The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire

land of Cush.<sup>[e]</sup> <sup>14</sup> The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

<sup>18</sup> The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

<sup>19</sup> Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam<sup>[f]</sup> no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs<sup>[g]</sup> and then closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib<sup>[h]</sup> he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called ‘woman,’  
for she was taken out of man.”

<sup>24</sup> That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

<sup>25</sup> Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (NIV)

#### Footnotes:

- a. Genesis 2:5 Or *land*; also in verse 6
- b. Genesis 2:6 Or *mist*
- c. Genesis 2:7 The Hebrew for *man* (*adam*) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for *ground* (*adamah*); it is also the name *Adam* (see verse 20).
- d. Genesis 2:12 Or *good*; *pearls*

- e. Genesis 2:13 Possibly southeast Mesopotamia
- f. Genesis 2:20 Or *the man*
- g. Genesis 2:21 Or *took part of the man's side*
- h. Genesis 2:22 Or *part*

## Lesson 10: Humans in the Garden (Gen 2:4–17)

**Review:** List three unique features of day seven.

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1. Genesis 2:4–25 narrates the creation of humans and animals. But weren't animals and humans already made in Genesis 1? In this lesson we'll analyze specific verses in Genesis 2, and in the next lesson we'll consider how Genesis 1 and 2 relate to each other.

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created,  
when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. (Gen 2:4)

2. Underline “This is the account of” above. The book of Genesis is structured around the phrase “this is the account of” (NIV) or “these are the generations of” (ESV). That phrase is used 11 times in Genesis (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2).
3. Although it's not translated literally in the NIV, the Hebrew word **yom** (= day) is used in Genesis 2:4—“in the *day* that the LORD God made earth and heaven” (NASB). If the day (yom) of Genesis 2:4 is a literal 24-hour day, the days (yom) of Genesis 1 cannot be literal 24-hour days and vice versa.
4. As we've already learned, the Hebrew word used for God in Genesis 1 is **elohim**. In Genesis 2:4, God is called LORD for the first time. And LORD is the most common name used for God in the OT.<sup>xxiv</sup> **LORD** = the English translation of four Hebrew consonants, which transliterated give us YHWH. The four consonants are known as the tetragrammaton. **Tetragrammaton** = the four Hebrew letters that compose God's personal name. Out of respect for God's name, ancient Jewish scribes inserted the vowels from the word **adonai** = Lord into YHWH so that when readers came to YHWH they would not attempt to pronounce it. Instead they would simply say, “Adonai.”  
So how should we bring YHWH into English? In the past, many believed we should combine the vowels from Adonai with the consonants YHWH, which results in **Jehovah**. Today, many scholars believe **Yahweh** is a more accurate conjecture of the proper pronunciation of the divine name.

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<sup>xxiv</sup> The differences between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, including the different name used for God, has led some interpreters to conclude that they are two separate creation accounts written by different authors.

Using the name without vowels would result in **YHWH**, which is unpronounceable. The Orthodox Jewish Bible uses a reverential term in place of the tetragrammaton, **Hashem**, which means “the Name.” The tradition in English Bible versions is to translate YHWH as **LORD** (capital L followed by small caps). However, that can create confusion because LORD looks and sounds like Lord. But Lord is a title of authority, while LORD is God’s personal name. So when you see LORD, remember it is the translators’ way of conveying YHWH, which is God’s personal name—the name he revealed to his covenant people. LORD God = Yahweh God.<sup>xxv</sup> If it was your job to translate the tetragrammaton into English how would you do it? Why?

The the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground  
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,  
and the man became a living being. (Gen 2:7)

5. Genesis 2:7 shows God getting his hands dirty in the process of creation. Did God do anything like that in Genesis 1?
  
6. In Hebrew, there is a close linguistic connection between the man and the ground. God made *adam* from *adamah*. **Adam** = man, humanity, the man’s personal name. **Adamah** = ground, soil. Some suggest that the best way to show this connection in English would be to translate it as “God made the earthling (adam) from earth (adamah).”
  
7. Regarding God breathing into the man’s nostrils “the breath of life,” we must ask, does God breathe? If God breathes, he certainly doesn’t breathe exactly like we breathe because God doesn’t have mortal lungs. Many interpreters view God breathing as an anthropomorphism. When

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<sup>xxv</sup> For a tutorial video summarizing this information see my youtube video *The Tetragrammaton in 3 Minutes* at [https://youtu.be/7aX\\_wByxUUM](https://youtu.be/7aX_wByxUUM).

we describe God in human-like terms we may be using an anthropomorphism. **Anthropomorphism** = ascribing human characteristics to God. As we continue studying Genesis 1–3, consider other possible anthropomorphisms.

8. The statement “the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground” has been used to support **de novo** creation = new creation, because the man was created directly by God. But Genesis 2:7 has also been used to support theistic evolution. Keith Ward argues,

The Bible has no objection to humans being generated out of simpler forms of life—you cannot get much simpler than dust! So the evolutionary theory, now accepted by the vast majority of working scientists, that *Homo sapiens* evolved from simpler forms of life over a long period of time, is quite compatible with the biblical view.<sup>xxvi</sup>

9. Four rivers are mentioned in Genesis 2:10–14. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers run through modern-day Iraq. But we don’t know the location of the Pishon and Gihon. Hugh Ross has suggested that the garden of Eden would have been located where the current Persian Gulf sits, but we can’t be certain.<sup>xxvii</sup> While some believe Eden was an actual physical location, others suggest that the text gives us clues to understand Eden symbolically. For example, since the word **Eden** = delight or bliss, they suggest that Eden represents our original state of delight and innocence.<sup>xxviii</sup> What do you think? Was Eden a place on Earth as we know it?

10. Genesis 2:15 says that God placed the man in the Garden “to work it and take care of it.” God didn’t place the man on a mountaintop or in the desert. God placed him in a garden where his needs would be met. And although everything was “very good” in God’s eyes, there was still work to be done. God’s creation is not a work of art that should not be touched. God left room in his

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<sup>xxvi</sup> Keith Ward, *What the Bible Really Teaches: A Challenge for Fundamentalists* (London: SPCK, 2004), 66.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Ross, ch. 10.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Matthew Schlimm, *This Strange and Sacred Scripture: Wrestling with the Old Testament and Its Oddities* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2015), ch. 2.

creation for humans to cultivate it and bring it to its full potential. God is the Creator; humans are the cultivators.<sup>xxix</sup> What does that show us about God? What does that show us about humans?

11. The Hebrew verbs used in Genesis 2:15 describing Adam’s assignment are the same used of the priests in the tabernacle in Numbers 3:7–8. For that reason, many view Adam as carrying out a priestly function in the garden.

but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,  
for when you eat from it you will certainly die. (Gen 2:17)

12. In Genesis 2:17, the word yom (day) is used again—“in the *day* that you eat from it you will surely die” (NASB) and similar to Genesis 2:4, many translations use a general word, such as “when,” to translate it. If yom always means a 24-hour day, we have a problem because Adam ate the fruit and yet lived until he was 930 years old (Gen 5:5). (We will return to the meaning of the word death when we get to Genesis 3.) God told Adam he could eat from any tree in the garden, except for one. Why was this one tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—in the garden?<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>xxix</sup> John Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today* (LPI: 1984), ch. 8.



The man said,  
“This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called ‘woman,’  
for she was taken out of man.”  
(Gen 2:23)

4. The woman is a true companion for the man. She bears God’s image just like the man (Gen 1:27) and she was made from part of the man (vv. 21–22). Here’s a famous quote on Genesis 2:21–22: “God did not make the woman ‘out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.’”<sup>xxx</sup> Finally, the woman’s complementary nature is seen in the close connection between the Hebrew words used for the woman (*ishah*) and the man (*ish*) in Genesis 2:23.
5. Adam and Eve were both naked in Genesis 2:25 and they felt no shame. They had nothing to hide from each other. In addition, God commanded them to reproduce in Genesis 1:28. Sex was God’s idea. According to the Bible, sex is a good thing, but it should be practiced within the boundaries of marriage (Heb 13:4).
6. The woman is described as the man’s helper in verse 20. But being someone’s helper does not mean the one helping is inferior to the one being helped. Using the keyword search (under Bible in the upper left-hand side) on biblegateway.com, look up the references to the word “helper” in the NIV. Limit your search to the Old Testament (under Options). List three verses that refer to God as the helper of humans.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>xxx</sup> Cited in Blocher, 99–100.

7. What do you think life was like for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? Using information from this lesson and your five senses, write a journal entry, poem, or rap in which you imagine yourself to be Adam or Eve in Eden. Title it "Life in the Garden."

## Lesson 12: Comparing Genesis 1 & 2

**Review:** Does being someone's helper imply inferiority in the Old Testament? Why or why not?

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1. In this lesson we'll compare Genesis 1 and 2 and explore the various ways in which they may relate to each another. An important feature of both Genesis 1 and 2 is a comparison between animals and humans. In Genesis 1, after God made the animals, he made humans "in his image." The image of God makes humans distinct from animals. And in Genesis 2, no animal could meet the man's need for companionship, so God created the woman.
2. Make a list of differences between animals and humans. Since chimpanzees are probably the most similar to humans, compare humans to chimps.<sup>22</sup>
3. Now let's compare Genesis 1 and 2. List the similarities between the two chapters.<sup>23</sup>

4. List the unique features of each chapter. How are Genesis 1 and 2 different from each other?<sup>24</sup>

5. Some believe chronological differences exist between Genesis 1 and 2. If so, that could affect how we understand the days in Genesis 1. For example:

- **Genesis 1:** God creates vegetation (day three) then humans (day six).
- **Genesis 2:** God creates man then vegetation (vv. 5–7).
  
- **Genesis 1:** God creates animals then male and female humans (day six).
- **Genesis 2:** God creates the man, then animals, then the woman.<sup>xxxi</sup>

6. Here's the most important part of this lesson. The big difference between Genesis 1 and 2 is the difference between transcendence and immanence.

Genesis 1 portrays God as **transcendent** = above and beyond the world (Gen 1:24). In Genesis 1, God speaks and brings light, land, and creatures into existence. Genesis 2 portrays God as **immanent** = active within the world (Gen 2:7,19). In Genesis 2, God steps into the world he created, forms the man from the ground, breathes into his nostrils, brings the animals to the man, then makes the woman from the man's side. Together Genesis 1 and 2 show that God is both transcendent and immanent.

Transcendence and immanence are difficult concepts to hold together. Many people only think of God as one or the other. For example, it's common to think of God as the one who is far above and beyond us. God is the immortal Creator who says, "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool" (Is 66:1; cf. 40:22, 25). But God is also immanent. God is so close to humans that he

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<sup>xxxi</sup> For more detail see my blog post "Chronological Differences in Genesis 1 & 2?" at [www.bible-bridge.com/chronological-differences-in-genesis-1-2/](http://www.bible-bridge.com/chronological-differences-in-genesis-1-2/)

inhabits us and makes our bodies his temple (1 Cor 6:19). So God is above and beyond the world *and* God is active within the world. God is far beyond us and God is right beside us.

7. What ideas do you have for helping others think of God as *both* transcendent and immanent?

8. Study Lessons 8–12 for a quiz next lesson. Memorize Genesis 2:7 and 2:18.

## Lesson 13: Quiz 2; Applying Genesis 1 & 2

### Quiz 2 (10 pts. each, out of 70)

1. Define immanent –
2. What is the difference between LORD and Lord?
3. What was not good in Genesis 2?
4. List three of God's actions in Genesis 2.
5. Write out Genesis 2:7.
6. Write out Genesis 2:18.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ True or False. The tetragrammaton is the four-letter personal name of God in Hebrew.

**Answers**<sup>25</sup>



## Life Application: Genesis 1 and 2

- **Believe God exists.** Put your faith in the one God who made everything.
- **Enjoy a relationship with God.** God made us in “his own image” (Gen 1:27). We were made with the capacity to know God, to experience God, and to be like God. There is a special connection between human beings and God.
- **Trust in God.** What can be too hard for the God who made everything (Jer 32:17)? God is powerful and caring and has our best interests in mind (Gen 2:8-9). Since God is powerful and loving, trust him. Rely on him for your purpose in life. Your life is not a mistake or accident (Ps 139:13–16). God made you for a purpose.
- **Reverence and worship God.** Stand in awe of the God who spoke and brought things into existence. This is the only God who deserves to be worshiped; it is useless to worship anyone else. Praise God for his creation (Neh 9:6; Acts 4:24; Rev 4:11).
- **Obey God.** God made us and gave us the boundaries in which we are to live (Gen 2:16–17).
- **Respect all people.** All human beings are made in God’s image (Gen 1:27). There should be no racism or prejudice in our hearts. All people deserve respect regardless of their race, gender, age, beliefs, etc.
- **Be organized.** God is a God of order. He brought form to formlessness and order to chaos. He created in an orderly way.
- **Respect marriage.** Marriage was God’s plan from the beginning. Divorce and sexual immorality are not a part of God’s plan.
- **Care for the environment.** God placed Adam in the garden to “work it and take care of it” (Gen 2:15). We shouldn’t destroy God’s creation, but cultivate it to bring out its full potential.
- **Maintain healthy relationships with others.** God said, “It is not good for man to be alone” (Gen 2:18). We were created to connect with others.
- **Work.** God placed Adam in the garden to work. We were designed to work. Don’t be lazy.
- **Rest.** God rested from his work and we should rest from our work also. Keep your work in its proper perspective by taking time to rest on a regular basis.

5. Choose one item from the life-application list that you need to improve in, then write a one-paragraph essay explaining why you should improve in that area and how you can do so.

## **Lesson 14: The Creation Foundation**

1. The influence of Genesis 1 and 2 can be seen throughout the Old Testament (or Hebrew Bible). In this lesson, we'll review our vocabulary words and then explore the teaching of creation in the book of Psalms. Review the vocabulary words below.

### **Hebrew words**

- Adonai – Lord
- Adam – man, humanity, personal name
- Adamah – ground, soil, earth
- Bara – create
- Bohu – empty
- Eden – bliss, delight
- Elohim – God
- Erets – land, earth
- Ish – man
- Ishah – woman
- Mayim – water
- Raqia – dome or space
- Ruach – Spirit, wind, breath
- Shamayim – heavens
- Tanninim – great creatures
- Tohu – formless
- YHWH – God's personal name, translated as LORD in English Bibles
- Yom – day

### **English words**

- Accommodation – making room for a lack of knowledge or a lack of ability to understand
- Agnosticism – the idea that we can't be sure if God exists
- Anthropomorphism – ascribing human characteristics to God
- Atheism – the belief that God does not exist
- Cosmology – the study of the origin of the universe
- Dualism – the existence of two eternal entities
- Genesis – beginning
- Holy – set apart

- Immanent – within the world
- Merism – an expression of totality that uses contrasting parts
- Monotheism – the belief in only one God
- Pantheism – all is god
- Polytheism – the belief in many gods
- Tetragrammaton – the four-letter personal name of God
- Theogony – the birth story of the gods
- Transcendent – above and beyond the world

### **Latin phrases**

- Creatio ex nihilo – creation out of nothing
  - Imago dei – image of God
2. The teachings of the Bible are built upon a creation foundation. Creation is foundational because it occurs at the start of the Bible and it is repeated throughout the Bible. Read Psalm 104 then make a list of items that remind you of Genesis 1.<sup>27</sup>

3. Summarize two or three ideas about creation expressed in the following passages:

a. Psalm 8

b. Psalm 19:1–6

c. Psalm 33:6–9

d. Psalm 139:13–16

## Lesson 15: Creation in the New Testament

**Review:** Define mayim and pantheism.

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1. In the previous lesson we noticed that the doctrine of creation is foundational in the Old Testament. In this lesson, we'll see that the doctrine of creation is foundational in the New Testament as well. But the New Testament adds something to the Old Testament doctrine of creation. Read the following NT Scriptures then answer the question on the next page.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made . . . The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1–3, 14)

For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. (1 Corinthians 8:5–6)

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:15–17)

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. (Hebrews 1:1–3)

2. What major idea do the NT references above add to our understanding of creation?<sup>28</sup>

3. Write out the following NT Scriptures:

a. Matthew 19:28

b. Acts 3:21

c. 2 Peter 3:13

3. What is the key idea of the three verses listed above?<sup>29</sup>

4. Why does it matter that God is going to renew all things?<sup>30</sup>

5. Summarize Revelation 21:1–5.

6. While there are aspects of the promised future that are still to come, there are aspects that have already arrived. Paul writes, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Cor 5:17). And believers have already received the deposit or down payment of the promised future inheritance (see 2 Corinthians 1:21–22 and Ephesians 1:13–14).

## **Lesson 16: Introducing Genesis 3**

**Review:** What new idea was added to the doctrine of creation in the New Testament?

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1. We began our study with the creation of the entire universe and then quickly zoomed in to one place on Earth—the garden of Eden—inhabited by two people and many animals. Genesis 3 continues in the same location, but it zooms in even more to one area of the garden of Eden where Adam and Eve committed one act.
2. To help you relate with the themes in Genesis 3 reflect on the following questions:
  - When have you eaten something that you were not supposed to eat?
  - Have you ever been reprimanded? What did you do? How did you feel?
  - When have you tried to hide the fact that you did something wrong? What did you do?
  - Have you ever blamed someone else for your mistake? What did you do wrong?
  - How have you been tricked?
  - Have you ever rebelled against your parents and regretted it? What did you do wrong?
3. Read Genesis 3 below then highlight or draw the same symbol around the words eat/eaten/ate each time they appear. And place question marks in the margins beside things you don't understand.

### **Genesis 3**

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

<sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

<sup>4</sup>“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup>“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

<sup>10</sup> He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

<sup>11</sup> And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

<sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

<sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,  
“Cursed are you above all livestock  
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly  
and you will eat dust  
all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring<sup>[a]</sup> and hers;  
he will crush<sup>[b]</sup> your head,  
and you will strike his heel.”

<sup>16</sup> To the woman he said,  
“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;  
with painful labor you will give birth to children.

Your desire will be for your husband,  
and he will rule over you.”

<sup>17</sup> To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed is the ground because of you;  
through painful toil you will eat food from it  
all the days of your life.

<sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you,  
and you will eat the plants of the field.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow  
you will eat your food  
until you return to the ground,  
since from it you were taken;  
for dust you are  
and to dust you will return.”

<sup>20</sup> Adam<sup>[c]</sup> named his wife Eve,<sup>[d]</sup> because she would become the mother of all the living.

<sup>21</sup> The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. <sup>22</sup> And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” <sup>23</sup> So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup> After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side<sup>[e]</sup> of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. (NIV)

**Footnotes:**

- a) Genesis 3:15 Or seed
- b) Genesis 3:15 Or strike
- c) Genesis 3:20 Or The man
- d) Genesis 3:20 Eve probably means living.
- e) Genesis 3:24 Or placed in front

## **Lesson 17: Genesis 3 in Six Parts**

1. Eating is a big theme in Genesis 3. In the NIV, the word eat and variations of it appear 17 times in this chapter. The serpent tempted the woman to eat the fruit (vv. 1–5); Eve and Adam gave in and ate the fruit (v. 6); God sentenced the serpent to eat dust (v. 14); and Adam will eat his food through painful toil of the ground (v. 17). Summarize each of the six sections below then check your answers.

I. The Serpent's Tactics (vv. 1–5)<sup>31</sup>

II. Human Rebellion (v. 6)<sup>32</sup>

III. The Immediate Consequence (vv. 7–8)<sup>33</sup>

IV. God's Questions (vv. 9–13)<sup>34</sup>

V. God's Judgment (vv. 14–19)<sup>35</sup>

VI. God's Mercy (v. 21)<sup>36</sup>

## **Lesson 18: The Problem of Evil (Gen 3:1–5)**

**Review:** List two of the serpent's tactics in Genesis 3.

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1. One of the most vexing philosophical problems is the problem of evil. Every religion and philosophy must wrestle with the existence of evil. Why do we live in a world where evil things occur? Have you personally struggled with the existence of evil? How so? What was your conclusion?
2. Using the information found in Genesis 3 only, answer the following question: Who is the serpent?<sup>37</sup>
3. Write out the words of Revelation 12:9 and 20:2. (Other NT Scriptures on Satan include: 2 Corinthians 11:3,14; Luke 10:18; John 8:44; Romans 16:20.) Who is the serpent according to Revelation?
4. If everything God made was good, how did the good serpent become deceitful? Remember, if the serpent was the first tempter, he would not have had anyone to tempt him.

The answer is not given in Scripture, so we can only speculate. (Some interpret Isaiah 14:12–19 and Ezekiel 28:11–19 as explicitly teaching the fall of Satan, but those passages are primarily poetic depictions of the wickedness of the king of Babylon and the king of Tyre, respectively.) According to 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6, certain angels sinned and were placed under a sentence of judgment. If Satan is connected to angels, and he seems to be according to Matthew 25:41 and Revelation 12:9, we can conclude that Satan was created good but subsequently fell through disobedience. Jesus gives support for a Satanic fall when he states, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Lk 10:18). This means that like humans, angels have the freedom to choose to obey or disobey. And some chose to disobey.

5. And that takes the problem of evil further back. In his famous autobiography *Confessions*, Augustine (AD 354–430) writes,

But again I said: ‘Who made me? Is not my God not only good but the supreme Good? Why then have I the power to will evil and to reject good? Is it to provide a reason why it is just for me to undergo punishments? Who put this power in me and implanted in me this seed of bitterness (Heb. 12:15), when all of me was created by my very kind God? If the devil was responsible, where did the devil himself come from? And if even he began as a good angel and became devil by a perversion of the will, how does the evil will by which he became devil originate in him, when an angel is wholly made by a Creator who is pure goodness?’ The reflections depressed me once more and suffocated me (7.3.5).<sup>xxxii</sup>

6. Summarize Augustine’s questions above.<sup>38</sup>

7. As Augustine continues reasoning in *Confessions*, he concludes that evil is not a substance, rather it is a deprivation of good. Evil is like rot on a good apple. The rot is nothing in itself; it is only an attack on the good. So the problem of evil actually takes us back to original goodness, because evil cannot exist without prior goodness.

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<sup>xxxii</sup> For a free online version of *Confessions* see [ccel.org](http://ccel.org).

8. While Augustine believed he made progress with the problem of evil, ultimately the origin of evil is a mystery. We don't know how a good creature could have turned away from ultimate goodness. Who or what tempted the original tempter? We do know that one day God will remove all evil from his kingdom (Matt 13:41–43) and crush Satan (Rom 16:20).<sup>xxxiii</sup>
9. If you'd like to think more on this topic, watch the two youtube videos I've made titled:
- *Evil in the Bible and Augustine's Confessions: Part 1* (10 min.)
  - *Evil in the Bible and Augustine's Confessions: Part 2* (14 min.)

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<sup>xxxiii</sup> For a brief reflection on God's relation to evil see my post *Is God Behind Evil?* at [www.bible-bridge.com/god-behind-evil](http://www.bible-bridge.com/god-behind-evil).

## Lesson 19: Judgment and Mercy (Gen 3:6–24)

**Review:** In the previous lesson we considered the problem of \_\_\_\_\_. And we concluded that ultimately the origin of evil is a \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>39</sup>

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1. Does anyone ask you things they already know the answer to? Give examples.
2. If God knows everything, why did he ask Adam and Eve questions in Genesis 3?<sup>40</sup>
3. In the New American Standard Bible (NASB), Genesis 2:17 reads: “but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” Why did Adam and Eve not die on the day they ate the fruit?<sup>41</sup>
4. In Genesis 3:8, Adam and Eve recognized the sound of God’s walk, which means the sound must have been familiar to them. This description of God is the opposite of a deistic God—a God who starts everything, but then remains completely uninvolved in the world. Can you recognize the sound of anyone’s walk? What do you think God’s walk sounded like?<sup>xxxiv</sup>

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<sup>xxxiv</sup> Another interpretation of this verse views God coming in a threatening windstorm to confront Adam and Eve for their sin. <https://bible.org/netbible>, Genesis 3, footnote 22.

5. Notice the contrast between Genesis 3:8 and Psalm 139:23–24 below. David’s words in Psalm 139 encourage us to be open and vulnerable before God.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (Gen 3:8)

Search me, God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting. (Ps 139:23–24)

6. Notice the blaming occurring in Genesis 3:12–13: Adam blames Eve, and ultimately even blames God, and Eve blames the serpent. Who have you recently blamed for your own mistake?
7. In verse 14, God says to the serpent, “Cursed are you . . .” **Curse** = “a decree of irate and radical disapproval.”<sup>xxxv</sup> “You will crawl on your belly” doesn’t necessarily mean that the serpent had appendages prior to the curse. It may mean that how the serpent moves takes on a new meaning of humiliation or the focus of the curse may be on the eating of dust. “You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust.”
8. God questioned both Adam and Eve in verses 14–19, but why didn’t God question the serpent? What does that show about the serpent?<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>xxxv</sup> Reardon, 45.

And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
he will crush your head,  
and you will strike his heel.  
(Gen 3:15)

9. Some early Christian interpreters viewed Genesis 3:15 as the first messianic prophecy in the Bible. **Messianic prophecy** = a prediction of the coming Messiah—the one appointed by God to redeem humanity. While the serpent defeated the first humans through his deception, this verse predicts the following:

- Enmity between the woman (and her offspring) and the serpent (and his offspring),
- One of the woman’s male descendants will crush (NIV) the serpent’s head—“*he* will crush your head.” (Crush is translated as “bruise” in the ESV and “strike” in the NRSV),
- The serpent will strike his heel—“you will strike his heel.”

So in the first round, humans lost to the serpent and in that way relinquished their God-given authority to rule the earth. But in the second round , humans, and in particular, one human, will defeat the serpent.

10. Write out Genesis 1:28.

11. What relationships are affected by the judgment pronounced in Genesis 3:14–19? How are they affected?<sup>43</sup>

12. In Genesis 3:16, judgment for the woman involves increased pain in childbearing and desire for her husband who will rule over her. (Notice that pain may have been a part of God’s original design, only now the pains are increased.) Does Genesis 3:16 mean that we should encourage women to

live with the harsh pain of giving birth without medication? Does it mean that it's acceptable for a husband to "rule" over or dominate his wife?<sup>44</sup>

13. Adam's punishment involves harsh labor of the cursed ground and eventual death (vv. 17–19). A cursed ground indicates a damaged environment. The world is not as easy to live in as it once was. As a result, all of creation, and not merely humans, needs to be liberated. Paul writes,

For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. (Rom 8:19–21)

What is the "freedom and glory of the children of God"? New, transformed, immortal bodies. Paul says that just as we have borne the image of the earthly man who was of dust, we will also bear the image of the heavenly man (1 Cor 15:42–49). And the Lord Jesus Christ "will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Phil 3:20–21). Summarize Romans 8:22–25.



## Lesson 20: Quiz 3; The Impact of Adam and Eve's Sin

### Quiz 3 (10 pts. each, out of 90)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ True or False. In Genesis 3, both God and the serpent ask questions.
2. What is the first thing God says in Genesis 3? What does that show you about God?
3. List three tactics used by the serpent to tempt Adam and Eve.
4. The serpent contradicted God by telling Eve, "you will not certainly \_\_\_\_\_."
5. \_\_\_\_\_ True or False. God first pronounced judgment on the man.
6. Define curse –
7. Define messianic prophecy –
8. What is the significance of God clothing Adam and Eve with garments of skin?
9. Define shame –

**Answers<sup>45</sup>**

## **The Impact of Adam and Eve's Sin**

1. In this lesson, we'll consider the impact of Adam and Eve's sin on all of humanity. Let's begin with this quote from Blaise Pascal's (1623–1662) *Pensées*:

The greatness and the wretchedness of man are so evident that the true religion must necessarily teach us both that there is in man some great source of greatness, and a great source of wretchedness. It must then give us a reason for these astonishing contradictions.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

2. Does Genesis 1–3 provide us with an explanation for both the greatness and wretchedness of humans? How so?<sup>46</sup>

3. Do you think the story of Adam and Eve represents the story of everyone? Why?

4. Do you think everyone has sinned? (This question implies the existence of God because sin, at its core, is rebellion against God. See Ps 51:4).

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<sup>xxxvi</sup> Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, Section 7, 430, ccel.org.

5. Assuming you answered yes to the previous question, why has everyone sinned?
6. The basic Christian answer is that the first humans rebelled against God and suffered the consequences of their rebellion. And those consequences plunged them and their descendants into a state of sin, condemnation, and death. In Paul's words, "one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people" (Rom 5:18), and "through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners" (Rom 5:19). Attempting to articulate the effects of the first sin more precisely has been controversial.

For example, Augustine (AD 354–430) supported his doctrine of original sin on the basis of Paul's words in Romans 5:12: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned." But Augustine read that verse in an inferior Latin translation that ended with the words, "in whom all sinned" instead of the more accurate translation, "because all sinned." Consequently, Augustine believed that statement meant that in some way every human sinned in Adam, and therefore, every human is automatically guilty and deserving of judgment.

While the Bible doesn't explain the details, many early church fathers believed Adam and Eve's sin weakened them and their descendants morally and spiritually. And that weakening guaranteed that Adam and Eve's descendants would sin.<sup>xxxvii</sup> We can also reason that since we are born into the human race with its weakened moral state and its history of sinful choices, we are born into a world of sin. In this way, the story of the first humans going astray affects us all.

7. How have your parents' imperfections affected you? (Maybe you shouldn't record your answer here.)

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<sup>xxxvii</sup> Bernard Ramm, *Offense to Reason: A Theology of Sin* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 52.

8. If you think that people are generally good, consider the following items:

- **Young children naturally lie and steal.** We go astray from an early age without other people teaching us to do it. We need to be taught to do what is right. Where would we be if others didn't discipline us?
- **The fear of punishment restrains evil.** What if all police officers and security cameras were removed? What if our government collapsed and our constitution was no longer in effect? How safe would we be? How good would we be?
- **Our comfortable lifestyles restrain evil.** How nice would we be if we lost electricity for a month? What if the grocery stores ran out of food? What if we could no longer buy gas for our cars?
- **We are prone to submit to evil authority figures.** Many examples in human history of warfare, brutality, and racism could be used to support this point. In addition, psychological experiments have been conducted that illustrate this principle. One of these experiments, called the *Milgram experiment*, was conducted at Yale in 1961. Voluntary participants were chosen to help in what they thought was a memory improvement study. One participant was chosen to be the teacher and the other the learner. The learner was required to answer the teacher's questions correctly or receive an electric shock with increasing intensity for each wrong answer. After hearing the student's expressions of pain in the other room, the teacher often refused to continue the study. (The expressions of pain were not genuine; they were pre-recorded.) But the scientist encouraged the reluctant teachers to continue with the experiment and they usually did so. Over 1,000 people were involved in the study, many of whom were professionals in their fields. About sixty-five percent of the "teachers" went all the way and administered the lethal 450-volt shock. (No one was actually harmed in the experiment.)
- **We don't really know the evil we are capable of committing until we find ourselves in unusual situations.** Both Plato's story called the *Ring of Gyges* and William Golding's book *Lord of the Flies* illustrate the idea that respectable individuals end up committing evil acts when they find themselves in unusual circumstances.

9. Write out the following verses:

- Psalm 51:5

- Proverbs 20:9
  
- Jeremiah 17:9
  
- Ecclesiastes 7:20
  
- Romans 3:10

10. What is the common theme in those verses?<sup>47</sup>

## **Lesson 21: Ancient Near Eastern Literature**

1. The first three chapters of Genesis lay the foundation for the rest of the Bible. Here are several main points from Genesis 1–3.

- One God made everything.
- Everything God made was originally good.
- The one God who made everything made humans, both male and female, in his image.
- God wants humans to live in relationship with him.
- God wants humans to be his representatives on Earth, which means taking care of the environment and taking care of other creatures.
- God wants humans to live in relationship with each other.
- God wants humans to live within his boundaries.
- God initiated human marriage.
- Humans originally lived without shame and fear toward God or each other.
- God is both transcendent and immanent.
- There is an evil spiritual being who seeks to tempt and deceive human beings.
- The first humans gave in to temptation and rebelled against God.
- The first human sin was rooted in deception and selfishness.
- Human sin led to increased pain, shame, and death.
- God still cared for the first humans after they sinned.
- God promised that the serpent would be crushed by one of Eve’s descendants.

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2. Several scholars believe that a key to understanding the early chapters of Genesis is to compare them with other works of ancient literature, especially ancient Near Eastern (ANE) literature. For example, based on his understanding of the relevant ANE literature, John Walton, an Old Testament scholar, views the creation account in Genesis as functional. In other words, the creation account is not about God bringing matter into existence out of nothing, rather it is about God making matter functional. According to that understanding, day four is not about God making the sun out of nothing, rather it is about God making the sun functional or making it work to give light on Earth. While that may sound strange, Walton argues from many ANE literary references, that ancient people thought about origin functionally not ontologically. He also believes that the ancient stories of gods resting in their temples fits with God resting on the seventh day. Therefore, the temple is the most appropriate setting for understanding the creation account in Genesis.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

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<sup>xxxviii</sup> “Understanding Genesis with John Walton” <http://biologos.org/resources/videos/john-walton-on-understanding-genesis>; accessed 25 March 2017.

3. However, while one scholar believes comparing other ancient literature with Genesis gives light to the biblical text, another scholar views that same literature as obscuring the biblical text. That's because scholars differ in their understanding of how much Genesis reflects or conflicts with ANE culture. Regardless of the different views, Christian scholars agree that the Genesis creation story contains revolutionary and countercultural ideas. For example,
- One God who made everything and who should not be identified with anything in creation, such as the sun or moon,
  - God does not have an origin or birth story,
  - Humans, both male and female, have an inherent dignity because they are made in the image of the one God,
  - Divine violence did not give birth to the world.<sup>xxxix</sup> (In many of the ANE creation stories, the world arises out of acts of divine violence. For example, in the *Enuma Elish*, the ancient Mesopotamian creation story, the founding god, Apsu, decides to kill his children who were infuriating him with their noise. But the oldest son, Enki or Ea kills Apsu first. Following the advice of the god Kingu, the mother, Tiamat, plans to destroy her children for killing her husband with the eleven monsters she created. But Marduk kills Tiamat with an arrow and then splits her corpse in two using one half to create the heavens and the other half to create the earth. He then slays Kingu and uses his blood to create humans. Marduk created humans to relieve the gods of their assigned duties.)<sup>xi</sup>
4. What does the existence of so many creation stories throughout the world show us?<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>xxxix</sup> Schlimm, ch. 3.

<sup>xi</sup> If you're interested in the relevant ANE creation stories do an online search for one or more of the following texts: *Enuma Elish*, *Epic of Atrahasis*, *Eridu Genesis*, and *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Also see Barbara C. Sproul, *Primal Myths: Creation Myths Around the World* (San Francisco, HarperOne, 1979).

5. What could be the possible origins of all of the creation stories?<sup>49</sup>

6. Out of all of the creation stories, why do Christians embrace the Genesis creation story?<sup>50</sup>

7. Let's say there are a million creation stories and only one is true. And let's make it even more difficult by saying that you don't have a spiritual leader to point you to the one true story. How would you seek to identify the true creation story? What would you look for? What should you look for?<sup>51</sup>

## Lesson 22: Scripture and Science: Part 1

**Review:** What is ANE literature?

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1. In this lesson we'll consider the challenge of understanding the Genesis creation account in light of modern science. How do you think modern science supports the Genesis account?
  
2. How do you think modern science contradicts the Genesis account?
  
3. Modern science and religion don't have the best of relationships. The roots of the conflict go back almost 400 years. In his groundbreaking work, *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, published in 1543, Copernicus (AD 1473–1543) argued that Earth revolved around the sun. While the Catholic Church did not initially reject Copernicus's heliocentric (sun-centered) model when it was proposed, by 1616 the Catholic authorities had "suspended" the works of Copernicus "until corrected." The reason given was that Copernicus's heliocentric proposal was being defended by a Carmelite Father and the authorities didn't want the proposal to spread any further.<sup>xli</sup>

But as time passed, the realization dawned that Copernicus was right, and therefore, the official interpreters of Scripture were wrong. Today, we understand those statements in Scripture, which seem to support geocentrism as phenomenological statements. In other words, from an ancient writer's perspective the sun looked like it was moving around Earth so they wrote of it in that way. And today we continue to use phenomenological language when we speak of the sun rising and setting. But the official Bible teachers failed to grasp this concept, and as a result misinterpreted the Bible. They assumed that the authors of Scripture were giving scientifically precise information when, in fact, they were only describing the world as they saw it without modern-day technology.

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<sup>xli</sup> P., Bishop of Albano, "Decree of the Index (5 March 1616)," *Galileo Trial 1616 Documents*, <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~allch001/galileo/library/1616docs.htm#indexdecree>; accessed 3 March 2016.

The story of Copernicus should cause us to be humble in our attempts to harmonize Scripture and science. After all, we're trying to interpret two things, which can be complex in themselves, and then show how they relate to each other.

4. The debate between science and religion is often labeled as a battle between the Book of God's Word (Scripture) versus the Book of God's Works (nature or creation). **Scientific concordists** assume an intrinsic harmony between the two books. That means that if the Bible makes a statement about the physical world, it must match our modern scientific understanding. **Non-concordists** assume that the two books are focused on different domains—the spiritual world and the physical world—and therefore they cannot be harmonized. Non-concordists view many biblical statements about the physical world as ancient and outdated, but they don't believe that should be a cause for concern, because the Bible was written primarily for a spiritual purpose. Are you a scientific concordist? Do you believe that all biblical statements relating to the physical world must match with modern scientific data? Why or why not?

5. Many believers argue that both science and religion need each other. According to Pope John Paul II (1920–2005), "Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes."<sup>xlii</sup> Do you agree or disagree with Pope John Paul's statement? Why or why not?

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<sup>xlii</sup> Cited in Daryl, *Reading Genesis 1–2*, ch. 4.

6. Exploring the relationship between science and religion takes us into the controversial topic of the origin of life. Read the summary of the five major views below.

### **Views on the Origin of Life**

- **Atheistic Evolution (Dysteleological evolution)** – God does not exist so only natural physical processes were involved in the origin and continuation of life on Earth. The diversity of life comes from a common ancestor + lots of time + random mutation + natural selection (or the survival of the fittest). The account of creation in Genesis is scientifically false and completely irrelevant for us today.
- **Deistic Evolution** – After bringing the universe into existence and setting up the process of evolution, God has been completely uninvolved in the world. Therefore, God is not immanent and humans have not received divine messages nor experienced miracles. Many of the details in the Genesis creation account are scientifically false and irrelevant for us today, but Genesis is correct in affirming that a transcendent God started the universe.
- **Evolutionary Creationism (or Theistic Evolution)** – God brought the universe into existence billions of years ago when he set the process of evolution in motion, and God remains actively involved in the world through the evolutionary process and through other means (e.g., miracles, messages, etc.). Since God is involved in the evolutionary process, ultimately the mutations that occur are not random. After acknowledging the lack of consensus on certain issues, one of the leading evolutionary creationists, Francis Collins states,

we do agree upon descent from a common ancestor, gradual change over a long period of time, and natural selection operating to produce the diversity of living species. There is no question that those are correct. Those are three cardinal pillars of Darwin's theory that have been under-girded by data coming from multiple directions and they are not going to go away. Evolution is not a theory that is going to be discarded next week or next year or a hundred or a thousand years from now. It is true.<sup>xliii</sup>

While theistic evolution allows for different views of Adam and Eve, it necessarily affirms that humans evolved from non-human creatures. According to this view, science and the Bible are focused on different domains so they cannot substantially contradict each other.

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<sup>xliii</sup> Francis Collins and Karl Giberson, "Francis Collins and Karl Giberson Talk about Evolution and the Church, Part 2," <http://biologos.org/blogs/archive/francis-collins-and-karl-giberson-talk-about-evolution-and-the-church-part-2>; accessed 3 March 2016.

Since evolutionary creationism may be new and even suspect to some, it's important to note that several prominent Christian scholars and leaders either fully subscribe to this view, support one of its key concepts such as common descent, or have expressed openness to the view in general.<sup>xliv</sup> Old Testament scholar, Tremper Longman III, writes, "At the present moment, there is wide consensus among scientists including scientists teaching at most Christian schools—including Westmont College where I teach—that evolution best fits the evidence, particularly the genomic evidence, for how human beings came to be."<sup>xlv</sup> (For one believer's journey to embracing this view see Denis O. Lamoureux, *I Love Jesus & I Accept Evolution*. For more information on this view see [biologos.org](http://biologos.org).)

- **Progressive Creationism (Old Earth Creationism)** – This view agrees with evolutionary creationism that God created everything over a period of billions of years and used cosmological and geological evolution in the process.<sup>xlvi</sup> In particular, the universe is 13.8 billion years old, Earth is 4.5 billion years old, and life first appeared on Earth around 3.5 billion years ago.<sup>xlvii</sup> But in disagreement, living organisms did not evolve; they were created *directly* by God at specific points in history. This includes the creation of hominids (human-like creatures without God's image, e.g., Neanderthal, Homo erectus) before Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were the first two hominids that God placed his image upon. The following items are used to support this view: 1.) the account of **de novo creation** = new creation in Genesis, 2.) the evidence for the explosion of distinct life forms in the fossil record, and 3.) the lack of transitional forms in the fossil record. This view asserts that science and the Bible correspond with each other. Genesis 1–3 is scientifically accurate and it does not teach a young Earth. (For more information on progressive creationism see [reasons.org](http://reasons.org) and [oldearth.org](http://oldearth.org).)

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<sup>xliv</sup> For example, Denis Alexander, Michael Behe, Francis Collins, Dinesh D'Souza, Peter Enns, Pope Francis, Karl Giberson, Deborah Haarsma, Tim Keller, Alister McGrath, Mark Noll, Alvin Plantinga, John Polkinghorne, John Stott (deceased), Bruce Waltke, Richard Mouw, Dennis Venema, and Keith Ward.

<sup>xlv</sup> Cited in *Reading Genesis 1-2*, ch. 4.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Since both progressive creationism and evolutionary creationism affirm an old Earth and God as the creator, they can both be labeled as old-Earth creationism (OEC). The **gap theory** is another view that affirms an old Earth and it can be incorporated into progressive creationism or evolutionary creationism. According to the gap theory, an enormous amount of time, or gap, exists between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. Verse 1 gives us the original creation, verse 2 describes the conditions after the destruction of the original creation, and the rest of the chapter narrates the restoration of creation.

<sup>xlvii</sup> For NASA's online timeline showing the history of the universe see [http://map.gsfc.nasa.gov/media/060915/060915\\_CMB\\_Timeline150.jpg](http://map.gsfc.nasa.gov/media/060915/060915_CMB_Timeline150.jpg). For a summary of the scientific arguments for an old Earth, including evidence from geology, radiometric dating, and astronomy see Deborah B. Haarsma and Loren D. Haarsma, *Origins: Christian Perspectives on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design* (Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, 2011), chs. 5, 7. Also see Deborah B. Haarsma and Loren D. Haarsma, "Multiple Lines of Evidence for an Old Universe," <http://biologos.org/blogs/deborah-haarsma-the-presidents-notebook/multiple-lines-of-evidence-for-an-old-universe>; accessed 3 March 2016, and "Scientific Evidence for an Old Earth," *Reasons to Believe*, <http://www.reasons.org/rtb-101/scientificevidenceforanoldearth>; accessed 3 March 2016.

- **Young Earth Creationism (YEC)** – God created everything directly as stated in Genesis 1, 6,000 to 10,000 years ago. Adam and Eve were the first two humans created directly by God; they did not evolve from animal-like creatures. According to proponents of this view, it is vital to hold to a historical-referential interpretation of the opening chapters of the Bible, which includes a literal 24-hour day interpretation of Genesis 1, because that is how Jesus and the biblical authors interpreted Genesis.

Additionally, a failure to hold to this interpretation will negatively impact other doctrines. This view explains the scientific data used to support the old-Earth position in the following ways: apparent age only (e.g., Adam was created fully mature and so was the universe), age markers were created during the global flood, and demonic deception. This view is also unique in asserting that dinosaurs and humans lived concurrently and that there was no animal death prior to Adam and Eve’s sin. In a nutshell: Genesis 1–3 conveys scientifically accurate details and it teaches a young Earth. (For more information on young-Earth creationism see [answersingenesis.org](http://answersingenesis.org), [creation.com](http://creation.com), [icr.org](http://icr.org), [creationresearch.org](http://creationresearch.org).)

7. Which of the five views would you like to learn more about?

8. Which of the five views do you think are acceptable for Christians to hold? Why?<sup>52</sup>

9. Do you think there is a way to reconcile the views of young-Earth and old-Earth advocates?

10. While the two views appear to directly contradict each other, some believe they can be reconciled. Gerald Schroeder uses Einstein's theory of relativity to show that both views are correct. He explains that since time varies depending on location and speed (e.g, time is not uniform on all planets), billions of years elapsing when the universe was very small and young, would be the same as 24-hours elapsing now. In this way, Schroeder believes he is able to affirm both a young Earth and an old Earth.<sup>xlviii</sup> What is your view of the age of the universe? How did you come to that conclusion?

11. Does the age of the universe affect your view of God? Why or why not?

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<sup>xlviii</sup> Gerald Schroeder, "The Age of the Universe," <http://www.geraldschroeder.com/AgeUniverse.aspx>; accessed 3 March 2016.



4. While evolutionary creationists agree with the basic evolutionary assumption that human history began with a group of about 1,000–10,000 people, they differ over exactly how to understand Adam and Eve. To help us grasp this issue, we will analyze statements made by John Stott (1921–2011). Stott was a highly respected leader of the Evangelical movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some even claimed that, if it were possible, he could have been the Evangelical pope. After expressing his view that Genesis 1 is “a highly stylized literary and theological, not scientific statement,” he writes,

Moving on to Genesis 2 and 3, I have long held and taught that they contain figurative or symbolic elements, so that we should not dogmatise about the snake and the trees. But I cannot agree with you that the Adam and Eve story is a myth, whose truth is purely symbolical, not historical. The important theological statement in the second half of Romans 5, by the parallels it draws between the first and second Adams, depends for its truth on an act of disobedience by Adam as historical as Jesus’ act of obedience, and all who deny the historicity of the fall find themselves in grave theological difficulty regarding the good creation and the origins of evil. The fall really cannot be reconstructed in evolutionary terms.<sup>xlix</sup>

5. How does Stott show interpretive balance in his statement above?<sup>53</sup>

6. Stott continues by admitting that there are problems in dating Adam and Eve in light of contemporary science.

In this case, the hominids which date from several hundreds of thousands of years earlier, though some are named *homo habilis* and *homo erectus*, were not fully human in the biblical sense, but pre-Adamic creatures. It all depends on how we define ‘human’; all Christians agree that to be human is to bear the image of God, and that this consists at least of a moral, social and spiritual awareness. This kind of reconstruction is not incompatible with evolution, although, theologically speaking, it has to be stated in terms of creation. Adam’s body may well

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<sup>xlix</sup> David L. Edwards and John Stott, *Evangelical Essentials: A Liberal–Evangelical Dialogue* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 96–7.

have evolved from hominids. But alongside this continuity with the animal creation, he enjoyed a radical discontinuity, owing to his having been created in God's image.<sup>l</sup>

7. From the previous statement, what would you say is the most important thing to Stott about Adam?<sup>54</sup>

8. Stott believes that human-like creatures existed prior to Adam, but he doesn't believe that they were fully human because they didn't bear God's image. Where does Stott suggest that Adam's body came from?<sup>55</sup>

9. Does Stott believe that Adam evolved from hominids?<sup>56</sup>

10. If Adam's body evolved from other creatures, other human-like creatures may have been Adam's contemporaries. That leads to another question. What was Adam's relationship to his contemporaries? Stott offers two possibilities that he has heard from others,

First, Adam's contemporaries "remained sub-human and later became extinct."<sup>ii</sup>  
Second, God may have subsequently conferred his image on Adam's contemporaries and then allowed them to share in Adam's fallen state.

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<sup>l</sup> Stott, 97.

<sup>ii</sup> Stott, 98.

11. How would you categorize Stott's tentative view on Adam and Eve using the list given at the beginning of the lesson?<sup>57</sup>
  
12. While Stott expresses his belief in Adam and Eve's historicity, others believe Adam and Eve were merely ancient literary characters. If you were convinced that Adam and Eve were merely literary characters intended to represent humans in some way, what would the account of Adam and Eve in Genesis mean to you?<sup>58</sup>
  
13. Using biblegateway.com, do a keyword search for the name Adam in the New Testament then summarize each of the references. (You performed a keyword search in Lesson 11.) There are only seven references to "Adam" in the NT.<sup>59</sup>

14. Write out Acts 17:26.

15. Based on your reading of the NT passages above, do you think the NT writers viewed Adam and Eve as historical? Why?<sup>60</sup>

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Congratulations! You have completed the 23 lessons on Genesis 1–3. I hope you have enjoyed the journey through this fascinating and challenging terrain. If you would like to see what you remember, take the test in the next section. Genesis 1:27 and 2:7 are memory verses on the test.

If you have enjoyed this study, please check [bible-bridge.com](http://bible-bridge.com) for more studies, including the companion volume *Genesis 4–50: Bible Study Lessons*.

## TEST

**Define the following:** (3 pts. each)

1. Anthropomorphism –
2. Tetragrammaton –
3. Holy –
4. Transcendent –
5. Shame –
6. Elohim –

**True or False** (2 pts. each)

- \_\_\_ 7. The book of Genesis was originally written in Hebrew.
- \_\_\_ 8. “Then God said” is found in days three and six.
- \_\_\_ 9. Genesis 2 emphasizes God’s transcendence.
- \_\_\_ 10. According to tradition, Moses wrote the book of Genesis.
- \_\_\_ 11. Lord is God’s personal name.
- \_\_\_ 12. The account of each of the seven days ends with “evening and morning.”
- \_\_\_ 13. God said, “it is not good” in Genesis 1.
- \_\_\_ 14. The author of Genesis did not put in chapter divisions.
- \_\_\_ 15. Adam was created in the Garden of Eden.
- \_\_\_ 16. Adam’s first recorded words in the Bible were about the woman.

- \_\_\_\_ 17. Eve does not speak in Genesis 2.
- \_\_\_\_ 18. Genesis 1 ends with a description of day seven.
- \_\_\_\_ 19. Genesis 2 mentions the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.
- \_\_\_\_ 20. Both God and Eve are described as being man's "helper" in the OT.
- \_\_\_\_ 21. God made fish on day six.
- \_\_\_\_ 22. God brought the man to the animals to see what they would name him.
- \_\_\_\_ 23. Adam was with Eve when she took the fruit and ate it.
- \_\_\_\_ 24. God made light on day one.
- \_\_\_\_ 25. The serpent and God both ask questions in Genesis 3.
- \_\_\_\_ 26. According to the book of Revelation, the serpent is the devil.

**Fill in the Blank** (1 pt. each)

- 27. In Genesis 1, the most attention is given to day \_\_\_\_\_.
- 28. In days 1–3, God f\_\_\_\_\_ the earth and in days 4–6, God f\_\_\_\_\_ the earth.
- 29. God saw all that he had made, and it was “\_\_\_\_\_” (1:31).
- 30. “The LORD God \_\_\_\_\_ a man from the dust of the ground . . . and \_\_\_\_\_ into his nostrils the breath of life.” (Gen. 2:7)
- 31. “God blessed the seventh day and made it \_\_\_\_\_” (2:3).
- 32. “Adam and his wife were both \_\_\_\_\_, and they felt no \_\_\_\_\_” (2:25).
- 33. The serpent said to Eve, “you will not certainly \_\_\_\_\_” (3:4).

34. According to the \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ view, the days of creation were each long periods of time.

35. The first question God asked Adam was, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ?” (3:9)

36. God then asked Adam, “Who told you that you were \_\_\_\_\_ ?” (3:11)

37. God told Adam, “for \_\_\_\_\_ you are and to \_\_\_\_\_ you will return” (3:19).

**Short Answer** (5 pts. each)

38. Write out Genesis 1:27 then list two observations about it.

39. Write out Genesis 2:7 and explain what this verse shows us about God and man.

40. List three unique features of both Genesis 1 & 2 then list two similarities between the two chapters.

41. List three tactics used by the serpent in Genesis 3.

42. List three facts about the progressive creation view.

43. What idea in Genesis 1–3 could help you most in your relationship with God? Why? (5 sentence min.)

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## ANSWERS

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1 Since the bird is feeding and protecting the babies, the bird is probably the mother.

2 Because we get bored and easily distracted.

3 To be good at anything we must be good observers. For example, good thinkers, detectives, and artists are good observers. They're able to see details that most people miss. Have you watched the show *Monk* or read *Sherlock Holmes*? Both characters are great detectives because they see what other people miss. Likewise, great artists are able to see things in a tree or landscape that others fail to notice. Claude Monet, for example, noticed how the rising and setting sun affected a church building. And his observations led to thirty-one different paintings of the same building as seen during different times of the day. Instead of observing physical objects, we'll be observing the words, phrases, and sentences of Scripture.

4 No, everything we make is ultimately a discovery or new application of something that was already here.

5

- God/he/him (~ 30x)
- And God said (six times – vv. 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24) begins each day. “Then God said” (two times – vv. 11, 26). “God blessed them and said” (two times – vv. 22, 28). This gives us a total of ten references to God’s speech in Genesis 1. Many have noted a connection between these ten words and the Ten Commandments: God’s ten words started the world and God’s ten commands ordered the way his people should live.
- God created/made
- God called
- God saw that it was good (and very good)
- God blessed
- Evening and morning
- And it was so
- According to their kinds
- Let there/them
- Light
- Darkness

6 Forming and Filling

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7

- “And God said”
- “Let there be”
- “And it was so”
- “And God saw that it was good”
- “And there was evening and there was morning”

8 In contrast with some religions and philosophies that view the physical world as evil, it shows that matter or the physical world is fundamentally good.

9 Some think this makes a big difference to a person’s faith because if we get the first chapter of the Bible wrong that could lead to misunderstanding the rest of the Bible. However, others say it doesn’t matter because the main point is still the same: God created everything.

10 It indicates a bird-like movement and it seems to show that the Spirit was preparing to swoop down and accomplish something.

11 9

12 He seems to be saying that the character of those who preceded Seth was not human. For example, Cain did not act according to the true human nature, and as a result, became animal-like.

13 6

#### 14 Quiz 1

1. Check Bible
2. Check Bible
3. Check Bible
4. God
5. God creates:
  - Day 1 – Light
  - Day 2 – Sky
  - Day 3 – Land and Seas
    - Vegetation
  - Day 4 – Luminaries (sun, moon, stars)
  - Day 5 – Fish & Fowl
  - Day 6 – Land Animals
    - Human Beings
6. goodness
7. 24-hour calendar day, age-day, analogical, literary framework

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15

- One God made everything. (This conflicts with polytheism—the belief in many gods—that permeated the ancient world. According to that view, the world was ruled by many gods, who were each in charge of distinct parts of this world. Genesis dismisses all other gods and confronts us with an all-powerful God.)
- There’s a distinction between the Creator and creation. We shouldn’t confuse the two by worshiping the sun, trees, or human beings. (Again, this was a revolutionary idea in the ancient world where, for example, the sun or the king was identified as a god.)
- God’s word is powerful and creative.
- Original goodness. Everything was good in the beginning. God didn’t make a mistake nor was anything made accidentally.
- Human beings have a special connection to God. We bear his image.
- God likes order. The work of creation is portrayed as an orderly process.

16 I think I would place the chapter break after Genesis 2:3 because it makes sense to keep the seven days together.

17

- The phrase “And God said” does not appear
- The phrase “evening and morning” does not appear (It seems to be interpreted as an eternal day in Hebrews 4.)
- God rested – the Hebrew term for rested here means “stopped and breathed freely” (see *Reading Genesis 1–2*, ch. 1). This verb is used in two other places in the Old Testament: 2 Sam 16:14; Exod 23:12. This brings up a problem if it is interpreted literally because Isaiah 40:28 says that God doesn’t grow tired or weary. So perhaps we can say that God rested in the sense that he stopped his work of creating, but not because he was literally tired. (God is still in a state of rest in the sense that he is not creating. But God *is* working in another sense – see John 5:17.)
- God blessed it
- Made it “holy.” **Holy** = set apart.
- “Seventh” mentioned three times
- Work mentioned three times

18 It shows that God is sovereign. God doesn’t have to work like a workaholic to stay in charge. God can rest and still remain in control over all that he has made.

19

- Formed a man from the dust of the ground (v. 7a)
- Breathed life into man (v. 7b)
- Planted a garden (v. 8)
- Made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground (v. 9)

- 
- Put man in the garden of Eden (v. 15)
  - Gave the man his rights and obligation (vv. 16–17)
  - Planned to make a helper suitable for the man (v. 18)
  - Formed wild animals and birds from the ground (v. 19)
  - Brought the animals and birds to the man to see what he would name them (v. 19)
  - Caused the man to fall into a deep sleep (v. 21)
  - Made woman from the man's side/rib (v. 22)
  - Brought the woman to the man (v. 22)

**20** It seems like God wanted the humans he created to have the freedom to reject him. If he didn't give them that freedom, they would not have had a choice. They would have had to obey. But God created a world where his image-bearers could reject him. Perhaps bearing his image requires that we have the ability to choose. Note the name of the tree—"the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Before they ate from the tree they didn't know good and evil, they only knew life as it was. They were in a state of innocence.

**21**

- and the other was named Eliezer, for he said, "My father's God was my helper" (Exod 18:4)
- Blessed are you, Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD? He is your shield and helper and your glorious sword (Deut 33:29)
- The victims commit themselves to you; you are the helper of the fatherless (Ps 10:14b)
- Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior. (Ps 27:9)
- The LORD is with me; he is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies. (Ps 118:7)
- "You are destroyed, Israel, because you are against me, against your helper." (Hos 13:9)

**22**

- **An ability to learn languages** – While experiments have been done on chimps and apes, they have not been able to learn a language. Yet humans learn languages easily at young ages.
- **Demonstrates self reflection/self awareness/personal consciousness.** I can think, "I would like a piece of chocolate," begin to walk toward the chocolate, then stop myself by thinking, "I'm on a diet and I shouldn't eat chocolate." That seems like a simple process, but it's very complex and we seem to be the only creatures who practice self-reflection. What would an animal do? Feel hunger then seek to satisfy it. That's what we call animal instinct. Humans have a much greater sense of self awareness. For example, when we look in the mirror we have the capacity to know that we are looking at ourselves. While personal consciousness is a great mystery, we know that humans have it.
- **An ability to express ourselves artistically**
- **An ability to create and use complex tools.** (I qualified tools because chimps use simple tools such as sticks and stones.)

- **A deep sense of morality – conscience.** Linked to this is a desire to live in a just and moral society. Humans create and enforce laws to make sure that their societies are just and fair.
- **A desire to worship something greater than ourselves.** \*We should note that these types of lists are generalizations. There are many humans, who bear God’s image, who do not have the capacity to demonstrate certain distinct human characteristics (e.g., mentally challenged individuals with a limited ability to reason).

**23**

- One God made all
- God wants animal and human life to flourish on earth
- Humans are special

**24**

Unique Features of Genesis 1	Unique Features of Genesis 2
Days one through six	Focused on creation of animals and humans (day six of Gen 1)
Includes everything –“heavens and earth”	Focused on garden of Eden
“it was good”	“It is not good”
God creates by speaking	God creates by forming
God called Elohim	God called YHWH Elohim
God is primarily transcendent	God is primarily immanent

**25 Quiz 2**

1. within the world
2. LORD is God’s personal name, but Lord is a title of authority.
3. The man being alone
4. See Lesson 10
5. Check Bible
6. Check Bible
7. True

**26**

- They were blessed by being made in God’s image, which means they had a special relationship with God (1:26) and they served as God’s representatives on earth (1:26).
- To rule over the other living creatures (1:28).
- To fill the earth (1:28).

- 
- To work (2:15). God created Adam and then put him to work.
  - To live in community with others (2:18). God created Eve for Adam. We were created for community.
  - To live in abundance (2:8–9). God made Eden for Adam. He could have made the man and then placed him in a desert but instead God placed Adam in a flourishing garden.
  - To live in obedience (2:16–17). God set the boundaries for Adam’s existence.

## 27

- Light (v. 2; Gen 1:3)
- Watered-covered earth (v. 6, Gen 1:2)
- Water separated from land (vv. 7–9; Gen 1:9–10)
- Beasts of the field (v. 11; Gen 1:24–25)
- Birds of the sky (v. 12; Gen 1:20–21)
- Vegetation (vv. 14, 16; Gen 1:11–12)
- Moon and sun (v. 19; Gen 1:14–18)
- Sea creatures (v. 25; Gen 1:20–21)
- Spirit who creates (v. 30; Gen 1:2)

28 That Christ was involved in the creation of all things.

29 God will renew and restore all things.

30 It affirms the goodness of matter. Instead of discarding his creation, God will renew it.

## 31

- **Acts innocent by asking questions** – Acts like he needs clarification. He doesn’t begin by directly refuting God or explicitly telling Eve to break God’s command.
- **Good timing** – speaks directly to Eve while she was near the tree. What were Adam and Eve doing near the tree? We don’t know, but notice that the serpent spoke to them when they were near the tree. Furthermore, Eve probably heard God’s command secondhand, through Adam (2:16–17). Perhaps that made her more vulnerable.
- **Makes God look bad** – “Did *God* really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” (3:1). This makes God sound stingy and evil. Imagine God placing them in the garden with all of the delicious fruit hanging from the trees and then saying, “you’re not allowed to eat from any of the trees.” This is almost the complete opposite of what God actually said (2:16–17). The serpent also makes God seem stingy by saying, ‘God knows that when you eat of it . . . you will be like God’ (3:5). In other words, God doesn’t want you to be like him.

- 
- **Rejects God's judgment** – says “you will not surely die” (3:4), but God said, “you will surely die” (2:17). According to the serpent, the consequences for eating the fruit will only be good.

**32** The progression of the first sin: She saw→she took→she ate→she gave→he ate. Eve was deceived. Adam was with Eve. What was he thinking at the time?

**33** After they ate the fruit they gained a new awareness of themselves. All of a sudden they became focused and wrapped up in themselves so they hid from each other and from God. Shame, guilt, and fear entered the human experience. **Shame** = a feeling of embarrassment that makes us hide. **Guilt** = a feeling of responsibility for committing an offense. **Fear** = a feeling of distress a person gets when they think something bad is going to happen to them.

**34**

- “Where are you?” (v. 8)
- “Who told you that you were naked?” (v. 11)
- “Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” (v. 11)
- “What is this you have done?” (addressed to the woman) (v. 13)

**35** God's judgment moves from the serpent to the woman to the man:

- The serpent will eat dust, be the target of the woman's enmity, and have his head crushed by a male descendent of the woman.
- The woman will have increased pain in childbearing. And she will desire her husband who will rule over her.
- The man will receive harsh labor because of the cursed ground and eventual death.

**36** God made clothes for Adam and Eve. This shows that:

- Something had to die for them to be adequately covered—“garments of skin.”
- God did for them what they could not adequately do for themselves—skin is a better covering than leaves.
- God still cared for them after they sinned.
- God wants to cover our nakedness/shame.

**37** Other than the fact that the serpent can talk, there's no indication in Genesis 3 that the serpent is anything more than a literal serpent. But what do other parts of the Bible say about the serpent?

**38**

1. If I came from a good God, why do I have the power to will evil and reject good?
2. Is it to justify my punishment?
3. Who put this bitterness in me?
4. If the devil did it, where did the devil come from?

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5. If the devil was created good, how did evil originate in the devil?

**39** evil, mystery

**40** When God asks a question to someone it is more for the person's sake than for God's sake. He wants to make us stop and think. And he wants to give us an opportunity to confess the truth and change our ways.

**41** Since Adam and Eve didn't die instantly, the best explanations for the meaning of death are probably:

- spiritual death – Adam and Eve lost something vital in their relationship with God shown in their hiding from God and their expulsion from the garden,
- they were placed under the sentence of physical death so that they would certainly die, i.e., they became mortal.

**42** It seems to show God's lack of interest in relating with the serpent. God has nothing to talk about with the serpent. His judgment on the serpent is certain and decisive.

**43** First, the serpent and the woman's offspring will be hostile to each other. Second, the wife will want to control her husband, but he will rule over her. "You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you" (3:16 NET).

**44** Of course not. Jesus came to overturn the consequences of the curse (Gal 3:13). Christians are not happy to live with the consequences of a cursed experience, that's why we hope and strive for complete redemption. Husbands are called to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25).

### **45** Quiz 3

1. True
2. "Where are you?" Personal response.
3. Acts innocent by asking questions, has good timing, makes God look bad, rejects God's judgment
4. Die
5. False
6. "a decree of irate and radical disapproval"
7. a prediction of the coming of the Messiah
8. Something had to die for them to be adequately covered, God still cared for them
9. a feeling of embarrassment that leads us to hide

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**46** Yes, we are great because we are made in God's image *and* we are wretched because we rebel against the one whose image we bear.

**47** The universal sinfulness of human beings, with the power of sin ruling over and within them.

**48** Ancient people throughout the world felt a need to understand how the world began and how things went wrong.

**49** Here are three options.

1. They all come from divine revelation. The Creator revealed different stories to peoples of different cultures. This view presents a problem because the various stories often contradict each other. If this view is correct, we would then have to ask: Why did the Creator tell contradicting stories? And what does that tell us about the Creator?
2. They are all human inventions. That idea is promoted in many university departments of religion.
3. One of these stories was divinely revealed, while the others have a varied degree of divine revelation and human invention. This would be an approach that fits with the Christian belief system. While Christians acknowledge the existence of other creation stories and can even see similarities between those stories and Genesis, Christian and Jewish beliefs are rooted in the Genesis creation account.

**50** Of course, because Christians believe the Bible is God's Word. But think of it this way: Christians are, by definition, followers of Christ. Jesus Christ was a first-century Jew who believed in the Hebrew Scriptures and often quoted them. And Genesis is the first part of those Scriptures.

**51** First, we should look for the story that fits with the world as we know it. If the stories don't make sense of the big details of the world and our existence in the world, we can discard them. For example, we know that human beings continually mess up. If someone disagrees with that they should consider how many people are in prison, divorced, robbed, addicted, murdered, etc. Or simply consider how many times you've hurt someone. Since we know our failures, we should look for the story that gives us an honest picture of human beings—a story that presents human failure. There may be many stories that talk about the greatness of human beings, but if they don't account for our depravity, they're incomplete or inaccurate.

Second, what accounts for human greatness? Our artwork, architecture, music, writing, compassionate acts, etc.? (These first two points coincide with Pascal's quote—why are we wretched? And why are we great?)

Third, since we all have a deep need to know our purpose on this planet, we should look for the account that shows that things were made on purpose.

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Fourth, since personal relationships are so integral to our existence, we should look for the account which explains why relationships are so essential to our being. A personal Creator, someone who started everything for a reason and someone with whom we can have a relationship, would be a perfect explanation for our relational nature.

In summary, by using what we know about the world, we are better equipped to search for the true story of the beginning of the world and the human race.

**52** Obviously atheistic and deistic evolution are incompatible with Christianity. The controversy usually lies with evolutionary creationism. On the one hand, many Christians feel strongly that evolution is contrary to Scripture and they reject it completely. On the other hand, many Christians, who are scientists, believe that God used evolution to bring life to where it is today. Honesty requires us to acknowledge the existence of both evolutionary rejectionists and evolutionary proponents within Christianity.

**53** He recognizes symbolism in Genesis 2–3, which means we shouldn't fight about every detail in the story. But he also doesn't think every part of the story is purely symbolic. He believes Adam was a historical person because the comparison between Adam and Jesus in Romans 5 depends on historical events.

**54** Adam was made in God's image.

**55** From hominids

**56** He doesn't say, but he is open to that idea. He writes, "Adam's body may well have evolved from hominids."

**57** II.b - The first two hominids specially-marked by God with his image.

**58** Literature doesn't have to be historically accurate to have a profound impact on the reader. At a bare minimum, if Adam and Eve were not intended to be interpreted as historical figures, the story of Adam and Eve could still convey the following points:

- We have an inherent dignity—"made in God's image."
- We have struggled with temptation from the beginning of human history.
- We have gone astray from the beginning.
- We now live in a condition that is inferior to our original condition.

**59**

1. Jesus' genealogy is traced back to Adam who is called the son of God (Lk 3:36).

- 
2. Sin entered the world through one man. Adam sinned by breaking a command. Death came to all because of sin. Adam is a pattern of the one to come (Rom 5:12–14).
  3. In Adam all die, in Christ all will be made alive (1 Cor 15:22).
  4. The first man became a living being, the last Adam is a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45).
  5. Adam was formed first, then Eve (1 Tim 2:13).
  6. Adam was not deceived, the woman was deceived (1 Tim 2:14).
  7. The seventh from Adam was Enoch (Jude 1:14).

**60** It seems most natural to read the NT references to Adam and Eve as historical. For example, Adam's name is found as one of the many names in Jesus' genealogy. If Adam is not historical, we would need to interpret the genealogy as partly non-historical and partly historical.

But supporters of the literary view point to the fact that the names Adam and Eve are usually used in a generic sense for man (or humanity) and woman. They also highlight the way Paul speaks generically of Adam in his two extensive discourses on the topic (Rom 5 & 1 Cor 15) (e.g., Adam = mortality).

## **61 Test**

1. ascribing human characteristics to God
2. the four-letter personal name of God
3. set apart
4. beyond the world
5. a feeling of embarrassment that leads to hiding
6. God
7. T
8. T
9. F
10. T
11. F
12. F
13. F
14. T
15. F
16. T
17. T
18. F
19. T
20. T
21. F
22. F
23. T

- 
24. T
  25. T
  26. T
  27. six
  28. formed, filled
  29. very good
  30. formed, breathed
  31. holy
  32. naked, shame
  33. die
  34. day-age
  35. Where are you?
  36. naked
  37. dust, dust
  38. check Bible
  39. check Bible
  40. See Lesson 12
  41. Acts innocent by asking questions, has good timing, makes God look bad, rejects God's judgment
  42. God created everything over billions of years and living organisms were created directly by God. The explosion of life forms in the fossil record shows that God did not use evolution but rather directly introduced new life forms at specific points in history.
  43. Personal answer