

EARLY WORLD TIME PERIOD

Creation to 2200 BC

The Bible begins when God creates the world. Man is created in God's image. But Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, disobey God, and sin enters the world. Sin and sadness spread, leading to a great flood. Later, there is confusion in the city of Babel as people continue to turn away from God.



God creates the heavens and the earth, along with man

In the Beginning ...

Before anything else, before you or your great-great-great-grandparents were born, before your neighborhood or town was built, before the earth, the stars—before the entire universe that lies beyond what even the most powerful telescope can see—before any of that was, before any of it came to be, do you know what there was?

God.

God, who always was and always will be.

God, who was never born and will never die.

God, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving.

One God in three Persons, a Trinity of love—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Before earth, sun, or stars, before time, before even space, there was nothing at all—except God.

And God spoke.

“Let there be light.”

That’s all it took. Out of absolutely nothing, into what had been a formless void, came something. What was it? It was just what God said: light. God saw that the light was good. Creation had begun.

God divided the light from the darkness. He called the light “day” and the darkness “night.” And that was the beginning of time.

It was evening, it was morning. It was the first day.

And God spoke. He said, “Let there be a firmament to divide the waters.” God had made time when he made the light, and now he created space, too. He called the firmament “heaven.”

It was evening, it was morning. It was the second day.

And God spoke again. This time he said, “Let the dry land appear.” Through his all-powerful word, the waters gathered and the land formed. God called it the earth and the seas, but this was only a start. He spoke again, and the earth was filled with plants: trees and grasses, fruits and vegetables. Great and small, standing tall or waving quietly in the breeze—God gave plants life. But it wouldn’t end there, for God made the plants with seeds, ways to keep growing and making new life over and over.

God saw that it was good.

It was evening, it was morning. It was the third day.

And God spoke. He said, “Let there be lights in the heavens.” And there were so many lights! Countless stars twinkling through the vast universe.

Then near the beautiful planet earth, teeming with green plants, God set two special lights. The sun would rule the day, keeping the world warm and helping the plants keep growing. The moon would rule the night, so the world would never know total darkness.

God saw that it was good.

It was evening, it was morning. It was the fourth day.

And God spoke. He said, “Let the waters bring forth living creatures, and let birds fly!” And so the seas and rivers and sky filled with life—huge whales and sharks, slow-moving manatees and playful dolphins, swarms of shimmering sardines, and salmon leaping over the rocks. Tiny hummingbirds found the flowers, red-breasted robins built their nests, and great eagles soared over the mountains God had raised.

God blessed all the fish and the birds. He told them to be fruitful and multiply, to fill up the earth with movement, sound, and new life, again and again.

God saw that it was good.

It was evening, it was morning. It was the fifth day.

And God spoke. He said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures.” And so over the plains, on the hillsides, in the forests, and in sunshine, God made the animals.

There were cattle and all kinds of other creatures that walk on four legs. There were animals that hop, crawl, and creep. Great elephants and tiny ants, quick-as-lightning antelope and slow-moving sloths. God created them all, of every kind, shape, and color.

God saw that it was good.

What a beautiful world God had made! Before he spoke, there was nothing, but look at it now. The all-powerful God spoke, and through that powerful word, all of this living, growing, leaping, shimmering creation came to be. The all-knowing God spoke, and through his word, a creation—ordered, changing and growing in cycles, bodies great and small—came to be. The all-loving God spoke, and through his word, a creation of endless delight and beauty came from nothing.

But was there something missing? Even with such beauty, such variety, such power, the earth and the heavens lacked one thing.

God—all-powerful, all-knowing—God, who is life itself, who gives and shares life—God is also love.

And God said, “Let us make man.”

So God made one more creature. A creature different from the rest, but still his own, created by his word.

“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” was what God said. The rest of God’s creation reflects God’s wisdom, reason, power, and love as a painting reflects an artist’s ideas. But in man, God put something different. In human beings, God made creatures who are like him: who reflect and share God’s mind and God’s love.

God made creatures who can talk to him. Who are free and can choose to grow and become more like him. Who are made to live in union with him now and forever.

And so God created men and women, creatures who could share in his life. Creatures who could reflect his power, wisdom, and love and help God care for the rest of creation.

God looked at everything he had made, from the heavens to the earth, to the seas and the mountains, from the tiniest cell to the woman and man, and saw that it was all very good.

It was evening, it was morning. It was the sixth day.

The work of creation was finished. God had spoken, and now it was the seventh day. On the seventh day, God rested and blessed that time. The seventh day became the Sabbath, the holy day of rest for God—and for us all.

Based on Genesis 1–2:3.

Creation of Woman and Man

What a beautiful world God created! It was full of life of all kinds, growing and flourishing, the work of God's loving, wise hand. Ocean waves glinted in the sunshine, tigers stretched after their afternoon naps, flowers blossomed, the seasons changed, day moved into night and back again, and rain fell gently from the heavens God made.

In the midst of all this beauty, alongside the creatures who crawled, flew, and walked on four legs, strode another creature. He was like the others in so many ways. He reflected the Creator's wisdom and depended, like all the rest, on the loving Creator for his life and every breath.

But this creature was different from the rest. God had formed him from the dust on the ground and given him life when he breathed into his nostrils. He had made this creature in his own image and likeness. And now this creature walked the earth on two legs, his face turned up to the heavens, his arms outstretched.

This creature was a man, walking in the Garden of Eden, free and able to choose to love, build, hope, reason, and most

of all, talk and listen to God. God had breathed life into him. God had given him a soul.

In this beautiful Garden, the man had all he needed to live and be happy. God told him to keep the Garden and protect it. God told him he could eat of all of the trees of the Garden, but one: the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

As the man walked in the Garden, God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." And so God brought the animals to the man. He told the man to name the animals, and the man did. He named all the cattle, the birds and beasts. He saw the furry bears, the fuzzy mice, the scaly iguanas, the strutting peacocks, and he named them all.

They were all beautiful and special in their own ways, but not one of them was like him. Not one of them was made in God's image as well, free and able to create, think, and love.

The man had no companion, no other creature to share in the closeness of life. He lay down to sleep.

While he was asleep, God took one of the man's ribs from his side, and

from that rib, he fashioned one more creature: a woman.

The man woke up, saw the woman, and said, with joy, “At last! Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!”

God had given the man and woman a great gift: each other. He had created them to be together, in union with each other. And he had created them to be in communion with him. He created them to walk in the Garden together. They would be happy and at peace in

the midst of all God’s beautiful creation. They would have everything they needed. They would be companions, one flesh, each created for the other and for the glory of God.

Based on Genesis 2:4-25.

