

CREATION

How and Why God Created

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

God's creation is defined as his work by his Word and for his glory in creating the universe out of nothing so that its original condition was without spiritual or physical corruption.

Warm-up questions



- Why does humanity seek to eliminate God from having had any role in the creation of the universe?
- Did God create humans because he was lonely?
- In what ways can God's creation influence our worship of him?

1) How big is the universe?

- Our solar system is part of the Milky-Way Galaxy which consists of 250 billion stars.¹
- If our Milky-Way Galaxy was the size of a quarter, our solar system would be less than the size of a molecule. Other galaxies would be from a foot to 1,000 feet away.³
- To travel from one end of the Milky-Way to the other at the speed of light (186,282 miles per second) would take about 100,000 years.
- To travel to the next closest galaxy, Andromeda, would take 2.2 million years.⁴
- By galaxy counts, astronomers estimate that there are at least 80 to 120 billion galaxies in the visible universe.
- God's creation is beyond human comprehension!!!

2) Creation theories

Following is a brief summary of several creation theories that have been proposed but do not seem to be consistent with scripture. Any theory of the origin of the universe that does not see an infinite God as responsible for creating the universe by intelligent design, is inconsistent with the teachings of the scriptures.

- **Darwinism:** The body of theory dealing with biological evolution in general, and evolution by natural selection in particular⁵. Darwin never ruled out the possibility of God.⁶
- **Theistic-Evolution Theory:** The theory states that living organisms came about by the process of evolution that Darwin proposed, but God guided the process so that the result was just what God wanted it to be.⁹
- **Big-Bang Theory:** The universe began in a fantastic explosion that happened 15 billion years ago. In a secular form, this theory excludes God.
- **Myth Theory:** The account in Genesis 1 is only symbolic; even though God created the universe, the account is not historically correct it is a myth.
- **Two-Phase Theory:** This theory, also called the "Prior Creation Theory," holds that there were two distinct phases of creation in Genesis chapters 1 and 2, with a long period of time in between.¹⁰ With this view, the duration of a "day" could be of any length.
- **The Gap Theory:** Similar to the two-phase but assumes much more. The initial creation in Genesis 1:1 was complete and perfect, but a catastrophe involving the fall of angels and Satan must have occurred during the gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. The six days of creation took place after this gap, and all geological ages took place between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2.
- **Day-Age Theory:** Since the Hebrew word for day (H. yom) can be

interpreted as a 24-hour day, or a much longer period of time, this theory holds that God created everything in a series of acts over longer periods of time than 24-hour days. Each of the six “days” of creation would then equate to the six major geological ages (Paleozoic, Mesozoic, Cenozoic, etc.).

- **Flood Geology Theory:** This theory holds that the earth is actually only a few thousand years old and that the six days of creation took place over six 24-hour days. During the flood, various forms of life were solidified into rock under great hydrostatic pressures. The various rock strata represent various enormous waves of the flood.
- **Literary-Framework Theory:** This theory, (also called the “Pictorial-Day” Theory), suggests that either God’s revelation of long periods of creation were given to Moses in a series of six pictures, or the author arranged them by logical literary thought rather than in a chronological sequence. This would explain the parallels between the first and fourth days, the second and the fifth days, and the third and sixth days.
- **Ideal-Time Theory (Mature Creationism):** This theory supports the “Young Earth” Theory and holds that God created the earth in a literal six-day period, but made it as if it were billions of years old. In other words, it was created at its “ideal time” (also called “mature creationism”). Therefore, Adam was not created as a baby, but was created at his ideal time, as a mature man. If God created trees at their ideal time, rather than as seeds, they would have had growth rings indicating a longer previous period.¹¹

3) The differences between scripture and science

Bible scholar Bruce K. Waltke offers four differences between scripture and science.¹²

- Genesis and science discuss essentially different matters because the transcendence of God is beyond the scientific grasp.
- The language of Genesis and science is entirely different. The creation account is formed in everyday speech and non-theoretical terminology, rather than mathematics and technical terminology.
- The purposes of Genesis and science also differ. Genesis answers the questions of who and why, whereas science attempts to answer what and how.
- Science requires empirical testing for validation, while Genesis requires the validation of the witness of the Spirit to the heart (Rom. 8:16).

4) God created the universe out of nothing

- The Hebrew verb used to describe the creative act (*bārā'*) is what suggests “creation from nothing” (*creatio ex nihilo*) and is used only with

Deity¹³ (Genesis 1:1, 21, 27; cf. 2:3-4; 5:1-2; 6:7).

- This *creatio ex nihilo* precludes the idea that matter is eternal (materialism, evolution).
- Hebrews 11:3 NIV. "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."
- God created by his Word (decree), known as "divine fiat creation." (Gen. 1:1-31; Exod. 20:11; 31:17; Psa. 33:6; 148:1-6; John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; 11:3; Rev. 4:11).¹⁵
- Man (Gen. 2:7 Heb. *Adamah*, meaning "man") was not created *ex nihilo*, but out of the dust of the ground.
- The beasts of the field and the fowls of the air were also formed out of the ground (Gen. 2:19).
- God created the invisible spiritual universe (Col. 1:16).
- God operates apart from time and is not controlled by it (Job 36:26; Psa. 90:2, 4; John 8:58; 2 Pet. 3:8; Rev. 1:8).

5) The universe God created was "very good."

- "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." (Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 31 NIV).
- When God finished his work of creation, he took delight in it.
- Question: Is God responsible for sin since he created everything?

6) God created to show his glory

- God created the universe to show his glory (Psa. 19:1; Col. 1:16).
- Thomas Aquinas: "God created so that his goodness may be communicated and manifested."²⁰
- God did not need to create. He is complete within himself.
- "God did not create because he needed the world but because he delighted in his own will to create and in his act of creating" (Bavinck).
- We are to enjoy God's creation (Acts 14:17; 1 Tim. 6:17; Psa. 84:11).
- Question: Are there any aspects of God's creation that stand out most to you? If so, what are they?

7) The work of the Trinity in the creation

- The God who created the universe is the triune God revealed in the Bible. "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness..." (Gen. 1:26).
- God the Father: Initiated the divine work of creation and governed it (1 Cor. 8:6).
- God the Son: In submission to the Father, God the Son created the universe (Psa. 33:6; 104:30; John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:10, 12).
- God the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is pictured as completing, filling, and giving life to God's creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4; Psa. 104:30; Isa. 40:12-13).
- This work was not distributed; rather, each person of the Trinity acted in concert with the other two persons.

8) Were the six days of creation twenty-four-hour days?

- The word "day" (Heb. *yom*) in the Old Testament could mean a 24-hour day or a much longer period of time.²²
- Both views (24-hour days, or much longer periods of time) have valid supporting arguments, but God has chosen not to give us enough information to come to a clear decision on this question.
- However, with regard to creation, most Bible scholars take "yom" to mean a literal 24-hour day.

9) The age of the earth: two views

- Old-earth view: The earth is about 4.5 billion years old ("Yom" = a very long period of time).
- Young-earth view: The earth is approximately 10,000 to 20,000 years old ("Yom" = 24-hour day).²⁵

10) God is actively involved in his creation

- God is transcendent. He is far above the creation in that he is greater than the creation and independent of it (2 Chron. 2:6; Isa. 55:8-9; Acts 7:42; 17:24; 1 Kings 8:27).
- God is immanent. He is actively involved in his creation (Col. 1:17).

11) Major contrary views of God's relationship to his creation

- Atheism/Materialism ("no God"): The material physical universe, which has always existed, is all that exists. Therefore, God does not exist.
- Deism: God created the universe, but he is not actively involved in it (God

is not immanent: "Clockmaker" view).

- Pantheism/Panentheism: Everything is God, including humans. There is therefore no God-human relationship (God is not transcendent).
- Polytheism ("many gods"): There are many gods (Zeus, Apollo, Diana, etc.) and each one relates to humans in different ways.
- Dualism: God is good; the material universe is evil. The two exist separately side by side.²⁹

12) Humans were created in God's image

- Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, (Gen. 1:26 NIV).
- Both the Hebrew word "image" (*tselem*) and "likeness" (*demuth*) mean "similar to, but not identical to."
- God created humans directly and instantly.
- Man was created to rule the earth (Genesis 1:27-28).
- Because humans were created in God's image, they have a God-given dignity, the state or quality of being worthy of honor or respect. However, the enemy seeks to belittle this dignity in every possible way.
- God created them male and female. They were the first marriage partners and the pattern for all marriages (Genesis 1:27; 2:24).

13) Humans bear similarities with God

- We are like God morally (Matt. 27:3-5; Rom. 1:18-20).
- We are like God spiritually (Rom. 8:16; Gal. 5:18).
- We are like God mentally (Mark 12:30; Isa. 1:18).
- We are like God relationally (John 14:23; Rev. 3:21).

14) What about dinosaurs?

- Current scientific opinion holds that dinosaurs became extinct about 65 million years before humans appeared on earth.
- Some say that 66 million years ago, dinosaurs had the ultimate bad day. With a devastating asteroid impact, a reign that had lasted 180 million years was abruptly ended.
- Those who hold to six twenty-four-hour days of creation and a Young Earth view would say that dinosaurs were among the creatures created by God on the same day he created man (sixth day). Therefore, they would say that dinosaurs subsequently became extinct, perhaps in the flood.

- Those holding the old earth view would say that dinosaurs were created on the sixth day of creation, which was millions of years long, and that they became extinct by the time Adam was created.³¹

15) Summary

- Creation reveals God's eternal power and divine nature (Rom. 1:20).
- The size and vastness of the universe reveal God's glory.
- Creation itself gives clear evidence of God's existence.
- God didn't create out of pre-existing physical matter.
- Everything God created was good.
- All three persons in the Godhead were actively involved in the creation.
- We are to enjoy God's creation (Acts 14:17; 1 Tim. 6:17; Psa. 84:11).
- God created us simply because it was his will. He wanted to create us according to his good pleasure (Rev. 4:11; Eph. 1:9).
- God did not create us because he was lonely. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have perfect fellowship within themselves.
- God is above and beyond his creation (his transcendence).
- God is actively sustaining his creation (his immanence).
- God's sovereignty controls his creation, no part of it controls him (Col. 1:16-17).
- Creation, including humans, is completely dependent upon God.
- Man cannot justifiably say, "I never knew God existed" (Rom. 1:20).
- Creation is for God's glory, and we are to give God glory by thankfully praising and honoring him as our Creator (Rom. 1:21; Rev. 4:11; Isa. 43:7).



"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." (Ps. 19:1 NIV)

"He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit." (Ps. 147:4-5 NIV)

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End Notes

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- ¹ National Network of Education [<http://www.indiaeducation.info/infomine/cosmos/universefacts.asp>]
- ² Source: http://liftoff.msfc.nasa.gov/academy/universe/how_big_stars.
- ³ National Network of Education [<http://www.skygaze.com/content/facts/universe.shtml>]
- ⁴ Source: http://liftoff.msfc.nasa.gov/academy/universe/how_big_stars.html
- ⁵ Darwinism: Probably the greatest difficulty of all for evolutionary theory is explaining how any life could have begun in the first place. The spontaneous generation of even the simplest living organism capable of independent life (the prokaryote bacterial cell) from inorganic materials on the earth could not happen by random mixing of chemicals: it requires intelligent design and craftsmanship so complex that no advanced scientific laboratory in the world has been able to do it. Johnson quotes a now-famous metaphor: "That a living organism emerged by chance from a pre-biotic soup is about as likely as that "a tornado sweeping through a junkyard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein." Chance assembly is just a naturalistic way of saying "miracle." (Grudem 284)
- ⁶ Darwin felt that science should be objective in nature, and was careful to keep any reference to God or a creator out of his earlier work. However, in his 6th edition of the "Origin of Species" he used the word "creator" nine times, and the word "God" twice. Of greater importance is what he said about life and the Creator's role in it. Michael Bargo Jr., "What Darwin Said about God" <www.americanthinker.com> accessed August 14, 2015.
- ⁷ Darwin and Microbiology, <https://www.nature.com/articles/nrmicro2197#:~:text=He%20stated%20in%20one%20of.with%20bacteria%2C%20demonstrating%20that%20life>. Accessed August 26, 2022.
- ⁸ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Darwinism-definition.html>
- ⁹ (Grudem 275)
- ¹⁰ John H. Walton, Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994) 97.
- ¹¹ Ideal-time theory is also called "Creation with an Appearance of Age," or "Mature Creationism."
- ¹² Bruce Waltke, "Genesis," pp. 74-75
- ¹³ (Merrill 50)
- ¹⁴ (Mounce 145)
- ¹⁵ Fiat creation is usually associated with creation over six 24-hour days.
- ¹⁶ (Smallman 22)
- ¹⁷ (Smallman 22)
- ¹⁸ (MacArthur and Mayhue 216)
- ¹⁹ ἐγὼ εἰμί → "I am" → eternally preexistent.
- ²⁰ (Geisler Volume 2, p. 465)
- ²¹ <https://suscopts.org/resources/literature/1729/the-spirit-of-god-was-hovering-over-the-face-of-th/>.
- ²² For additional more detailed meanings of the word yom, see Geisler, pp. 1527-1528.
- ²³ Harold N. Miller, <http://www.interactingwithjesus.org/resources/genesis1.pdf>.
- ²⁴ (Swindoll and Zuck 665)
- ²⁵ (Grudem 289). (Morris 149) Morris cites clear physical evidence for a Young Earth.
- ²⁶ (Geisler Volume 2; 469)
- ²⁷ (Grudem 298)
- ²⁸ (Bavinck and Bolt 291 ff)
- ²⁹ (Grudem 269)
- ³⁰ (Houdmann, S. Michael). <https://www.gotquestions.org/male-and-female-He-created-them.html>
- ³¹ (Grudem 293)