

# Genesis

## The Creation

Lesson #1 for April 2, 2022

Scriptures: Psalm 100:1-3; Genesis 1&2; Exodus 20:8-11; 40:33; Matthew 19:7-9; 25:14-30.

1. What is the earliest known history recorded in Scripture? It is the record of the rebellion in heaven as recorded in Revelation 12:7-12. Ellen White suggested that one of the challenges that God faced in dealing with the rebellion of Lucifer/Satan was over the creation of this world. Lucifer wanted to be a part of the creation committee; however, God recognized that as a creature, Lucifer had nothing to contribute.
2. Genesis 1&2 mark the beginning of human history. There are a number of technical reasons from the original Hebrew language to suggest that these records in Genesis 1&2 follow the normal wording used to describe daily events throughout the Old Testament. When the Bible uses the expression **evening and morning**, it is always talking about a **literal 24-hour day**.
3. One of the most challenging things for many people to understand is the purpose of putting the tree of knowledge of good and evil in that beautiful garden, especially in the middle of it. We will discuss that briefly later and even more next week.
4. It is significant for us to realize that God created our wonderful world in its original pristine condition in preparation for the arrival of humans. That is a perfect example of God's grace and is a foretaste of God's grace that will be acting in the end of human history when He will re-create this earth for our benefit.
5. So, what should be our response to God's creation?

**Psalm 100:1-3:** Sing to the LORD, all the world!

<sup>2</sup> Worship the LORD with joy;  
come before him with happy songs!

<sup>3</sup> Acknowledge that the LORD is God.

**He made us, and we belong to him;**

we are his people, we are his flock.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation\** (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Psalm 100:1-3). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].<sup>†‡</sup>

The Christian understanding of Genesis begins with God. As we will note later, the evolutionary approach to origins does everything it possibly can to eliminate God. In Genesis 1&2, we are going to see two different presentations of God. These are more obvious in the Hebrew than in English. In Genesis 1:1-2:4, the use of the name for God, *Elohim*, in Hebrew suggests His supremacy, His transcendence, His strength, and His preeminence. In the original Hebrew, the use of the plural, *Elohim*, instead of the singular, *El*, suggests the idea of majesty and transcendence.

6. In the second creation account recorded in Genesis 2:4-25, the words suggest a very personal God known as *Yahweh*, in Hebrew *YHWH*, a name which is considered too sacred to pronounce. That name suggests closeness and relationship. So, the total picture suggests that we are dealing with a Being who has infinite grandeur and power; however, at the same time, God wants to be close to us. Many of the psalms suggested worship of God should

always be associated with remembrance of His work of creation. (See Psalm 95:1-6; Psalm 139:13-14. Compare Revelation 14:7.) So, how are we supposed to recognize God's awesome majesty and power and yet feel comfortable in His presence, recognizing His forgiveness and love? What does it mean to *serve God with fear*? In the original language, the word often translated *fear* also means *reverence* and *respect*.

7. Look over Genesis 1. Repeatedly, we see the expression "it was good" or "God was pleased" with His creation, day by day. And when the week was finished and He created man, He said, "It was very good." (Genesis 1:31, *KJV*\*)

8. And then God gives us a reason and a way to celebrate everything that He had done.

**Genesis 2:1-3:** <sup>1</sup> And so the whole universe was completed. <sup>2</sup>**By the seventh day God finished what he had been doing and stopped working.** <sup>3</sup>**He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day, because by that day he had completed his creation and stopped working.**—*Good News Bible*.\*†

9. The word translated *good* in all those verses means not just that it works, but also that it is beautiful and very appealing to human beings. That word is also sometimes used as in Genesis 2:17 to express what is good in opposition to what is bad.

**Genesis 2:17:** [The LORD said:] "... Except the tree that gives knowledge of what is **good** and what is bad. You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day."—*Good News Bible*.\*†‡

This description of the Creation radically contradicts the theories of evolution, which dogmatically declare that the world shaped itself progressively through a succession of accidental happenings, starting from an inferior condition and progressing to a superior one.

In contrast, **the biblical author affirms that God intentionally and suddenly created the world (Gen. 1:1).** There was nothing happenstance or chancy about any of it. The world did not come about by itself but only as the result of God's will and Word (*Gen. 1:3*). The verb *bara'*, "create," translated in Genesis 1 as in the beginning God "created" the heavens and the earth, occurs only with God as its subject, and it denotes abruptness: *God spoke, and it was so.*—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*\* for Monday, March 28.†§

10. Imagine how good things must have been for God to be very pleased.

**Genesis 1:31:** God looked at **everything he had made, and he was very pleased.** Evening passed and morning came—that was the sixth day.—*Good News Bible*.\*†

11. The Genesis account describes each day as *evening and morning*. As we mentioned earlier, that expression in the Bible always refers to literal days. Furthermore, if the vegetation was created on the third "day" or long period of time and the sun and moon were not created until the fourth "day," how did the vegetation survive without the sun for any prolonged period of time? **Of course, the real reason for the origin and existence of the theory of evolution was/is to remove God from His position as Creator and especially to try to remove Him**

**from the position of being the final Judge of all men.** Evolutionists do not want to think that they will ever be responsible to any ultimate righteous authority.

12. So, the real difference between a creation explanation of origins and an evolutionary explanation of origins is God. Does God exist? Or, doesn't He? And if He exists, will we, ultimately, be judged by Him? That is the real question. Evolutionist have been determined to try to explain the origin of everything without God.
13. Many scientists or even people with a scientific bent in their thinking look at Genesis 1 and think that it is far too simple. Where is the scientific evidence? But, there is a very clear answer to that accusation: When speaking of Genesis and origins, we are speaking about "who" and "why" and very little about "how." **Suppose for a moment that God had given Moses a full understanding of every scientific detail of how He created this earth. Who would Moses have been able to tell, and how could he tell? Considering the relatively simple language and wording of the time, what words could Moses have used to explain it? Besides Moses, who would understand any of it?**
14. Is it any surprise that when God declared that His work was very good and that He was well pleased that He would encourage us to join Him in celebrating? Reading again:  
**Genesis 2:2-3:** <sup>2</sup>By the seventh day God finished what he had been doing and stopped working. <sup>3</sup>He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day, because by that day he had completed his creation and stopped working.—*Good News Bible*.<sup>\*</sup>  
**Exodus 20:8-11:** <sup>8</sup> **“Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy.** <sup>9</sup>You have six days in which to do your work, <sup>10</sup>but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me. On that day no one is to work—neither you, your children, your slaves, your animals, nor the foreigners who live in your country. <sup>11</sup>**In six days I, the LORD, made the earth, the sky, the sea, and everything in them, but on the seventh day I rested.** That is why I, the LORD, blessed the Sabbath and made it holy.”—*Good News Bible*.<sup>\*†</sup>
15. God recognizes that we also have work to do six days a week. That is why He has given us a Sabbath so that we can celebrate all His gifts to us just as He did at the end of creation week.

**Contrary to some ancient (and modern) beliefs, nothing in Scripture, Old or New Testament, denigrates the body as evil. That's a pagan concept, not a biblical one.** Instead, Sabbath keepers [*sic*] are grateful for God's creation—which includes their own flesh—and that is why they can enjoy the creation and why they take care of it.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*<sup>\*</sup> for Tuesday, March 29.<sup>††</sup> [**Pagan philosophers theorized** that man consisted of two very different components. They believed: (1) The soul (*psuche*) was imprisoned inside of the body (*soma*); (2) The soul was untouchable while the body was touchable; and (3) The soul was good while the body was evil.]<sup>‡</sup>

16. The expression used in Genesis to describe the fact that God “finished His work” and that “it was complete” is used in Exodus 40:33 when the tent/tabernacle in the wilderness was completed and also in 1 Kings 7:40,51 when Solomon finished the first temple in Jerusalem.
17. As we know from our study of Scripture, Jesus created many challenges and much animosity by performing miracles of healing on the Sabbath. Why do you think He did that? Is it true that God will one day heal all of our problems, eliminating sin, sickness, death, and disease? And we will celebrate all that by continuing to keep the Sabbath on the earth made new? (See Luke 13:13-16.)
18. The Genesis account of creation deals in considerably more detail with the origin of human beings than with other events of that week.

**Genesis 1:26-29:** <sup>26</sup> Then God said, “And now **we will make human beings**; they will be **like us** and **resemble us**. They will have power over the fish, the birds, and all animals, domestic and wild, large and small.” <sup>27</sup> So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female, <sup>28</sup> blessed them, and said, “Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals. <sup>29</sup> I have provided all kinds of grain and all kinds of fruit for you to eat.”—*Good News Bible*.\*†

**Genesis 2:7:** **Then the LORD God took some soil from the ground and formed a man out of it; he breathed life-giving breath into his nostrils and the man began to live.**—*Good News Bible*.\*†

**That God has created humans in His image is one of the boldest statements of the Bible. Only humans have been created in the image of God.** Though “God made the beast of the earth according to its kind” (*Gen. 1:25, NKJV*), “God created man in His own image” (*Gen. 1:27, NKJV; emphasis added*). This formula has often been limited to the spiritual nature of humans, which is interpreted to mean that the “image of God” is understood to signify only the administrative function of representing God, or the spiritual function of relationship with God or with each other.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** for Wednesday, March 30.†§

19. **The above statement is contradicted by the following statements by Ellen White.**

**Evil originated with Lucifer, who rebelled against the government of God. Before his fall he was a covering cherub, distinguished by his excellence. God made him good and beautiful, as near as possible like himself.**—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,\* September 24, 1901, par. 4†; *4SDABC\** 1163.1†¶; *FLB\** 66.2.†¶

20. However, **Lucifer does not have the ability to procreate as humans do.**

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. **Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth. They were to live in close communion with heaven, receiving power from the Source of all power.** Upheld by God, they were to

live sinless lives.—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,\* February 11, 1902, par. 1.† Compare *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1081.3.

21. What does it mean **to be made in the image and likeness of God**?

While these understandings are correct, they fail to include the important physical reality of this creation. Both dimensions are, indeed, included in the two words “image” and “likeness” describing this process in Genesis 1:26. While the **Hebrew word *tselem*, “image,” refers to the concrete shape of the physical body**, the word ***demut*, “likeness,” refers to abstract qualities that are comparable to the divine Person**.

Therefore, the Hebrew notion of the “image of God” should be understood in the wholistic sense of the biblical view of human nature. **The biblical text affirms that human individuals (men and women) have been created in God’s image physically, as well as spiritually.**—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*\* for Wednesday, March 30.†

22. As Ellen G. White clearly said:

**When Adam came from the Creator’s hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker.** “God created man in His own image” (Genesis 1:27), and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. **All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase.** Vast was the scope offered for their exercise, glorious the field opened to their research. The mysteries of the visible universe—the “wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge” (Job 37:16)—invited man’s study. **Face-to-face, heart-to-heart communion with his Maker was his high privilege. Had he remained loyal to God, all this would have been his forever. Throughout eternal ages he would have continued to gain new treasures of knowledge, to discover fresh springs of happiness, and to obtain clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. More and more fully would he have fulfilled the object of his creation, more and more fully have reflected the Creator’s glory.**—Ellen G. White, *Education*\* 15.1.†

In fact, this wholistic understanding of the image of God, including the physical body, is reaffirmed in the other Creation account, which says that “man became a living being” (*Gen. 2:7, NKJV*), literally, “**a living soul**” (*nefesh*), **as the result of two divine operations: God “formed” and God “breathed.”** Note that the “breath” often refers to the spiritual dimension, but it also is closely tied to the biological capacity for breathing, the part of the man that was “formed . . . of the dust of the ground.” It is the “*breath of life*”; that is, **breath (spiritual) and life (physical)**. [In Hebrew and Greek, the words used to mean *breath* also mean *spirit*.]

God will later perform a **third operation**, this time **to create the woman from the body of the man (*Gen. 2:21, 22*)**, a way to emphasize that she is of the same nature as the man.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*\* for Wednesday, March 30.†‡§

**Genesis 2:21-23:** <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD God made the man fall into a deep sleep, and while he was sleeping, he took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the flesh. <sup>22</sup>**He formed a woman out of the rib and brought her to him.** <sup>23</sup>Then the man said,

"At last, here is one of my own kind—

Bone taken from my bone, and flesh from my flesh.

'Woman' is her name because she was taken out of man."—*Good News Bible*.<sup>\*†</sup>

23. My father was an anesthesiologist. Anesthesiologists say that God was the first anesthesiologist and that God working as an anesthesiologist was the first act of a physician, putting Adam to sleep before removing his rib. God was also the first surgeon. He did a perfect job.

24. Some have suggested that God took a careful look at Adam and said, "I can do better than that!"

25. Some people want to say that women are subject to men because the first woman was taken out of man. I remind such people that every man since then has been taken out of a woman!

26. God had no sooner created Adam than He began to bless him with three huge gifts: (1) The Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8); (2) Food (Genesis 2:16); and (3) The woman (Genesis 2:22). God gave Adam and Eve a wonderful relationship; they had each other.

27. But, there was **one restriction on their freedom**. As we read earlier:

**Genesis 2:15-17:** <sup>15</sup> Then the LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it. <sup>16</sup>He said to him, "You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, <sup>17</sup>except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. **You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day.**"—*Good News Bible*.<sup>\*†</sup>

28. Humans were to attend to and care for the garden. They were given access to the fruits and grains and nuts produced by that garden and told that they could freely eat of all of them except for the one tree which was forbidden.

29. And, later, man was to leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife so that they could form a new pair.

**Genesis 2:24:** That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united with his wife, and they become one.—*Good News Bible*.<sup>\*</sup>

30. Why is it said that it is the man who must leave his parents and not the woman? **In the Bible, man is often used in the generic sense, including both male and female.** Consider the following several paragraphs from Ellen White in *Story of Redemption* pages 20-22.

The Father and the Son engaged in the mighty, wondrous work they had contemplated—of creating the world. The earth came forth from the hand of the Creator exceedingly beautiful. There were mountains and hills and plains; and interspersed among them were rivers and bodies of water. The earth was not one extensive plain, but the monotony of the scenery was broken by hills and mountains, not high and ragged as they now are, but regular and beautiful in

shape. The bare, high rocks were never seen upon them, but lay beneath the surface, answering as bones to the earth. The waters were regularly dispersed. **The hills, mountains, and very beautiful plains were adorned with plants and flowers and tall, majestic trees of every description, which were many times larger and much more beautiful than trees now are.** The air was pure and healthful, and the earth seemed like a noble palace. Angels beheld and rejoiced at the wonderful and beautiful works of God.

After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, **to make man in their own image.** They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God said to His Son, "Let us make man in our image." As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator he was of noble height and of beautiful symmetry. **He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned.** His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was neither white nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. **Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble, perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful.**

This sinless pair wore no artificial garments. **They were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear.** While they lived in obedience to God, this circle of light enshrouded them. Although everything God had made was in the perfection of beauty, and there seemed nothing wanting upon the earth which God had created to make Adam and Eve happy, yet He manifested His great love to them by planting a garden especially for them. **A portion of their time was to be occupied in the happy employment of dressing the garden, and a portion in receiving the visits of angels, listening to their instruction, and in happy meditation.** Their labor was not wearisome but pleasant and invigorating. This beautiful garden was to be their home.

In this garden the Lord placed trees of every variety for usefulness and beauty. There were trees laden with luxuriant fruit, of rich fragrance, beautiful to the eye, and pleasant to the taste, designed of God to be food for the holy pair. There were the lovely vines which grew upright, laden with their burden of fruit, unlike anything man has seen since the fall. The fruit was very large and of different colors; some nearly black, some purple, red, pink, and light green. This beautiful and luxuriant growth of fruit upon the branches of the vine was called grapes. They did not trail upon the ground, although not supported by trellises, but the weight of the fruit bowed them down. It was the happy labor of Adam and Eve to form beautiful bowers from the branches of the vine and train them, forming dwellings of nature's beautiful, living trees and foliage, laden with fragrant fruit.

**The earth was clothed with beautiful verdure, while myriads of fragrant flowers of every variety and hue sprang up in rich profusion around them.** Everything was tastefully and gloriously arranged. **In the midst of the garden stood the tree of life, the glory of which surpassed all other trees. Its fruit**

**looked like apples of gold and silver, and was to perpetuate immortality. The leaves contained healing properties.**

### **Adam and Eve in Eden**

Very happy were the holy pair in Eden. **Unlimited control was given them over every living thing.** The lion and the lamb sported peacefully and harmlessly around them, or slumbered at their feet. Birds of every variety of color and plumage flitted among the trees and flowers and about Adam and Eve, while their mellow-toned music echoed among the trees in sweet accord to the praises of their Creator.

Adam and Eve were charmed with the beauties of their Eden home. They were delighted with the little songsters around them, wearing their bright yet graceful plumage, and warbling forth their happy, cheerful music. The holy pair united with them and raised their voices in harmonious songs of love, praise, and adoration to the Father and His dear Son for the tokens of love which surrounded them. They recognized the order and harmony of creation, which spoke of wisdom and knowledge that were infinite. Some new beauty and additional glory of their Eden home they were continually discovering, which filled their hearts with deeper love and brought from their lips expressions of gratitude and reverence to their Creator.—Ellen G. White, *Story of Redemption*\* 20.1-22.3.†

31. Some people feel that Genesis 1-11 and especially the account of creation is not intended to be historically accurate but just stories to edify us spiritually or *myths*. But, in actual fact, the theological message proceeds from the historical event.
32. So, how much is your faith impacted by your understanding of the creation story? If you believe the first 11 chapters of Genesis are just “myth,” does that impact your faith? Evolutionists do not believe that God created this universe. They do not want to even acknowledge that He exists. So, if *faith* is a relationship with a Person well known, to whom do they relate?
33. The creation story should also impress upon us the importance of being careful stewards of what God has left us. The world may be corrupted by our human activities; however, we need to preserve as far as possible what is left of God’s creation. Even what is left was made by God and must be respected.
34. Some Christians try to set aside the first 11 chapters of Genesis as a myth or allegory. If one suggests that those stories are not true, then s/he is claiming that many other Bible authors are lying to us, including Jesus Himself. For example, see 1 Chronicles 1:1; Isaiah 1:2; Daniel 1:12; and especially John 1:1-14.
35. For those who can read Genesis 1&2 in the original Hebrew, it is a thing of beauty with plays on words, plays on sounds, parallelisms, and well-balanced structures. It is written almost as a poem. Some people have described it as **the rhythm of sevens**. Since *seven* is considered to be a perfect number in the Bible, it should apply to God’s creation.
36. For those who understand the original language, these two chapters in Genesis were written using a form commonly applied to genealogy.



The reason the biblical text of Creation has been written in the form of a genealogy is to **connect it with the other genealogies of the book of Genesis** and to alert the reader that this report about the event of Creation belongs to human history to the same degree as the lives of the patriarchs....

The Genesis Creation account does not present itself as a scientific analysis of the event of Creation. If such were the case, the Creation account should have been written as a very complicated and infinitely long formula that would be inaccessible to humans. The biblical author writes, under inspiration, **the report of the event of Creation as a historical event**. All that he says about the Creation event is true and should not be in conflict with science.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*\* 14.†

37. In Genesis 1, we are told that God created the heavens and the earth. This is a construction from the Hebrew known as a *merism* in which two contrasting parts—heaven and earth—refer to the whole. Thus, when the Bible talks about heavens and earth, it is really speaking about the entire universe. Many modern versions reflect this. Reading Genesis 2:1-4 again:

**Genesis 2:1-4:** And so **the whole universe** was completed. <sup>2</sup>By the seventh day God finished what he had been doing and stopped working. <sup>3</sup>He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day, because by that day he had completed his creation and stopped working. <sup>4</sup>And that is how **the universe** was created.—*Good News Bible*.\*†

38. So, we would suggest that if it is going to be true to what we know about God, theological thinking must first begin with acknowledgment of the truth of creation. How do those ideas impact your life today? We were not present at creation. We did not see what happened. Do we celebrate the Sabbath in ways that commemorate our beliefs about creation?

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Last Modified: March 19, 2022