



God Creates the Heavens and the Earth

Genesis 1:1–2:3



LESSON GOAL

Students will praise God for His creation.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Recognize that God existed before anything was created.
- Explain how we know that the six days of creation were 24-hour days.
- List what God made on each day of creation.
- Identify the seventh day of creation as God's appointed day of rest.
- Explain God's evaluation of His creation.

KEY VERSE

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

APPLICATION

- Thank God for making the heavens and earth.
- 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



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level

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 can 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.



What Day Is It?

Divide the class into six groups and number the groups 1–6. Inform the students that the number of their group corresponds to one day of creation. Give each group five minutes to discuss, without using their Bibles, what God created on their day. Write their answers on the board by group. Then have them listen to the Bible lesson to see how accurate they were. Reward right answers with a prize. Use the same groups during Practice time.



1
2

A Closer Look

Bring to class some magnifying glasses and some things that God has created (a flower, a pinecone, some grass, a jar of water, bark from a tree, an earthworm, or some bugs). Set up different stations and have the students look at the items through the magnifying glasses. How were these things created? God is the Creator of the universe. He created all that we see. Today we will look at how our world began.



2
3

Beginnings

There are many theories of how the world came into existence and how life began. Ask students to tell you about some they have heard. List the theories on the board. What do students think of each one? In today's lesson, students will learn the truth about how life began.



Creation Sidewalk Murals

Materials: seven sets of sidewalk chalk in various colors

Directions: Before class, mark off seven equal sections of pavement with sidewalk chalk. Make sure to leave space between each section so the groups can gather around and work. Divide the class into seven groups. Give each group the Bible passage corresponding to the day of creation assigned to them. Have the group read the passage together and make a list of what to draw before going outside. Once outside, give the groups 10–15 minutes to draw on the ground a picture of

what took place on the day of creation assigned to them. Emphasize that each group member must participate in drawing part of the mural, no matter how artistic he or she is. After each group has completed their mural, have the students gather around the pictures while you teach the lesson. Move from mural to mural as you teach about each day of creation. Make sure other classes (both adults' and children's) know of your project so they can plan to visit the murals after church. Teachers of younger classes may want to use the murals as illustrations while they teach the same lesson.

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).

Introduction

Have you ever wondered how you got here, why you are alive, or how everything around you came to be? Many people believe that a long, long time ago everything began by itself. One moment there was nothing, and the next moment there was something. When God, through Moses, gave the book of Genesis to the Israelites, the nations around them believed that their gods had created everything. God's message in Genesis begins with the history of creation. In it, God told the Israelites (and He tells us, too) what happened at the very beginning.



Leadoff Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: What time in history does the opening verse of the Bible speak of?

Answer: Genesis 1:1 speaks about the beginning. As far as creation is concerned, there was nothing before the beginning. There was neither heaven nor earth. They had not yet been created.

LOQ: What existed "in the beginning"?

Answer: The Bible is very clear. It says, "In the beginning, God." Before all creation, God existed. [Draw a timeline. Indicate creation (at the beginning), the birth of Jesus, and today. Then put God before creation and history/time.]

LOQ: If God existed before the creation, where did He come from? When was

God created?

Answer: God is not like man or the rest of creation. He existed at the beginning before creation because He always has existed. God is the only being who has always existed. No one created God, nor did He just appear. God is eternal, without a beginning (or an end).

LOQ: What does Genesis 1:1 say that God created?

Answer: “God created the heavens and the earth.” This is another way of saying that He created everything.

LOQ: How long did God take to complete the creation?

Answer: He took six days of actual creation and one day in which He rested. Every time the Bible speaks of “the evening and the morning,” it indicates a day. Each time “the evening and the morning” is written, it is followed by “the first day,” “the second day,” etc. And because the word *day* is used each time, it means that the day lasted 24 hours, just like the days we have now.

LOQ: Do you think that God needed six days to complete the creation? Why or why not?

Answer: Because God is omnipotent (all-powerful), nothing is too difficult for Him to do. He did not need six days. If He had wanted, He could have taken three days, one day, or less than a second. God could have created the heavens and the earth immediately, without any time passing. But God created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh day because He wanted to set an example for human beings. We are to live according to a seven-day week, with the seventh day as a special day for rest and worship.

LOQ: What did God make on each day of the week?

Answer:

Day one: God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1) and light (1:3).

Day two: God created the sky (1:6–7).

Day three: God separated the waters and caused dry land to appear (1:9), and He created the vegetation, plants, and fruit trees (1:11).

Day four: God created lights in the expanse (sky; 1:14). There were two special lights—the greater (the sun) and the lesser (the moon). He made the stars also (1:16).

Day five: God created swarms of living creatures in the waters, birds to fly in the sky, the sea monsters, and every living thing that moves in the water and in the air (1:20–21).

Day six: God created the cattle (1:24), the creeping things (1:24), the beasts of the earth (1:24), and man (1:26)—both male and female (1:27).

Day seven: God did not create anything; He rested (2:1–2).

LOQ: What was special about day seven?

Answer: On day seven, God completed His creation. He set it apart (made it special) and blessed it. The Bible says that God also rested on the seventh day. Now, God does not ever have to sleep or get back His energy. When the Bible says God rested, it means that He stopped creating as He had done on the

previous six days.

LOQ: What did God think of the work that He saw on each of the days of creation?

Answer: On days one, three, four, and five, the Bible says that God saw that it was “good.” But on day six, God saw that it was “very good.” All of God’s creation was good. There was nothing missing or broken. It was just as He wanted it to be.

Summary

In the beginning, before all history and creation, God existed. No one created Him, but He created everything. He created the heavens and the earth over six 24-hour days and rested (stopped creating) on the seventh day. He created light, the sky, land, the sun, the moon, and the stars. He created all living animals, and He created man, too. There is nothing that He did not create. On the seventh day, after He had finished creating, He made that day holy and blessed it. What God had created was good. And when He saw all His creation, it was “very good.” God had done exactly what He had wanted to do in the way He wanted it to be done.

Application

The universe did not just appear, as some people believe. Nor was the universe created by many gods. The universe—the heavens and the earth—was created by the Creator, the God of the Bible, just as we learned. He is the one who created our world, our universe, and each of us. Every day, thank Him for creating this wonderful world and for creating you. He is the Creator and deserves our thanks and praise.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with this 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.



1
2

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.



1

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 it took for God to create the heavens and the earth. Rotate the hour hand twice for each of the remaining days of creation. Variations on the activity are turning the lights off during the “evening” and on during the “morning,” or having the students work during the six days of creation and rest on the seventh.



1

2

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.



3

God's Attributes in Creation

This discussion identifies the attributes of God shown in these verses and can help answer the question "Why should we believe in and worship God?" For example, God is eternal (Gen. 1:1); Creator (Gen. 1:1); omnipotent (all-powerful; Gen. 1:2–31); good (everything He made was good; Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 31); and a Trinity ("Us"; Gen. 1:26–27). We can pray to God and thank Him for being all these things.



God Said So

Can you really grasp the idea that God has the power to speak things into existence? Ask the students how many of them have ever managed to teach a dog to do a trick or obey a command. Allow time for them to share. Talk about the satisfaction of having the power to make something happen at the sound of your voice. Ask students to imagine the satisfaction God experienced when He spoke all creation into being. Genesis 1 repeats the phrase "and God said" many times as it recounts the beginning of history. The universe was created simply because God said so! We also learn in Genesis 1:31 that "God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." If God's spoken Word is powerful enough to create the universe and all that is in it, how powerful is His written Word in our lives? As we strive to obey His Word daily, let's remember the reason—because God said so.



Creation Correlation

Teach the students the following Creation Correlation to help them remember the days of creation in the proper order. Use the information below to show students how day one corresponds to day four, day two corresponds to day five, and day three corresponds to day six.

God Created Fundamentals.

Day One: Light

Day Two: Water and Sky

Day Three: Land and Plants

God Filled These Fundamental Spaces with His Special Creations.

Day Four: Sun, Moon, and Stars

Day Five: Fish and Birds

Day Six: Animals and Man

Praise and Worship

Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down

God Is So Good

Great Is the Lord

I Sing the Mighty Power of God

My God Is So Great

This Is My Father's World

*This Is the Day
Thou Art Worthy
We Bow Down*

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.



Know the Creator

Bring two contrasting works of art to show the class. One might be a print of a fine painting and another the work of a small child. Ask the class to speculate about the “creators” of these items. We can tell something about a person by looking at a creation he has made, but there is still a lot we don’t know. How would we learn more? Now consider God’s creation. Romans 1:20 tells us that 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. What can we know about God from looking at His creation? Brainstorm for some ideas and write them on the board. Does knowing these things give us a relationship with God? How can we really know Him—not just know something about Him?



“God Made” Necklace or Book

Necklace: Give each student six circles with holes punched in the top (from the “God Made” Creation Circles work sheet). Let the students color and decorate the pictures. Talk about what God made each day, how He created everything with His words, and that everything was good. String the picture circles in order on a piece of yarn.

Book: Glue the six pictures to 4½ x 6 inch construction-paper rectangles. To make the construction-paper books, fold 9 x 12 inch pieces of construction paper in half. Then staple the pages together along the folded side to make a book.



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.



Creation Dial

Use the “Creation Dial” craft pages at the back of the lesson as a tool to help students memorize the days of creation. Copy the two circles onto cardstock, and give a copy to each student. Tell the students to color the pictures. Then have them cut out each circle and the window from the top circle. Assemble the dial by placing a brad in the center of the two circles. The students can rotate the bottom circle to see what God created on each day of creation.



Creation Cube

Materials: copies of the “Creation Cube” craft page on white paper, 3 x 5 inch lined index cards, scissors, pencils, crayons, glue, string, hole punch

Directions: Pass out a craft page to each student. Instruct students to cut around the outside of the cube pattern on the solid lines. Model how to fold the cube on the dotted lines and then help students make the correct folds. Do not glue the pattern together at this time. After the cube pattern is folded, instruct the students to unfold the cube to the flat position so that they can write summaries and color illustrations. Label the top of each square with “Day One” through “Day Six.” At the bottom of each square, the students should write a 2–3 sentence summary of what happened on that day of creation. In the remaining white space of the square, the students should illustrate that particular day of creation. For older students, try a variety of media (e.g., colored pencils, watercolors, and chalk). Once students complete all summaries and illustrations, they may fold the cube and glue the tabs to assemble the cube. Before gluing the last tab, instruct students to cut an 18-inch piece of string and tie a knot at one end. Insert the knot into the cube before closing the last tab. The knot will hold the string inside the cube. Set the cube aside so the glue can dry. Direct the students to write an explanation of day seven on the index card, drawing from what they learned during the lesson about the meaning of God “resting” on the seventh day. Punch a hole in the top and the bottom of the index card. Slide the index card onto the string (making sure the string does not cover the writing on the front of the card), and secure the index card by tying a knot at each hole. Use the string to hang the cubes for display in the classroom.



“God Created Everything” Quiz

Using the creation dial or any visual display of what God made 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.



“God Creates the Heavens and the Earth”

Use this work sheet to review the lesson, or send it home with the students to review with their families. This work sheet is located at the back of the lesson.



Journal Page: “God’s Creation”

Give each student a copy of the the journal page at the back of this lesson. Provide a 5½ x 8½ inch, three-ring binder for each student. Each Sunday, the students will have the opportunity to complete a journal page and put it into their binders.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. The



students can color the pages in class or at home.

Hot-Potato Verse Memorization

Have the students sit in a circle. 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.

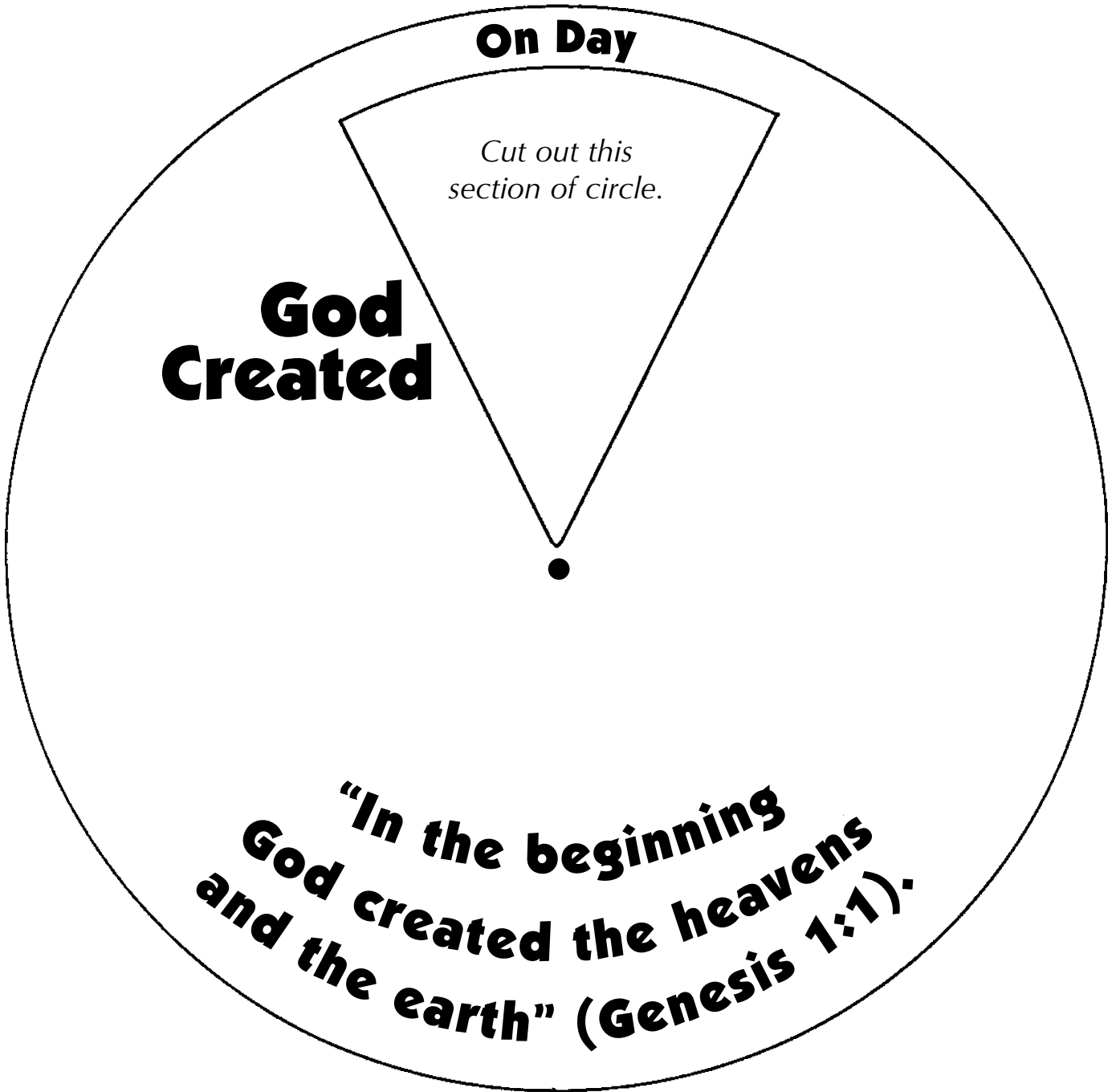


MEMORY VERSE

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

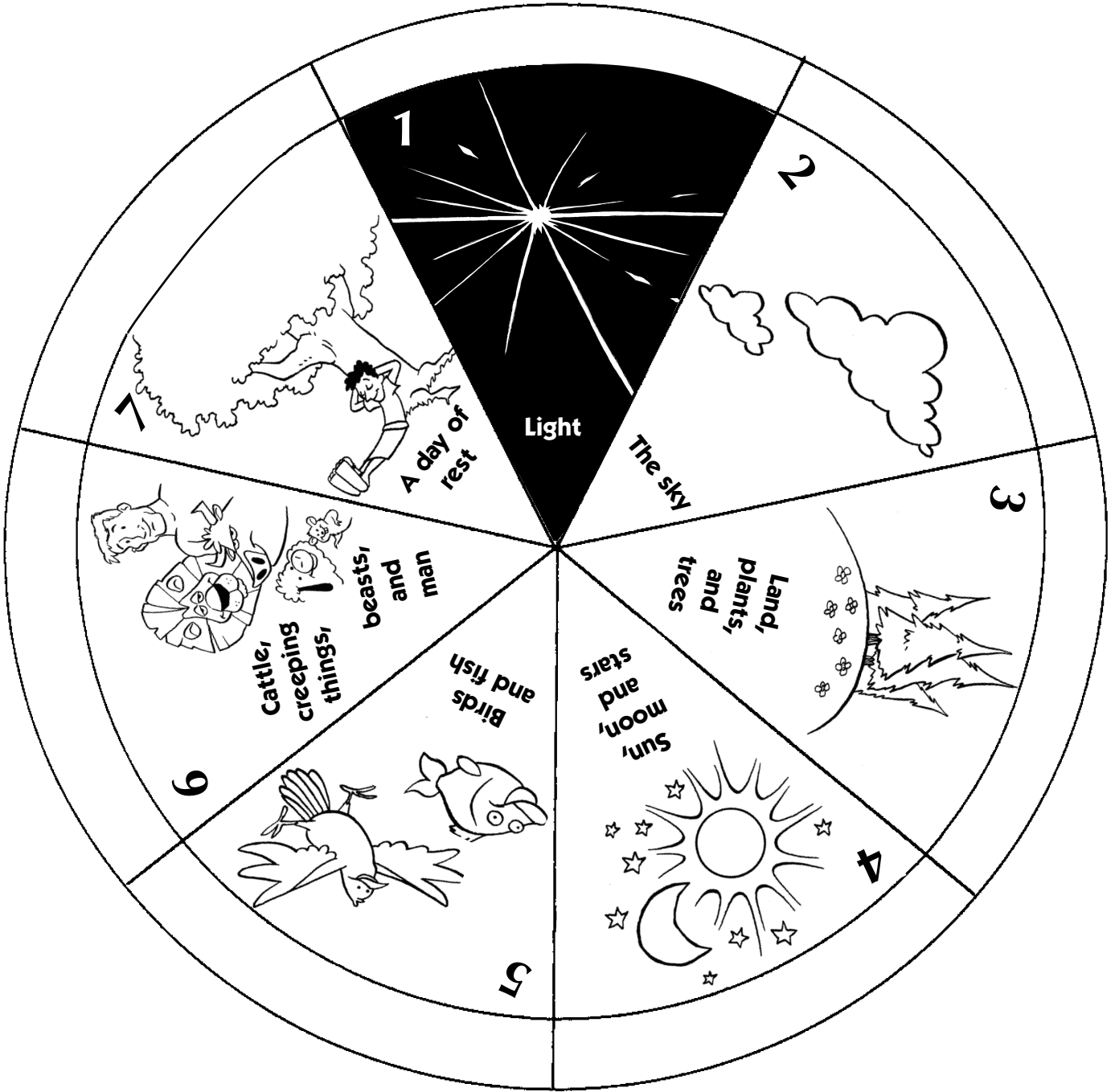
Creation Dial

Top Circle



Creation Dial

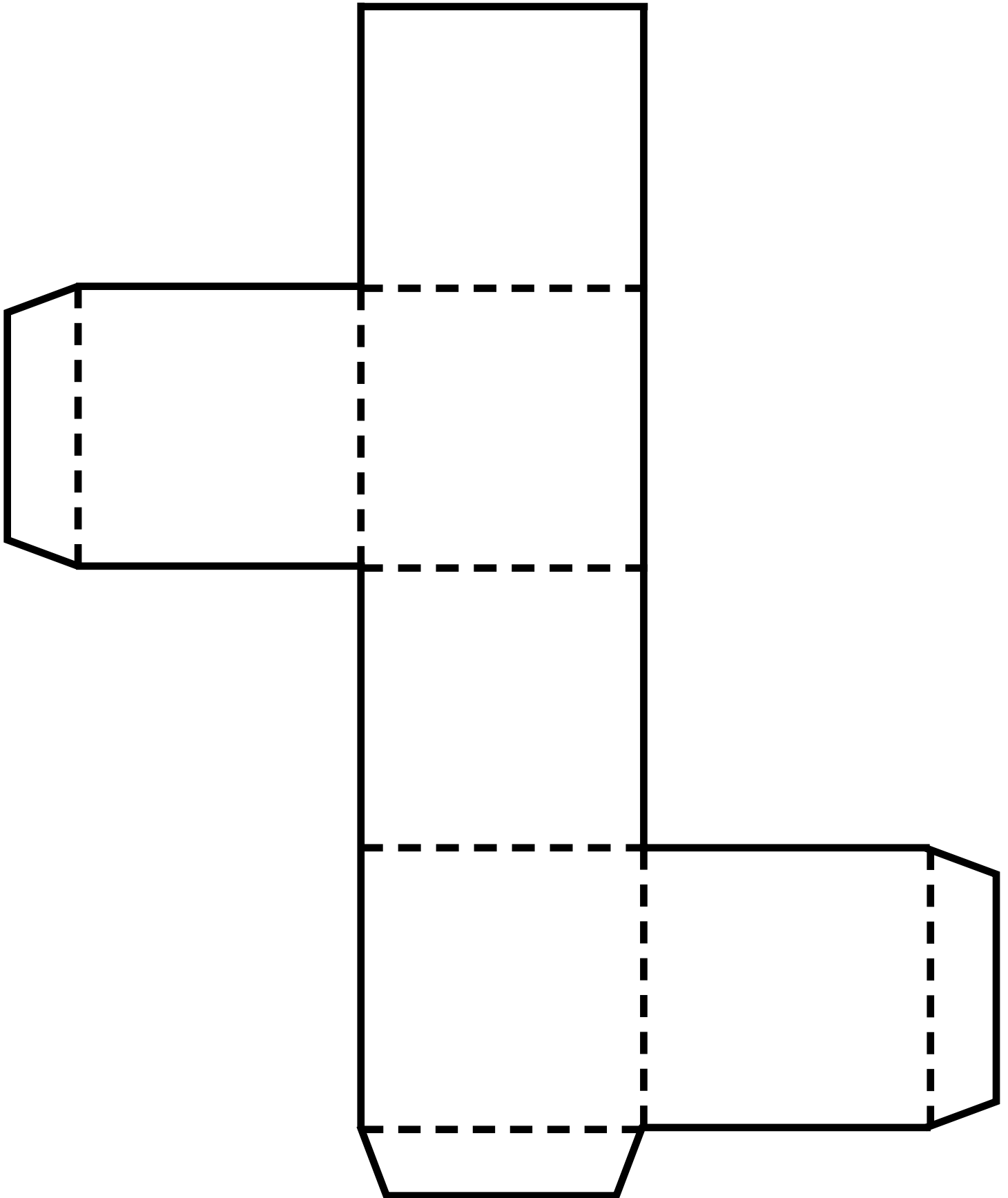
Bottom Circle



"God Made" Creation Circles



Creation Cube



God

Creates the **Heavens**
and the **Earth**



Genesis 1:1-2:3

Name _____

1. Who created the heavens and the earth? _____
2. Who created God? _____
3. How long did God take to create the heavens and the earth? _____

4. Write something that God created on

day one _____

day two _____

day three _____

day four _____

day five _____

day six _____

5. Genesis 2:3 tells us what God did on the seventh day.

God b _____ His creation.

God r _____ (stopped creating).

God's Creation

Did you know that you can see God's creation in your own backyard? Early in the morning is a good time to do this. Ask your parents whether you can go outside when the sun is rising so you can observe God's creation.

Today's date is _____

This morning I saw _____

Draw a picture of something you saw outside.

I learned this about God's creation: _____

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Today's date is _____

This morning I saw _____

Draw a picture of something you saw outside.

I learned this about God's creation: _____

I learned this about God: _____

I would like to thank God for _____

**“Then God saw everything He had made,
and indeed it was very good”**
(Genesis 1:31a).

I learned this about God: _____

I would like to thank God for _____

**“Then God saw everything He had made,
and indeed it was very good”**
(Genesis 1:31a).

SUNRISE SONG

Gawking blackbirds scatter across the sky
From telephone pole to tree.

“Gawk! Gawk! Morning has arrived!”
I heard their gawking, squawking, soaring,
But I chose to keep on snoring.
Lord, I missed your morning!

Did You blaze brilliant pink across Your sky,
Silhouetting blackbirds flying high?
Did Your softly soaring flocks of sparrows fly,
Freckling the face of morning sky?
And did morning spider spin silvery strands
Sopped with dew, Lord, reflecting You?

Your sunrise speaks sounds that should be seen,
Sounds that call the heart to sing!
Awake, O soul, and sing!
Dawn has arrived on blackbird wing!

—Carolyn Grisso

SUNRISE SONG

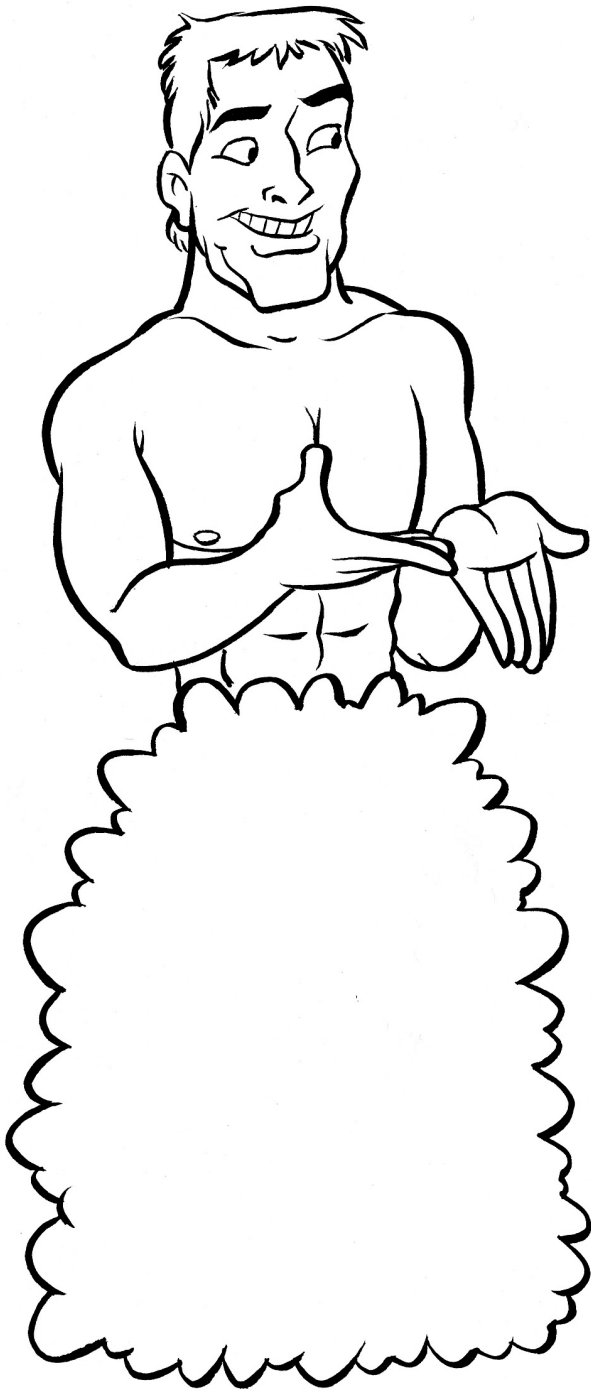
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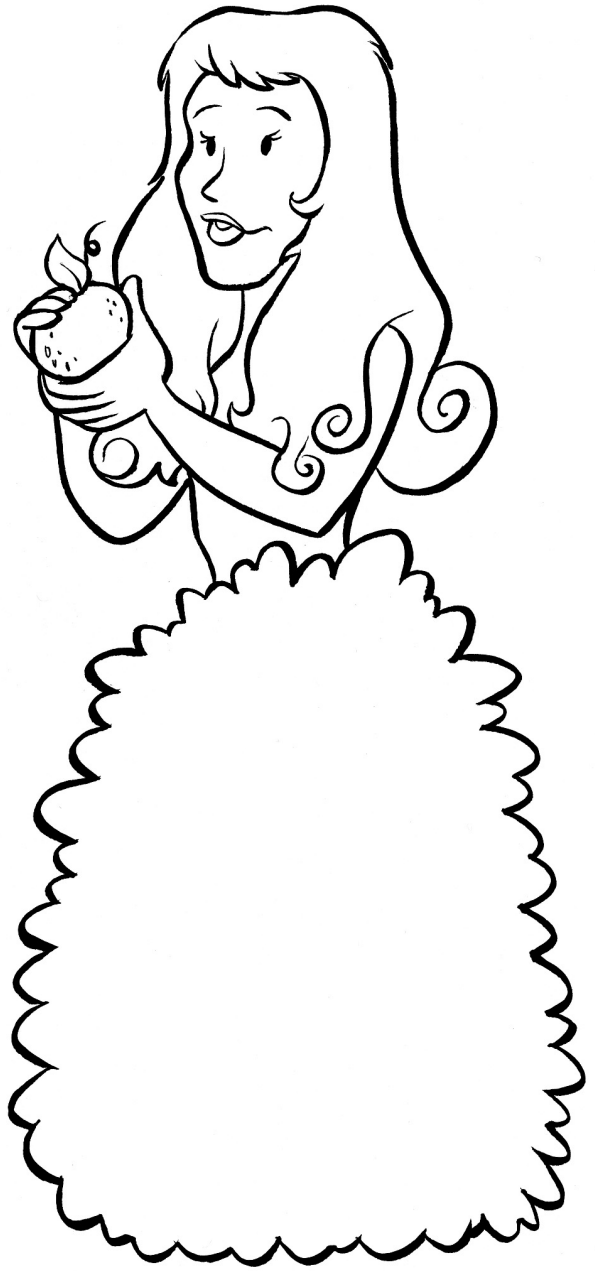
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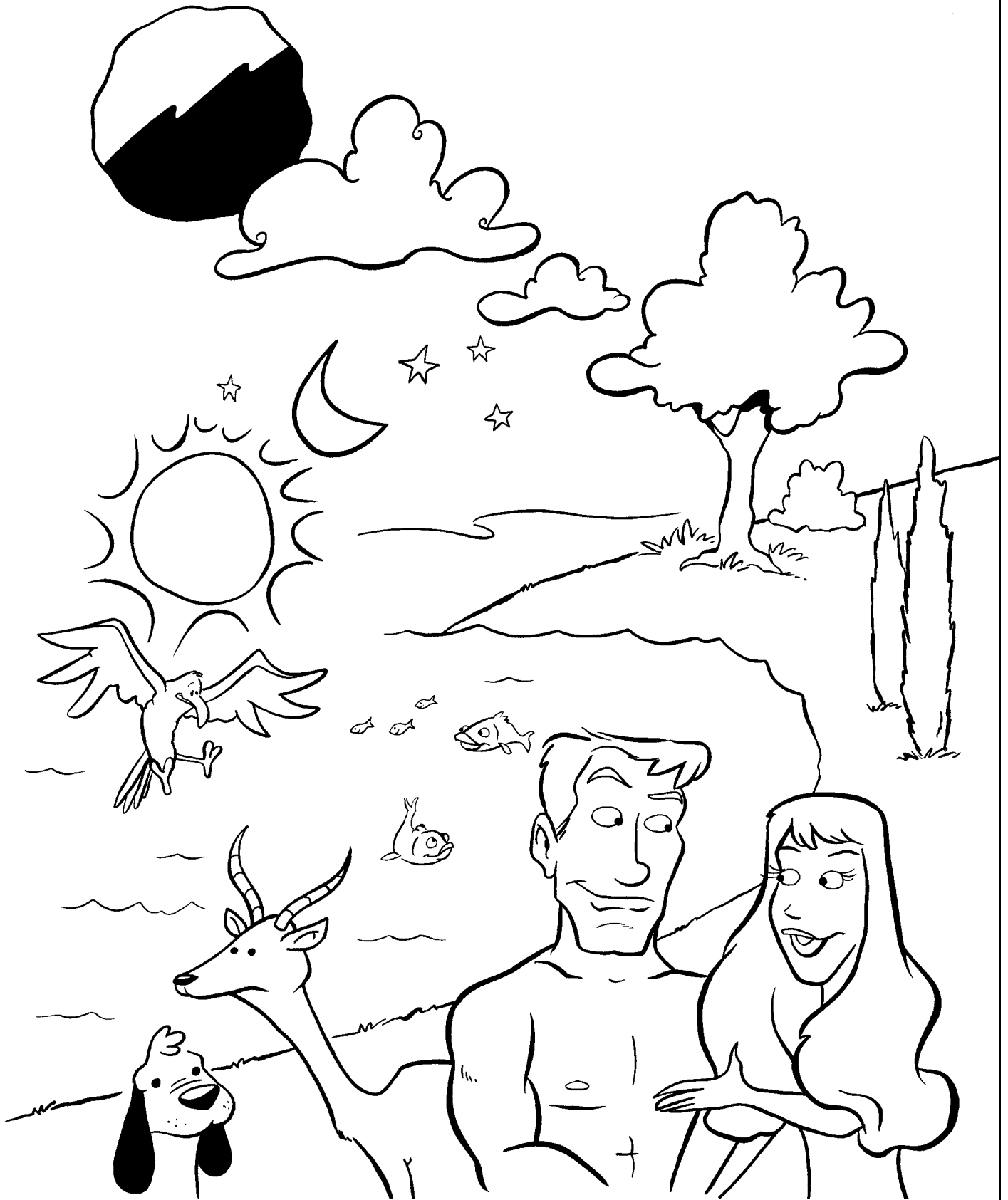
—Carolyn Grisso



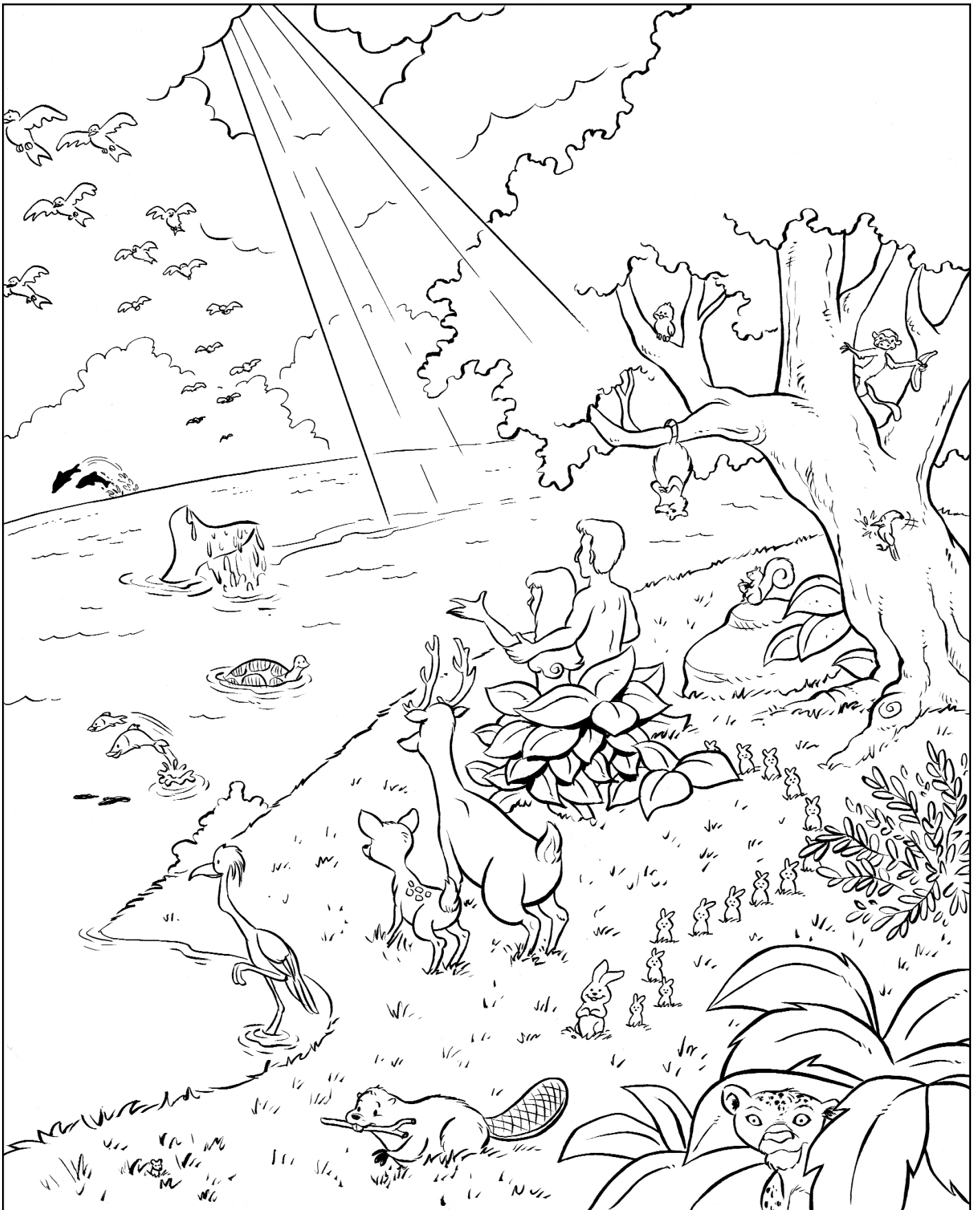
Adam



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).**

