



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

## #3 – The Beginning of Creation Genesis 1:1-2

### PICTURES NEEDED

- 3-1 God visual
- 3-2 Chart of the elements
- 3-3 Lego blocks and building
- 3-4 Hydrogen atom chart

### REVIEW (Before Teaching Lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review)  
How is God different from man? What does creation tell us about God? What is the theory of evolution?
- **The Big Question:** What does creation show about God?  
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** Romans 1:20  
What does creation show about God? Creation reveals God's eternal power and divine nature.

*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*

## LESSON CONTENT

**Note:** The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

Verse one of the first chapter of Genesis lays the foundation for the whole Bible and our faith. *<sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

Why is that verse the foundation of our faith? According to the verse, God existed before all things and is the creator of all things. He made the heavens and the earth. He made everything that can be seen and also what can't be seen. If this isn't true and there is no God, our faith is in vain, meaning it has no value.

What does in the beginning mean? All things that exist, except God, had a beginning. Time and history began when God created the heavens and the earth. Time is related to the created material or physical world, to things that have a beginning and an end. God always has and always will exist. We know God is eternal and spiritual and exists outside of time and the physical world. We will use an infinity symbol to represent this attribute of God. Show visual. **(picture 3-1)** (Point out the infinity symbol on the visual.)

How did God exist before the universe and the earth were created? Remember in the last lesson we learned that God is an eternal, infinite and spiritual being. He is not like man. He does not have a beginning or an end. He wasn't born and he won't die. He doesn't have a physical body and is present everywhere at all times. He is the source of all that is and is also all knowing and all powerful. Because God is so different from us, it is hard for us to comprehend the fullness of who he is.

Verse 2 of Genesis 1 tells us what things were like when 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.*

Before God created the heavens and the earth they only existed in his mind, they didn't exist in a way that could be seen. The Hebrew word for heavens used in Genesis 1:1 refers to stretched out space. Before God made the stars and the planets, he made a place to put them. The black square represents the place God made for his creation. **(picture 3-1)** (Point out the black square on the visual below the infinity symbol.)

The word used for earth means dirt or matter and refers to the elements that all things are made of. God has used the same basic elements in all his creation; he has just put them together in different ways. This means that before he made anything that can be seen he made the material from which things would be made. In other words, he made the building blocks or elements to construct the physical world. **(picture 3-2)** You may have seen a chart of all the elements known to exist. Everything in the universe is made up of the elements on the chart.

The building blocks that things are made up of is referred to as matter. Our bodies are made up of the same basic matter as dirt and everything else. Matter is made up of elements called atoms, which join together to form molecules. **(picture 3-1)** (Point out the atoms on the visual.)

Making matter first is like gathering all the needed types of Legos together before building a Legos contraption. **(picture 3-3)** To make something out of Legos, you need to have a plan for what you are going to build and a place to build on. Then you gather all the necessary pieces before you start putting it together.

What was the earth (matter) like in the beginning? In Genesis 1:2, it says that in the beginning the earth (or matter) was formless and empty. That means that God hadn't organized or shaped it into anything specific or purposeful.

What was over the surface of the deep? The verse goes on to say that darkness was over the surface of the deep, meaning that there was no visible light at the very beginning.

Over what was God's Spirit hovering? God's Spirit was hovering over the waters. Exactly how the water was we don't know because there was still no form to matter. It may have just been water molecules existing in deep space. The verse does tell us that God's Spirit was active in the material world from the beginning, and from the Bible and personal experience we know that the Holy Spirit is still watching (hovering) over creation.

In the New Testament, Colossians 1:16-17 affirms what we have learned about the beginning from Genesis. It says, *<sup>16</sup>For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

To whom do him and he refer to in these verses? Him and he refer to Jesus.

What does this say about Jesus? This says Jesus created all things, which means he is God and has always existed. God is the one who has formed all matter and holds it together. Without God's act of creation, there would be absolutely nothing besides God.

From Genesis 1:2 and Colossians 1:16 we can see the triune nature of the one, true, creator God. What is the triune nature of God? The one eternal God is made up of three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Comprehension Questions:** What existed before creation? When did time begin? What are all things made of? What was matter like in the beginning? What was space like? What was God's Spirit doing?
- **Thought Questions:** What does thinking about creation help you to understand about God?
- **Prayer:** Thank God that he had a plan for his creation when he created the space in which to put things and the matter which things are made of. Praise him that he is the almighty Creator who is all knowing and all powerful and able to bring matter, energy and life into existence through his design and desire. Thank him for creating and loving you. Pray that you would hear him speak through his creation and learn to love him more.

- **The Big Question:** Where did created things come from?

Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.

- **Memory Verse:** Colossians 1:16-17

Jesus created all things and holds them together.

*<sup>16</sup>For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

Questions: What was created by Jesus? Who does that mean Jesus is? What did he create? What would thrones, powers, rulers or authorities refer to? Why were all things created? What does that mean is the purpose of creation? What does it mean that he was before all things? What does it mean that in him all things hold together?

## ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

1. Before God created the things we can see, he already existed. God has no beginning or end.
2. God first created a place to put things and the matter that things are made up of.
3. In the beginning matter had no form, it just was.

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the class notes and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse.

- ★ **Activity Page:** Crossword Puzzle

Instructions: Solve the crossword puzzle with words relating to creation.

Eternal – The attribute of God that means he has always existed.

Matter – What the Hebrew word for earth can refer to besides dirt.

Time – What began with creation.

Darkness – What was over the deep.

Spirit – What was hovering over the waters.

Jesus – The one who holds all things together.

Formless – What the earth was in the beginning.

Heavens – Stretched out space.

## ★ Further Understanding: Investigation/Reasoning Skills

### The Building Blocks of Creation

All non-living and living things have three attributes: matter, energy and design. Matter is physical material that has mass and takes up space. Energy exists in different forms: kinetic (motion), electromagnetic (heat/light), and potential (meaning it exists in matter but is yet to be used). Design is the information that God has programmed into everything he created so it functions in a purposeful way. These three things can be seen in the smallest unit or element of matter, the atom.

What is an atom? Atoms are the basic building block of everything in the material world and are so tiny that they can't be seen. Each atom is a million times smaller than the thickness of a human hair. Like everything else in creation, each atom consists of: matter, energy and design. **(picture 3-4)**

- Matter – The matter of an atom is made up of minute subatomic particles: neutrons, protons and electrons. The proton and neutron form the center (nucleus) of the atom and make up the majority of the mass in the atom. Most of the atom consists of space through which the electrons move randomly. It is interesting that scientists don't know what holds the atom together and keeps the electrons from spinning off into space. How does the memory verse from Colossians address that question? The memory verse states that in Jesus everything holds together.
- Energy – Besides the motion of the particles (kinetic energy) and the attractive and repulsive force that exists between them (electromagnetic), the atom contains potential energy. An atomic bomb and nuclear power plant utilize the potential energy locked up in the atom.
- Design – Each type of atom was designed as its own kind with a unique number of protons. Atoms link up with other atoms in specific ways to form the molecules which make up all material things. The atoms in a molecule bind together by either sharing or transferring electrons. Compounds are made when two or more different types of atoms link together as molecules.

Example: (picture 3-4) Two basic elements are hydrogen and water. When two hydrogen atoms link together, they form hydrogen gas. When two oxygen atoms link together, they form oxygen gas. However, when two hydrogen atoms link with one oxygen atom they form a water molecule.

Questions: What three attributes do all things consist of? What is an atom? What are atoms made up of? What holds atoms together? What are molecules? How do they hold together?

Thought Questions: Why couldn't the atom and the molecules come into existence by time and chance? What can be learned about God from the atom and the formation of molecules?

## The Building Blocks of Creation

All things consists of: 1. matter 2. energy 3. design

Use the following words to fill in the blanks: atom, atoms, molecule, molecules, mass, matter, physical, space, weight

Atoms are the basic building block of everything in the physical world . An atom links up with another atom or atoms to form a molecule . All matter is made up of molecules . All matter has mass which means it takes up space and has weight.

What can be learned about God from the existence of atoms and molecules? Let the students give their own answers.

## JOURNAL

The journal is passed out at the end of class for the students to complete at home. It has six readings that answer a digging deeper question. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Digging Deeper: What should we understand about God?

Reading 1: Colossians 1:15-20 Christ is the fullness of God and created all things for his purposes.

Who is Jesus? For what purpose were all things created? What does it mean that in him all things hold together? What did God do through Christ? What does that mean?

Reading 2: Deuteronomy 4:39-40 There is only one God.

What does it mean that there is no other God but God? What should be our response to God because he is God? What will be the result?

Reading 3: Jeremiah 51:15-19 God made the earth by his power and wisdom.

How were all things created? What do men exchange the glory of God for? Why would men do that?

Reading 4: Isaiah 6:1-7 The Almighty is holy.

What did Isaiah see about God? What was Isaiah's response to what he saw? What did God do for Isaiah? How does God do that for us?

Reading 5: Revelation 1:8 Christ is the beginning and end of all things.

What does this verse say about Christ? What does that mean?

Reading 6: John 4:21-24 Picturing the spiritual world

Before the creation of physical matter only the spiritual world existed. Close your eyes and think about what that would have been like. Reflect on the following: What isn't physical about us? (thoughts, emotions) Even though there is nothing physical in the spiritual world is it empty? Why not? What is God's spiritual presence like? What enables us to experience God's presence? Why does closing our eyes help us to think about God?