



God Creates the Heavens and the Earth

Genesis 1:1–2:3



LESSON GOAL

Students will praise God for His creation.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God is Creator (Gen. 1:1).
- God is powerful (Gen. 1:2–31).
- God is good; everything He made was good (Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 31).
- God made us to worship Him (Gen. 2:1–3; Ex. 20:8–11).

KEY VERSE

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”
(Genesis 1:1).

APPLICATION

- Thank God for making the heavens and earth.
- Thank God for making you.
- Obey God because He made you.
- Praise God because He is wise and good.

NEXT WEEK

God Creates Man and Woman
Read Genesis 1:26–2:24.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

The book of Genesis presents a portrait of God as a being who is to be feared and adored for His uniqueness. There is no being like Him, yet He reveals Himself so that man may know and love Him. This picture of God is further developed in Genesis as Moses describes how God interacts with the universe He has made.

Everything that exists, in both the spiritual and physical realms, owes its existence to God (Gen. 1:1). Nothing has come into being apart from Him. Therefore, all things can be properly understood through the knowledge of, and a relationship with, the one who brought all things into existence.

An important aspect of this creative work of God is its immediate and sudden nature. The heavens and earth and all things in them were brought into being through the agency of God’s spoken Word alone. Moses does not present their coming to be as the result of physical processes or universal laws. Rather, the existence of all things was the supernatural response to God’s divine command, calling the creation out of nothingness. The immediacy, comprehensiveness, and complexity of God’s creative work speak of His greatness.

The Days of Creation

Genesis 1:2 indicates that the earth was “without form, and void” (empty), a translation of the Hebrew phrase *tohu wa bohu*. This was the situation on earth before it was touched by the creative hand of God. The acts of separating and gathering on days one through three gave form to the formless, and the acts of making and filling on days four through six gave divine assurance that the heavens and the earth would never again be “without form, and void.”

Day One (1:3–5)

God called for light and separated the light from the darkness. God called the light *day*, and the darkness He called *night*. By giving names to the light and the darkness, God was declaring His sovereignty and rulership over them. To name something or someone in ancient times implied dominion or ownership (2 Kings 23:34; 24:17). Day and night belong to the Lord (Psalm 74:16).

Day Two (1:6–8)

God called forth the “firmament”—the visible atmosphere or sky.

Day Three (1:9–13)

The water below the firmament (1:9) was gathered together, and God created dry land, seas, and vegetation (plants). The plants were to reproduce within categories (“kinds”) that were carefully distinguished from one another.

Additional Reference Materials

*The Battle for the
Beginning* by John
MacArthur

*The MacArthur Study
Bible* by John MacArthur

Day Four (1:14–19)

God created the sun and the moon. Why are the sun and the moon called the “two great lights” in Genesis 1:16? Perhaps the words *sun* and *moon* are deliberately avoided here since in ancient times pagan nations deified them and worshiped them under those names. Moses may have wanted his readers to understand that the lights are light-bearers to be appreciated, not gods to be feared. It is the one true God who made both the sun and the moon.

Verse 16 also mentions the fact that God created the stars. In reading the verse, the mention of the stars seems almost an afterthought, probably because of the emphasis on the specific functions of the sun and moon. Psalm 136:9 notes that the stars help the moon “rule by night.”

Genesis 1:14 lists three main duties of the lights in the sky:

1. To distinguish day from night
2. To provide signs (signs that relate to faith [Rom. 1:14–20], weather [Matt. 16:2–3], prophecy [Matt. 2:2; Luke 21:25], and judgment [Joel 2:30–31; Matt. 24:29]; also, a means of getting bearings for long journeys)
3. To determine days, seasons, and years

Day Five (1:20–23)

God created sea creatures (marine animals) and flying things (birds and flying insects). The Hebrew word *tanninim* (“great sea creatures”) was used in Canaanite mythology as the name of a dreaded sea monster. It often is referred to in a literary and figurative way in Old Testament poetry as one of God’s most powerful adversaries, whether natural (Job 7:12) or national (Babylon: Jer. 51:34; Egypt: Isa. 51:9; Ezek. 29:3; 32:2). But in Genesis, this is simply the first specimen of animal life created by God—not to be feared as an evil enemy, but to be appreciated because God created this creature as “good” (Psalm 148:7).

God showed gracious, loving concern to the animals by blessing them and making it possible for them to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:22) after their own kinds.

Day Six (1:24–31)

God created land animals and man. Verses 24 and 25 describe God’s creation of animals that filled the land. Large and small animals, cattle, and creeping things (worms, creeping insects, and reptiles) were brought forth from the earth.

Included in the sixth day of creation is the climax of God’s creative activity—the creation of man. God has “crowned him with glory and honor” and “made him to have dominion” over the rest of His creation (Gen. 1:26; Psalm 8:5–8). Man is a product of divine creation (Gen. 2:7), not of natural evolution.

Genesis 1:28 depicts God as the provider for man. It is in this role that we first see His love. God provided for man’s physical needs. He brought food (Gen. 1:29; 2:9) and shelter (Gen. 2:15) to man. (Note: Genesis 1:29–30 indicates that both people and animals were vegetarian before the flood. See also Genesis 9:3.)

God is also the provider of work (Gen. 2:15, 19–20) and of standards of right and wrong (Gen. 2:16–17). God provided man with a job—to rule over the earth and all things in it. All that was required—hand-eye coordination, intellectual power, strength, and wisdom to prune the garden, name and classify the animals, and later, till the earth—came from the hand of God.

God provided relationships for man. Man was not left alone (Gen. 2:21–23). The joys of friendship, the benefits of teamwork, and the intimacy of marital love are the product of God’s providing love.

Finally, God provided mankind with purpose and hope. Ultimately, man's purpose is to glorify God (2 Cor. 5:9).

Day Seven (2:1–3)

God rested. On days one, two, and three, God gave form to the universe; on days four, five, and six, He filled the universe. Then on day seven, the Creator of the universe rested from all His work. As God rested from all His work, so Christians share in the rest that Jesus provides (Heb. 4:4, 10).

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Giant-Step Counting, Part One

Before class, make a line on the floor using masking tape. Once the students have arrived, direct them to line up side by side with their toes on the masking tape. When you say "one," everyone should take a giant step, stretching their legs as far as they can. Have the students count out loud with you as they slowly take two, three, four, five, and six giant steps. When you say "seven," have the students sit down and rest. Tell them that today they will learn that God rested on the seventh day because everything was perfect. (See "Giant-Step Counting, Part Two" in the Practice section.)



God Made the Animals

Have the students sit in a circle on the floor. Begin to make a list by stating, "God made [name any animal]." Allow each student to stand up and add an animal to the list. Explain that in today's lesson, we will learn who created animals and when they were created.



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We Need a Creator

Present a series of projects to the students. First, set some Play-Doh on the table. Have the students gather around, and ask someone to create an object without touching the dough. Wait a few seconds to see if the object will create itself. (It won't, of course.) Tell the student he can use his hands to make the object, and then identify him as the creator. Repeat the activity with building blocks and a jigsaw puzzle. Only God can make things happen with a word. God made everything from nothing.



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Feeling God's Creation

Put the following items in a bag: sand, seashells, leaves, a flower, grass, and a light bulb. Have the students close their eyes, reach in the bag, and try to identify things God made.

Variation: Number six paper bags 1 through 6. These bags will correspond to the days of creation. Place an item for each day of creation into the corresponding bag. As you work through the Bible lesson, choose different students to pull items out of the bags.



Seeing God's Creation

Tape pictures of farm animals to one wall in your classroom. On another wall, tape pictures of marine animals, and on a third wall, tape pictures of zoo animals. Have the students line up behind you. Tell them you will be going on a trip. Pretend to start your cars and drive to the farm. Have the students name the animals they see. Tell them that God made each of those animals, and then talk about the differences in their sizes, colors, and shapes. Repeat the activity at each of the walls. In today's lesson, students will see that God made all the animals.



Clocks

Use the hour hand on an analog clock to demonstrate that God created everything in six 24-hour days. Have the students watch as you rotate the hour hand once for the evening and once for the morning. Explain that this is the amount of time God took to create the heavens and the earth. Rotate the hour hand twice for each of the remaining days of creation.

Variation: Turn the lights off during the "evening" and on during the "morning," or have the students work during the six days of creation and rest on the seventh.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included to use during worship time. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read Genesis 1:1–2:3: the opening (1:1–2), day one (1:3–5), day two (1:6–8), day three (1:9–13), day four (1:14–19), day five (1:20–23), day six (1:24–31), and day seven (2:1–3).

Today's story is from the book of Genesis, the very first book in the Bible. Genesis is called the book of beginnings because it tells us how God created everything in the world in just six days. Today we are going to learn about God's power as we learn more about how He made everything in the whole wide world! A long time ago, there was no earth. There was no sky. There was no day or night. There were no birds. There were no people. There was absolutely nothing, except for God. It always had been this way, until one day God said, "Let there be light," and suddenly there was light all around. Even before God made the sun, He made light. God saw that the light He had made was perfect. When God was finished, the first day was done. The next day, God made the sky. At the same time, He made the seas below. The day ended, and the second day of creation was over. So far, God had created the daytime and the nighttime and the blue sky and the deep oceans. On the earth, there was nothing but water until the third day, when God

said, "Let all the waters be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear!" God called the dry land "earth" and the waters "seas." Next God created the grass and the flowers and the fruit trees. And God saw that what He had created was perfect. On the fourth day, God said, "Let there be lights!" And immediately, He made the sun, sparkling stars, and a white moon in the sky. There were no living creatures on the earth or in the sky. On the fifth day, He said, "Let the oceans and lakes be filled with fish and the sky be filled with birds!" On the sixth day, God said, "Let there be animals!" And so the earth was filled with cows, horses, pigs, goats, and all kinds of animals. There were birds of all kinds flying through the air, and the waters were full of fish, sharks, and jellyfish. God saw that His creation was perfect. Later on the sixth day, God said, "Let us make man in Our image and let us give him control over all the fish in the sea, and all the birds in the air, and all the bugs that crawl on the earth." So God created the first people. God put the man and woman in charge of all He had made. He gave them all the plants and fruit for food. At the end of the sixth day, God looked over everything He had made, and He saw that it was very, very good. And on the seventh day, God rested from all the work that He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day of the week because He rested on the seventh day after all His work. God is very powerful. All He did was say, "Let there be light in the heavens!" and there was light. He said, "Let there be land!" and there was land. God created everything, and everything He created was very good. Because God created everything, everything and everybody on earth belongs to Him. We are to worship Him because He is our God and our Creator.



Lesson Questions

Who created the heavens and the earth?

God. [Recite the memory verse.]

How did God create everything, and what did He think of it all when He was done?
For six days, God spoke words of creation, and everything happened just as He said. God liked what He saw and said that it was good.

What did God create on each day of creation?

Day one: light; day two: sky; day three: land, plants, and trees; day four: sun, moon, and stars; day five: birds and fish; day six: animals and people.

What did God do on day seven?

God rested from creating new things.

Are God's words powerful?

Yes.

What happens when God speaks?

Whatever God says happens.

Did God create everything perfect?

Yes.

How are you going to praise God because of His creation?

By thanking Him, praying to Him, and obeying Him.



Presentation Ideas

A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards to present the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces to present the lesson. Begin the Bible lesson with all the pieces on the flannelgraph board. Say to the students, "In the beginning, there was only God. There were no people [take off Adam and Eve], there were no animals [take off whatever animals you have], and there were no trees [take off the garden]." Do this until all the pieces have been removed from the board. Then, as you tell the story, return the various pieces to the board.



Let There Be Light

Turn the light off when you talk about the darkness of the earth. Turn the light on when you talk about God saying, "Let there be light." Let the students say, "Let there be light" as the lights are turned on.

Praise and Worship

Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down

God Is So Good

God Made Me

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

My God Is So Great

This Is My Father's World

This Is the Day



In the Beginning

In the beginning

(Place hands together and then spread them open as if opening a book—or point to wrist to indicate time.)

God created

(Point up.)

the heavens

(Extend arms overhead; open and close fingers to represent twinkly stars.)

and the earth.

(Slowly move hands to sides in arc motion.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Creation Memory Game

On a flannel board, put up a figure of the number one. Call on students to name the number and say what God created on that day. Then display the matching creation scene. Repeat for each day of creation. Next, ask the students to close their eyes while you remove the flannel numbers from the board and mix up the creation scenes. Ask the students to open their eyes; hold up the figure of the number one. Ask for a volunteer to place that number above the correct creation scene. Repeat the activity for each day of creation. When you are finished, arrange the numbers and scenes in sequence and review with the students what God created on each day.

Variation: Instead of removing the numbers from the board and mixing up the creation scenes, remove the creation scenes and leave the numbers in order. Hold up a creation scene out of sequence and ask for a volunteer to place the scene below the correct number. Note: These same flannelgraph pieces could be used to present the Bible lesson.



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“God Created Everything” Quiz

Using the creation dial or any visual display of what God made on each day of the first week, ask students to figure out what day things were made on. Easy: dirt, flower, apple tree, sun, moon, stars, octopus, parrot, horse, cow, dog, snake. More difficult: mountain, house (wood=trees, nails=minerals from earth, etc.), apple pie (day three for most ingredients, day six for dairy products, etc.) The more difficult examples can show that everything we have today is part of God’s creation.



Egg-Carton Shaker Review

Materials: copies of “Egg-Carton Shaker” craft page, egg cartons, markers, stickers, marshmallows, wrapping paper, scissors, glue

Directions: Give each student an egg carton with the numbers 1–7 written in seven of the cups. Put happy-face stickers in the remaining cups. Have the students cut out the shapes from the craft page and glue them to the outside of the egg carton, placing the title on top and the verse on the side. Next, allow the students to decorate the egg carton with markers, stickers, and pieces of wrapping paper. Once the students have finished decorating, give them each a miniature marshmallow to place inside the carton. Use your own shaker to review the lesson with the class. Give each student a turn shaking the carton. Have each one open the carton and see where the marshmallow landed. If the marshmallow lands on a number, the student must tell the class what God created on that day. If it lands on a happy face, help the student recite the memory verse.



Create a Collage

Take the students for a walk and let them gather items for a collage. Place a length of masking tape, sticky side out, around the wrist of each child. Let them collect things outside to stick to the tape. Talk about things that God made and things that people

make. When the students arrive back in the classroom, let them create designs by gluing the items to a piece of cardboard. You may include additional items such as buttons, craft sticks, foam packing chips, and string to make an interesting design. Use the word “create” so that the students understand they are creating their own pictures. When God created the heavens and the earth, He created them out of nothing. He spoke and things suddenly appeared. We create pictures out of materials that God made in the beginning.

Variation: Cut out magazine pictures that represent the days of creation. Allow the students to choose pictures to glue or tape onto a piece of construction paper to make their own collages. Bring additional items, such as grass, flowers, leaves, and stickers, for the students to put on their pictures as well.



Giant-Step Counting, Part Two

Take the same giant steps you did during the Point time, but this time, as you say each number, have the older students say, “Day one, God created light,” etc. The younger students can simply say, “Day one” and look at a picture of what God made on that day. Take six giant steps, reviewing what God made on each of the six days. When you say “seven,” everyone should sit on the floor and rest because God did not create anything new on the seventh day. God wasn’t tired and didn’t need a nap. Everything was perfect and complete. God made everything good. Sing “My God Is So Great” while the students rest.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of the lesson. The students can color the pages, in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

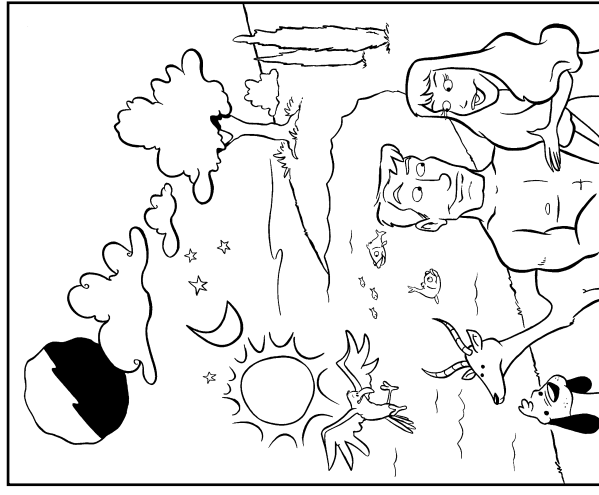


Hot-Potato Verse Memorization

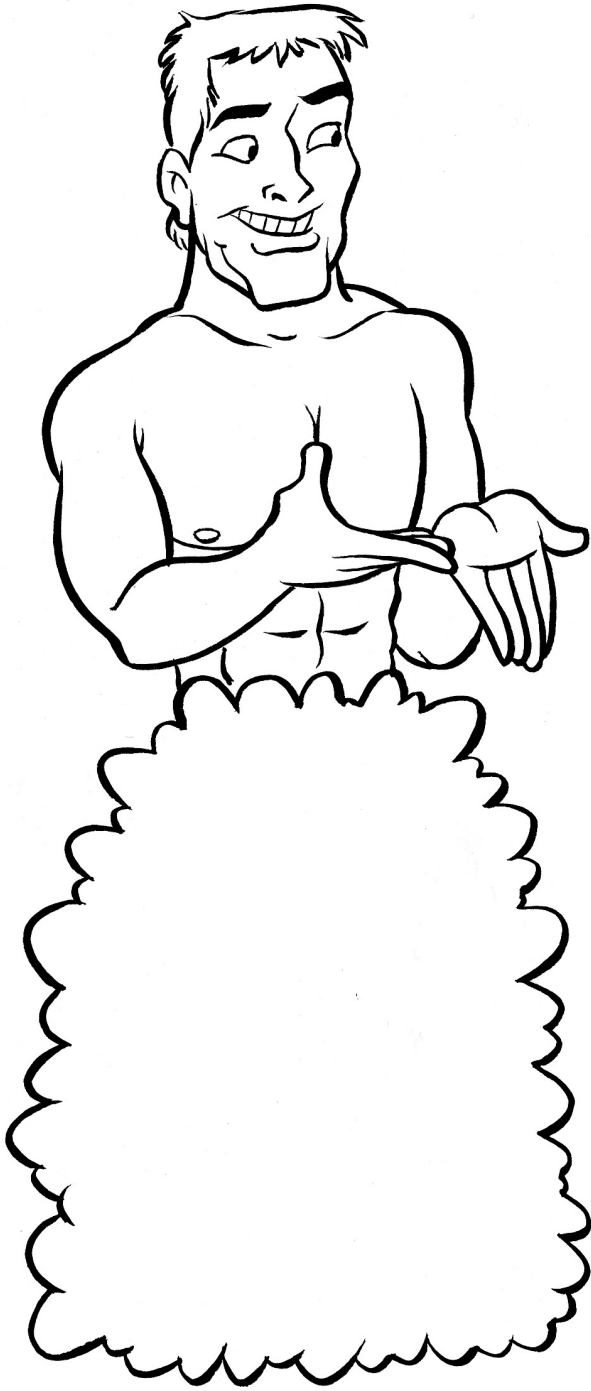
Have the students sit in a circle. Give the instructions. While the music is playing, pass the potato around the circle. When the music stops, the person holding the potato must recite the verse. Repeat.

Egg-Carton Shaker

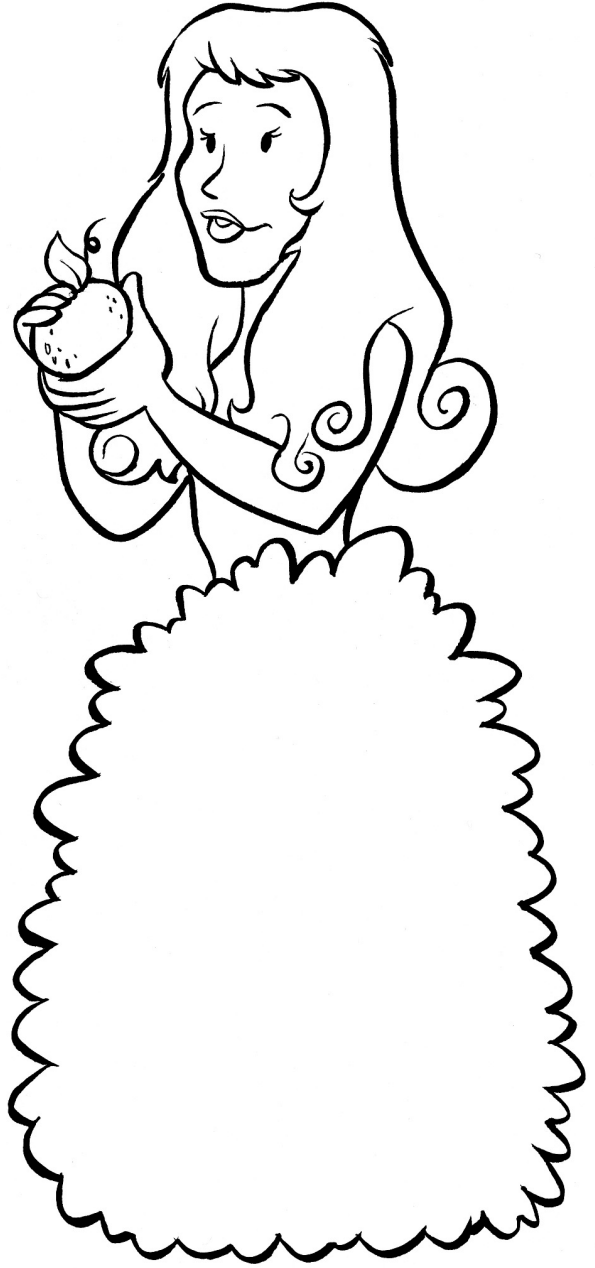
Creation Review



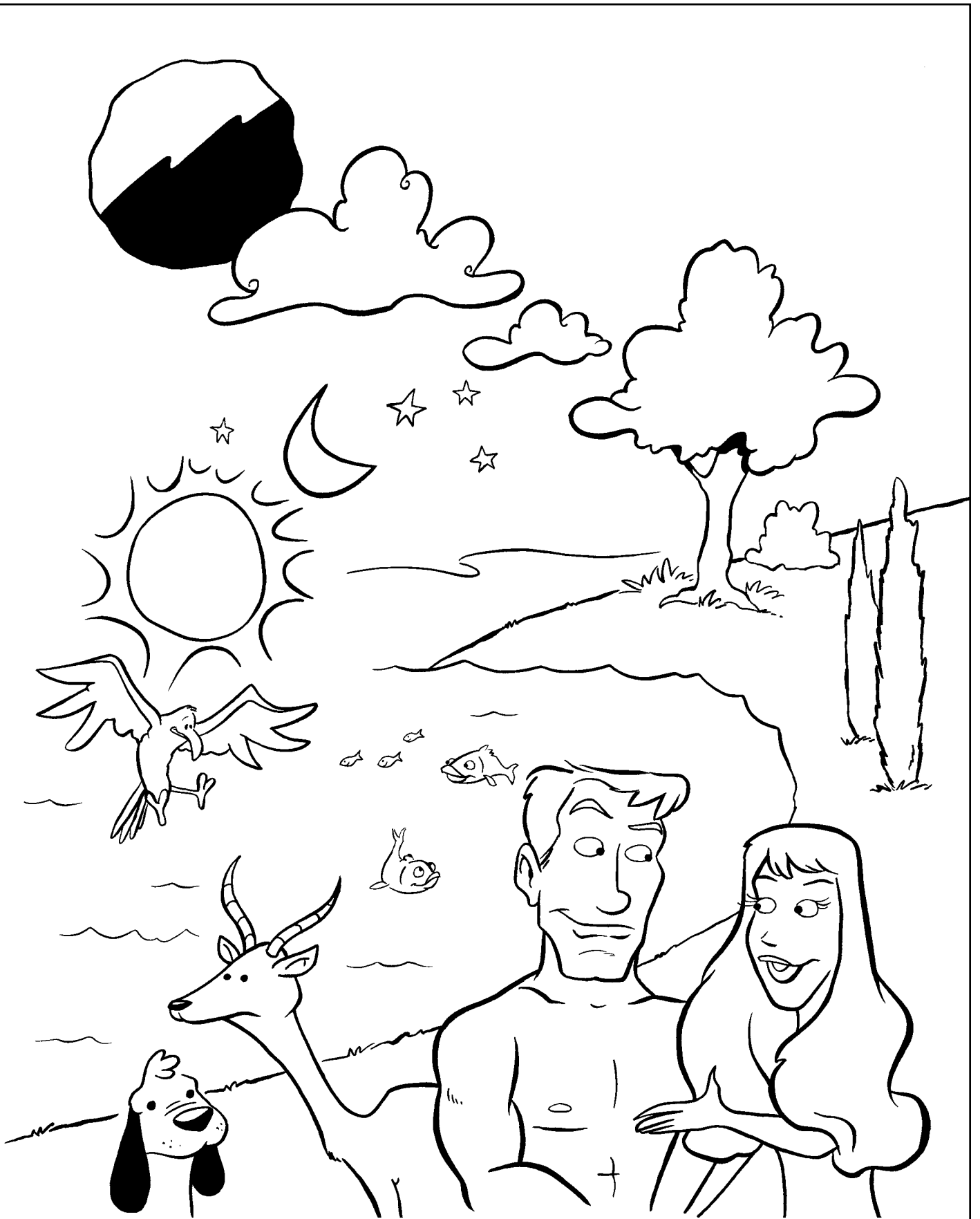
**“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”
(Genesis 1:1).**



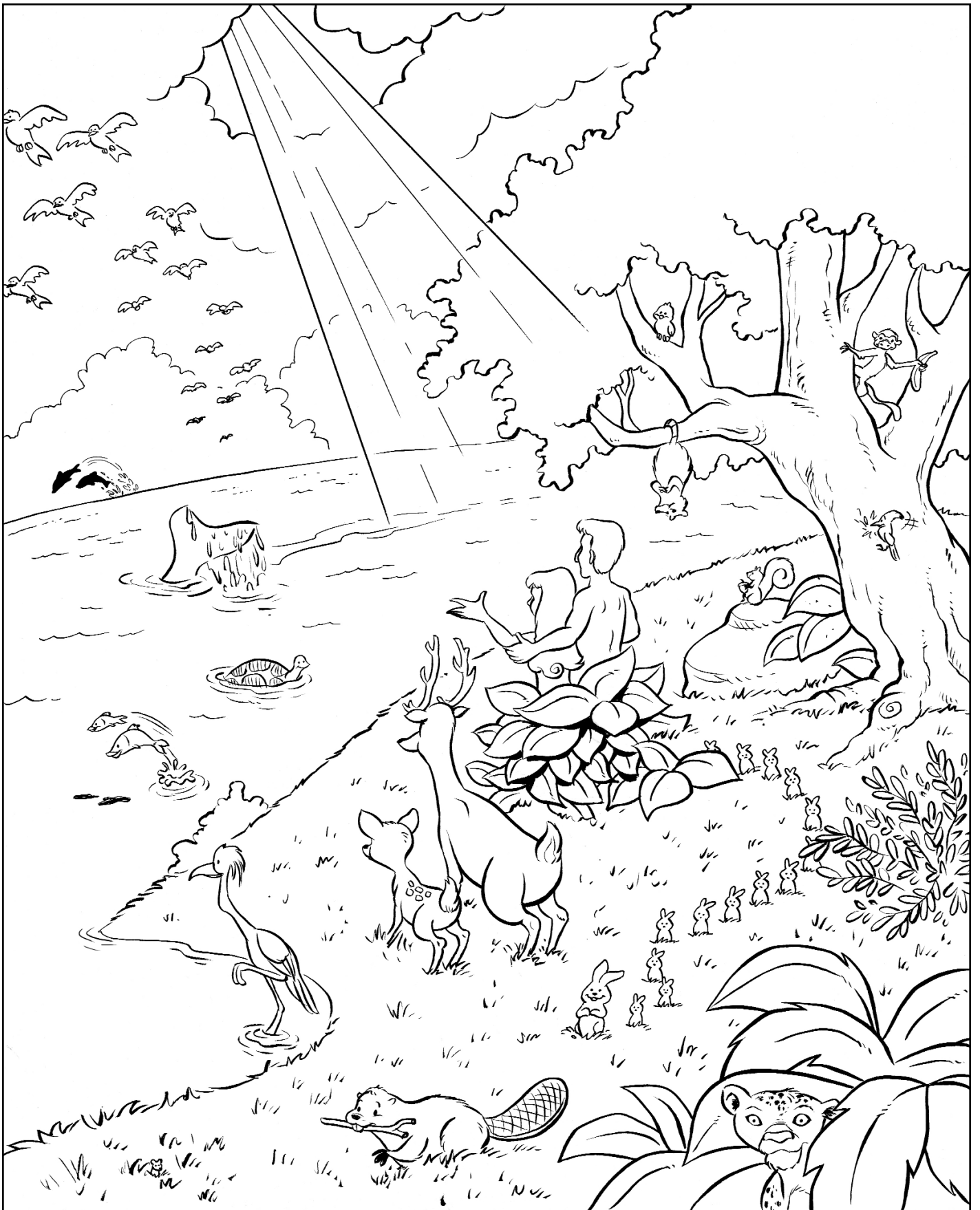
Adam



Eve



**God made the heavens and the earth in six days.
"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good"
(Genesis 1:31).**



**“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.
And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested”
(Genesis 2:1–2).**

