

God's Zoo



Lesson 1

Creation

Text

Genesis 1:1 - 2:4,18-20

Teaching Point

God made everything and is king of his creation.

Warm Up

The leader is a zoo keeper and tells the children about some of the animals. Today is a very important one because it is Jumbo the elephant's birthday. Talk about how you will celebrate the birthday. You need to make a cake. Don an apron and place the following equipment on a table: mixing bowl and spoon, measuring cup, empty labelled containers for flour, currants, peanuts, chili peppers, butter and milk, an empty egg carton, a cake tin and a box labelled 'oven'. Place the recipe on a flip chart or OHP.

Go through the motions of making the cake, measuring out the ingredients, breaking the eggs, etc. Ask the children to read out the recipe instructions as you do it. Put the cake into the oven to cook and produce nothing at the end. Where is the cake? You cannot make something from nothing. In today's true story from the Bible you will discover something that was made from nothing. Come back and tell me what was made from nothing and who made it.

Bible Time

1. The Creator

God is distinct and separate from his creation, yet, at the same time, has an intimate and continuing relationship with it; God's spirit hovers over the waters (Genesis 1:2), he speaks to man (Genesis 1:28), and man enjoys the personal presence of God.

God is the sole creator. In the beginning there was only the eternal God. God is a person - God said, God made - he is neither an indistinct force nor an

impersonal spirit (Psalm 94:8-9). God is a trinity and all three persons of the trinity are involved in the creation - God the Father (Genesis 1:1), God the Son (John 1:1-3), and God the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:2).

2. The Creation

A deliberate act of God bringing order out of disorder, created matter out of nothing. It was no accident or chance, but God's plan and design.

Everything was not created simultaneously, but in sequence. The six steps of creation can be seen as two groups of three; days 1-3 shaping the planet, days 4-6 filling the planet. Each step begins with the word of God. On only two days does God speak twice - day 3 (Genesis 1:11) and day 6 (Genesis 1:26). This seems to emphasise that there was no natural progression from inanimate to animate or from animal to man, but that each step is directed by God (see also John 1:3). Whilst the account does not answer the question 'how?' in scientific terms, it does confirm God as creator and states that everything was created through his word (see also Psalm 33:6, Psalm 148:5, Colossians 1:16).

3. Man

Man was the climax of creation and unique in that he was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and given dominion over the rest of creation (Genesis 1:28). Man has dominion over the rest of creation because he is made in the image of God, not because he is stronger. There is a limit to man's dominion (Psalm 115:16).

4. Days of Creation

There are three main possibilities:

- literal days of 24 hours, (which may or may not have had intervals between them?)
- long ages, (how long was the seventh day when God rested?)
- or days of revelation, (i.e. that God revealed the stages of creation to Adam over a period of 6 days).

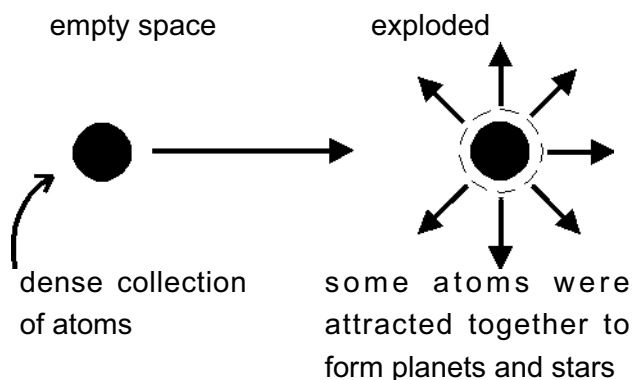
There are evangelical Christians advocating each of these views and supporting them from Biblical evidence.

The main points to bear in mind are:

- whatever the answer, we should never lose sight of the central emphasis. God is creator; the universe did not create itself.
- we must allow God to be God - with him all things are possible.
- we should adopt the most natural reading of the Bible within the constraints of context.

5. The Origin of the Universe

The theory most children will have been taught at school is that the universe spontaneously came into being at a point in time. A very dense collection of atoms in empty space exploded and some of these atoms were attracted together to form planets and stars (see diagram). One piece of evidence cited for this is the expansion of the universe.



Increasingly, scientists studying this model of the universe are impressed by the fact that the universe appears to be exceedingly fine-tuned in the sense that its forces have to be balanced to an incredible

degree of accuracy in order for life to be possible. The physicist Paul Davies stated that the accuracy required here is the same as that needed by a marksman in order to hit a target 1" square from the other end of the universe (20 billion light years away). His conclusion is that 'the impression of design is overwhelming.' This squares with the Biblical claim that the universe was designed.

(For further reading see "Does God Play Dice?" by John Houghton, IVP)

6. The Origin of Life

The Urey-Miller experiment, carried out in 1953, passed an electrical charge simulating lightning through a pre-biotic soup, causing it to form some amino acids. Amino acids are the basic building blocks of DNA. The DNA in the cell nucleus contains the genetic information required for specifying the proteins and it is exceedingly complex in the sense that the amino acids have got to be in the right order. Getting the building blocks is one thing, getting them in the right order is totally different. This is why Sir Fred Hoyle stated that the probability of life arising by chance is about the same as that of a typhoon blowing through a junk yard and forming a Boeing 747. (See the visual aid for older children.)

7. Evolution

Many of the children will be taught this theory as fact at school. When discussing evolution it is helpful to distinguish between micro- and macro-evolution. Micro-evolution consists of minor variations within limits through natural selection, e.g. the change in length of finch beaks which Darwin observed. This is not controversial. But the mechanism that explains how things vary does not explain how they came to exist in the first place. Macro-evolution, on the other hand, is about the development of the living cell from non-living materials, of multicellular from single-celled structures, of new body plans, new organs, etc., and this is much more controversial.

As science has progressed and appears to answer more and more questions about how the world functions, some people have concluded that God's role in it all is superfluous. But understanding how something works does not preclude the idea of someone having designed it. If we consider a Ford motor car we can see how flawed that logic is. Motor mechanics understand exactly how the car works, but this is not an argument about the existence of a Mr Ford who designed it. The more intricate we discover the universe to be, the more it should take us back to worship the designer who created it.

(For further reading see "Darwin on Trial" by Phillip Johnson, IVP)

8. Authority over creation

Adam is given the job of naming the animals (2:19-20). None among them was a suitable helper for man (2:20). These 2 statements underline Adam's distinctiveness from the animals. The only helper would be one of his own kind. (This is quite different from today's view of man as one amongst animals.) Giving a name to something denoted having authority over that thing (see also 1:28). Adam and Eve were made God's vice-regents over creation and were expected to rule wisely and well.

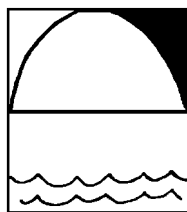
Visual aids

For the younger children, the creation story lends itself to building up one picture step by step. See pictures on page 59 for the figures.

Day 1 Start with a large sheet of black paper. When God created light, colour one of the top corners with yellow chalk.

Day 2 For the sky, pin on a blue dome.

Day 3 For the earth and sea (green grass and blue waves) see the diagram. Add on trees, bushes and flowers.



Day 4 Glue sun onto chalked area, moon and stars onto the black corner.

Day 5 Glue fish onto the sea, birds onto the sky.

Day 6 Glue on animals and man.

This helps to fix the progression of creation into the children's minds. Remember to say after completing each day's activity, 'God saw that it was all good.'

The children can come out one at a time and glue the next piece in place. If this course of action is followed make sure there are enough pieces for every child to be involved.

Keep the visual aid for use next lesson.

For the older children, show them a collection of scrabble letters that form a word. Ask them to make the word, then take the letters and place them in your hands or in a cup. Remind them that the amino acids in the DNA have to be in the right order, just like the letters needing to be in the right order to form the word. Tell the children you are going to shake up the letters in order to reform the word. Shake up the letters and spill them onto the table 2 or 3 times to show how impossible this is.

Fun Sheets

5-7s Photocopy pages 17-18 back to back for each child.

8-11s Photocopy pages 19-20 back to back for each child.

Consolidation

Divide the children into teams, each with a leader. Prior to the lesson prepare a set of 16 cards, each with a picture of a different animal, for each team. On the back of each card write one word of the memory verse. Hide the cards around the playing area. Tell the children that your zoo is not perfect, because it does not contain every animal. You are taking them on safari to collect the missing ones (name them and show pictures). Tell the teams how many animals to find and send them off to collect

their animals. The winning team is the first one to return with all the animals.

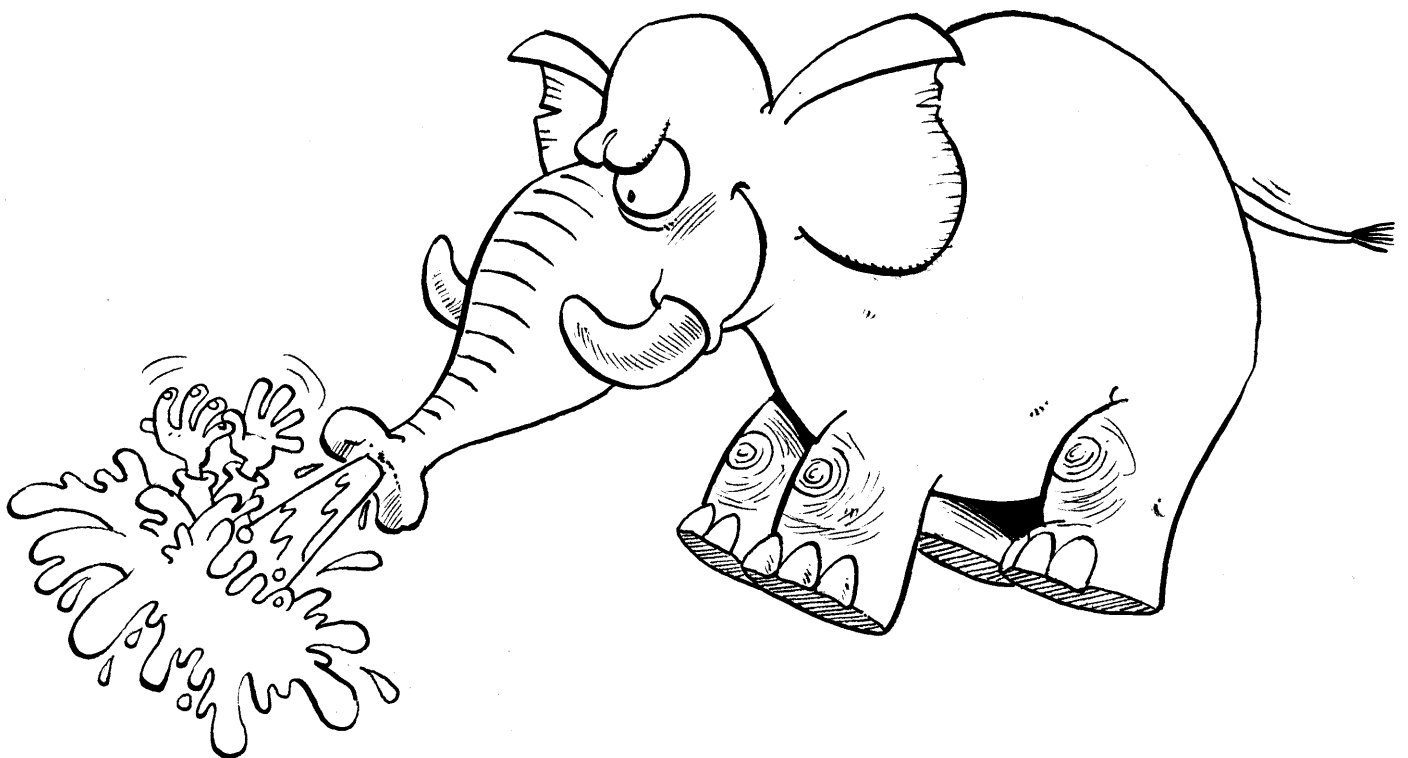
When all the teams have returned ask them to turn over the cards to show the words. The first team to place the words in memory verse order wins. Point out that the memory verse is not perfect. What is missing? (The Bible reference.) Line up the children in 2 lines with a corridor down the centre. Give the children sponge balls or similar. Attach a card containing the Bible reference to each leader. The leaders run from one end of the corridor to the other while the children try to tag them by hitting them below the waist with the sponge balls. Continue until each team has completed their memory verse.

If time permits, place several helpers in the centre of the playing area as catchers. The children are the animals and run from end to end to avoid capture by

the helpers. Any children caught go to the cage, a designated area with a leader in charge. Before all the children are caught release the captured children from the cage to rejoin the game.

Wind Up

Remind the children of the Warm Up and review the questions. Talk about the games. Did the teams collect a perfect set of cards? The Bible reference was missing. Could the catchers capture all the animals in the second game? No, the children kept being released from the cage to rejoin the game. Point out that they were unable to complete the tasks perfectly. Only God could make a perfect world and only God could make it from nothing.

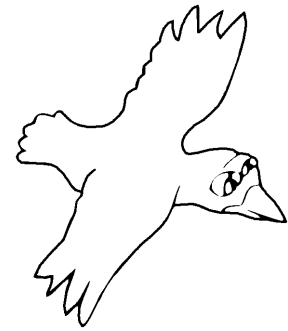
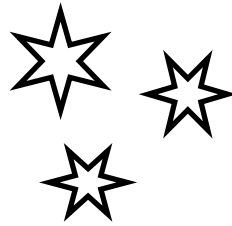


Creation

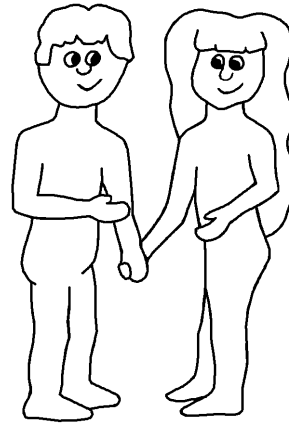
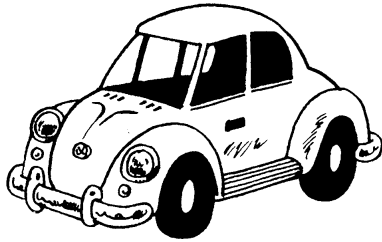
Genesis 1:1 - 2:4, 18-20

In the beginning God created...

*Circle and colour
all the things
God made.*



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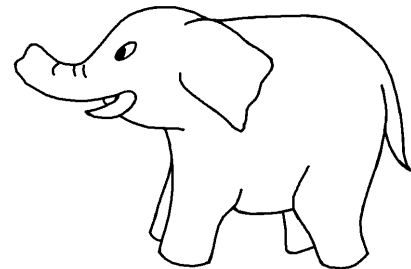
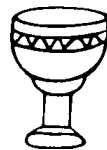
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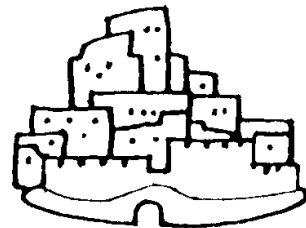
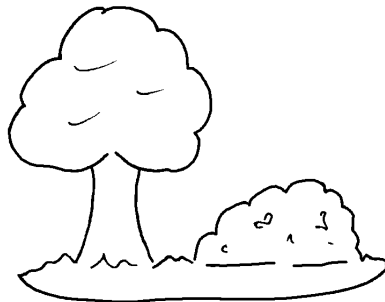


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The Bible tells us that God made the world in 6 days.

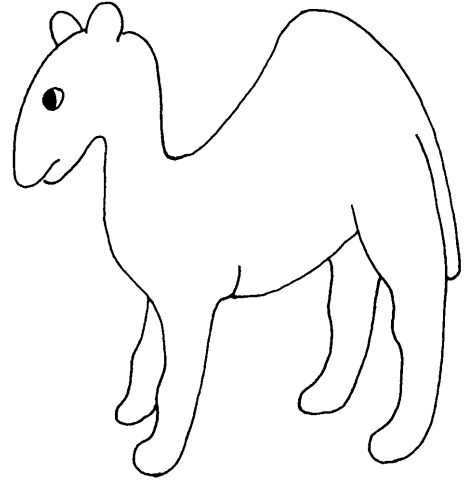
Draw a line to join each object you have circled to the day when it was made. (Some days may have more than 1 object and some may have none.)

When God created the world, what was it like?

Crack the code to see if you are right.

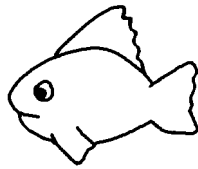
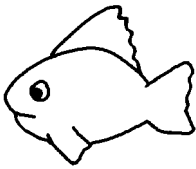
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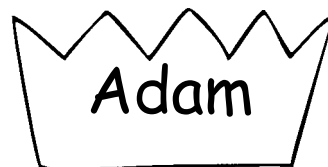


Who gave names to all living creatures?

God / Adam



Who was King over God's world? (cross out the wrong crown)



Colour your memory verse.

Know that the

Lord is God.

It is he who made
us and we are his.

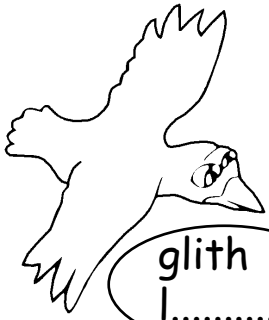
Psalm 100:3

Creation

Genesis 1:1 - 2:4,18-20

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Unscramble the following words to give some of the things God made.

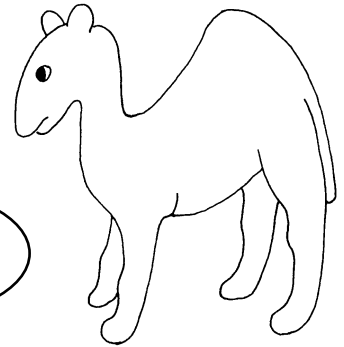


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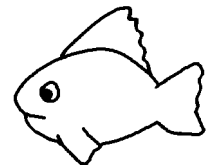
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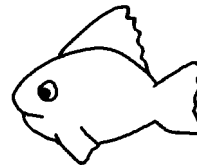
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The Bible tells us that God made the world in 6 days.

What did he make on each day? Draw a line from each unscrambled word to the day when it was made.

Write in the oval what the world was like when God made it. (1:31)

