

# CHAPTER THREE

**1** HEAVEN AND EARTH

**2** IT WAS GOOD

**3** MAN AND WOMAN

# 1 HEAVEN AND EARTH

The first book in the Bible is called Genesis.

Genesis means *beginnings*.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.* Genesis 1:1-5

## FROM NOTHING

"In the beginning God created..." To create is to exhibit profound power. It is even more incredible to realize that God created everything out of nothing. We as humans create, but only with pre-existing material. We paint pictures using oils and canvas. We build houses out of wood, mortar and brick. But when God created, he used nothing.

## ALL-POWERFUL

God is great. To create on such a grand scale with no materials, no blueprints, no workshop and no tools, takes abilities totally foreign to us. The Scripture tells us that creation was possible simply because God is able. God's power knows no limit.

*Great is our Lord and mighty in power ...* Psalms 147:5

He is truly *all-powerful*.

## ALL-KNOWING

God is great. He not only has the power, but he also has the knowledge. He is *all-knowing*.

*Great is our Lord ... his understanding has no limit.*

*Psalms 147:5*

God knows everything. He doesn't need to check with the architect or an engineer for further information. His knowledge is unlimited. In creation, God was not confined to someone else's blueprint.

**EVERYWHERE PRESENT AT ONE TIME**

When man is in the process of building or shaping an object, he needs a workplace, such as a shop or studio. But God needed no workshop in which to fashion his creation, for the Scripture tells us that the Lord is *everywhere present at one time*.

*“Am I only a God nearby,” declares the LORD, “and not a God far away? Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?” declares the LORD. “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” declares the LORD.*

*Jeremiah 23:23,24*

This triad of attributes—all-knowing, all-powerful, and present everywhere at one time—independently and together declare that God is great. And only a faultless combination of these three attributes would be able to create the complex realm in which we live.

*He made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.*

*Jeremiah 51:15*

The *angels* possess none of these characteristics, even as powerful and intelligent as they are. And us? We don’t even come close to this sort of ability. For us to construct even the simplest object takes combined human effort. For example, let’s say we decide to make a metal chair—the folding kind you find in a school auditorium. For starters we need metal.

*But where do you find the right kind of metal?*

In rocks.

*But who knows which stones contain the required metal?*

We need a geologist and a prospector who know a great deal about finding the rocks which carry iron ore.

*Assuming we have found the right rocks, what’s the next step?  
The rocks are in the ground!*

We need someone with the know-how to manufacture dynamite and assorted mining equipment. We need miners who have the expertise to extract the ore safely from the ground.

*But you still can’t build a chair with a mound of iron ore.*

It needs to be melted down.

*Can you build a fire hot enough to melt rocks?*

We need those who know the smelting and alloy process.

*So we found those fellows, but guess what?*

They just poured for us a glob of steel. At this point we might be willing to sit on the ingot—after it has cooled down, that is! But if we are going to make a chair, it will necessitate having someone who understands how to roll that block into a flat piece of metal, just the right thickness. Then we'll need to bend the steel and weld it.

*Welding?*

Sounds like we need someone with knowledge in electricity and how to generate it.

As you can see, making a chair is a complicated process. And we haven't even touched on how to make paint, specifically the kind that will adhere to metal and in the color we want.

*And what about the feet of the chair?*

They are plastic.

*Plastic?*

Hmmm. Doesn't that get into petroleum products? Now let me see. Drilling a well to find oil takes...!???

And all we wanted to do was make a metal chair. To create even the simplest object takes hundreds of people with combined knowledge and allied skills. **No one person knows it all.**

None of us, human or angelic, can be compared in even the smallest way to this great God who *knows* all things, who has all the *power* to create from nothing, and is *everywhere*—so that he can place the object he has made wherever he chooses. God stands alone.

*Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.*

*Jeremiah 32:17*

## **GOD SPOKE**

The account of this monumental creative act is recorded simply and concisely. The most staggering information is stated in just a few words. For example, the biblical text makes only passing reference to the *means* by which God accomplished his

creation. He didn't use hands or tools. The Lord just *spoke* the cosmos and all it contained into existence.

*And God said, "Let there be light," ...* Genesis 1:3

*... the universe was formed at God's command ...* Hebrews 11:3

Once again, such ability confounds our imagination. We can't comprehend speaking a metal chair into existence—let alone the universe! But then what would one expect from a truly great God? When you think about it, you would expect him to be just that powerful. The Bible confirms that fact.

*By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth ... Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.* Psalm 33:6,8,9

So, that's the way it all started. God spoke light into existence. He named the light *day*, and the darkness he called *night*. According to the Scripture, the first day of creation was complete.

#### ANCIENT BUT ACCURATE

Centuries ago it was commonly believed that the earth was flat. This thinking never had its origins in the Bible. The Scripture uses a word that alludes to the spherical shape of the globe when it states ...

*He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth ...*  
*Isaiah 40:22*

Some ancients speculated that the earth sat on a strong foundation or was supported by a mythological god. The prophet Job wrote that God ...

*... suspends the earth over nothing.* *Job 26:7*

Ptolemy in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century catalogued 1,022 stars, which was considered authoritative until Galileo's invention of the telescope in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Though only about 5000 stars are visible to the unaided eye, the Scripture from its earliest pages, relates the number of stars to ...

*... the sand which is on the seashore ...* *Genesis 22:17*

### EVERYWHERE PRESENT AT ONE TIME

Not all the attributes of God are equally comprehensible. Somehow it's easier for us to envision God being *all-powerful* and *all-knowing* than to see him being present in all places at the same time. But over and over again, the Scripture teaches us that God is *everywhere-present*.

When you stop and ponder the idea, it really is comforting. If I am traveling away from my family, I want to know that God is with them. But at the same time, I want the Lord to be with me. If I am in trouble, I don't want to have to *find God* to get help. I may need assistance—NOW! And, of course, I want that to be true for my family as well.

On the other hand, it can be frightening to know that God is everywhere. If I do wrong, there's no place to hide.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC, the prophet David wrote these words as he was directed by God:

*Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence?*

*If I go up to the heavens, You are there; If I make my bed in the depths, You are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to You; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to You.*

*Psalms 139:7-12*

The fact that God is *everywhere at one time* needs to be differentiated from the concept of *pantheism*. Simply put, pantheism teaches that God is *in* everything, and everything *is* God. In contrast, we will see that the Bible teaches that the Lord is distinct from his creation—he is not part of it. The Scripture defines God as a *being*, not some sort of abstract *force* or *transcendent reality*.

*Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.*

*Isaiah 40:28*

## 2 IT WAS GOOD

God had begun his creative work. The curtains had been pulled back. As all the angelic host watched, heaven and earth were placed on the stage. With a word, the sovereign God turned on the floodlights. Act One was completed: Day One was finished. Now five more acts of God's great drama were to follow in the next five days of creation.

*Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded? He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.*

*Isaiah 40:21,22*

The Scripture compares the earth to a tent. It's a place to dwell in, the most unique homestead in the universe. But for planet earth to be a suitable dwelling, major construction needed to be done. We see the angels hush. The curtain goes up on Day Two with the creation of the *expanse*. The *expanse*? What is that? Let me explain.

### DAY TWO

*And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.*

*Genesis 1:6-8*

When God created the world, the earth was covered with water. On Day Two, we see the first indication that the world as originally created was different from what we now know. The Scripture says God took some of the water and placed it high in the heavens. Though some commentators have suggested that this refers simply to the clouds, others have theorized the existence of a transparent canopy of water vapor surrounding the globe. Whether the *waters above* suggest a canopy or not, there is evidence that the climate was substantially different from what we now know. It seems to

have been uniformly tropical. It is known that an atmosphere containing more water vapor would have achieved some sort of *greenhouse effect*. Later on we will see what may have changed everything to what we now know. Whatever the case, according to the Scripture, God created an \*expanse, probably synonymous with what we presently call the atmosphere.

\*The word *expanse* is synonymous with *space*, and can apply to either earth's atmosphere or deep space.

### DAY THREE

At the beginning of Day Three, the water under the expanse still constituted one vast ocean with no visible dry land. Once again, God spoke.

*And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.*

*Genesis 1:9-13*

Day Three can be divided into two parts. First, we see the dry land appear. Apparently, as the ocean bottom sank forming huge basins for the water, dry land appeared rising out of the watery depths. Second, we see the creation of plants and trees.

From the very beginning, God had been preparing the world to be inhabited, and now plant life was created to provide for our physical needs: food to eat, oxygen to breathe and wood for building.

*For this is what the LORD says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: "I am the LORD, and there is no other."*

*Isaiah 45:18*



**DAY FOUR**

On the first day of creation, God had drawn back the curtain of darkness when He spoke light into existence. On the fourth day, God created the light-givers.

*And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so.*

*God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness.*

*And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.* *Genesis 1:14-19*

If it seems strange to us that God would create light before He created the sun, we must remember that it is just as easy for God to create the light as it is for him to create the light-givers.

*I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens . . .* *Isaiah 44:24*

*The moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.* *Psalms 104:19*

**ORDER**

The sun, moon and stars reveal that the Master Designer is a God of order. Order is the rule of the universe. It ticks with the precision of an atomic clock and indeed it is a kind of timekeeper. We write tidal charts years in advance with the confidence that they will be accurate. We launch satellites, certain that they will rendezvous with distant planets at a precise moment, just as \*programmed. The whole planet relies on the regularity of the sunrise and sunset. Without that set pattern, nothing would survive.

\* NASA's Galileo probe traveled six years before reaching Jupiter precisely as scheduled.

The order observed in the universe is the result of physical laws that govern all things. We can study those laws through

various sciences such as astronomy, biology, physics and chemistry. God established these physical laws to hold the universe together with astonishing precision.

*He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.*

*Colossians 1:17 NASB*

We take these laws so much for granted that we never consider what the world would be like without them. But just think if—for a few seconds, at random, every few days—the law of gravity was suspended. Chaos and death would reign. It would be like someone instantly removing all the traffic lights, stop signs and speed limits from our city streets. Those laws are there for a purpose. Laws define uncompromising boundaries as to how something will function.

*The day is yours, and yours also the night; you established the sun and moon. It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth...*

*Psalms 74:16,17*

Almost instinctively, we treat these natural laws with great respect. For example, we walk very carefully along the edge of a cliff because we know that to defy the law of gravity will have serious repercussions. *Whenever you have a law, you also have a consequence.* Unless one's a daredevil, we avoid flirting with those consequences like we avoid the plague.

These laws—this structure and order—are a reflection of God's nature. It's the way he is.

## **DAY FIVE**

On the fifth day, God created the whole kaleidoscope of sea life and birds.

*And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.*

*God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.*

*Genesis 1:20-23*

**DAY SIX**

The sixth day was the pinnacle of God’s creative act. God began the day by creating the land animals.

*And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so.*

*God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.*

*Genesis 1:24,25*

**KINDS**

On days three, five and six, it is respectively stated that plants, sea life, birds and animals were to produce according to their kind. What does it mean when it says, *according to their kind*? Simply put, it means that cats give birth to cats, dogs to dogs and elephants to elephants. We don’t need to worry that, when we plant tulip bulbs, cedar trees will sprout.

Creatures can give rise to different varieties,<sup>1</sup> but still be the same kind. For instance, you can breed various types of horses and end up with a whole array of equines—Arabians to Clydesdales—but they are all still horses. Nothing new has been added. In fact, each of them contains less genetic information than the mongrel stock from which they were bred. On the other hand, because kinds are fixed, a farmer need not be concerned about the neighbor’s sheep breaking into his pasture and interbreeding with his son’s pony. Once again, we can see that God embedded in the system physical laws to maintain order.

**PERFECT, FLAWLESS, HOLY**

As the universe was created, the Scripture says repeatedly that ...

*God saw that it was good.*

*Genesis 1:25*

It’s another of those concise statements which is loaded with meaning. When God created, he made things truly good.

*As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless.*

*Psalms 18:30*

We as humans can never make something flawless. What we produce may be quite acceptable, but it will still have defects. But when God created, he made all things without fault.

The Scripture says that God himself is perfect—without blemish. We use words like *holy* and *righteous* to describe aspects of that perfection.

*Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty...* *Isaiah 6:3*

*Splendid and majestic is His work, and His righteousness endures forever.*

*Psalms 111:3 NASB*

*... the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.*

*Isaiah 5:16 NASB*

We will take a deeper look at these words as we progress through God's Word, but for now, all we need to know is that the words, *holy* and *righteous*, are used to describe aspects of the Lord's perfect nature.

The absolute holiness of God cannot be over-emphasized. It's a point that must not be missed in the overall story. It's a piece that cannot be left out of the puzzle. Keep this in mind as you continue to read.

Perfection is fundamental to God's character—it's another aspect of his greatness. Because he is perfect, he could only make a perfect creation. Creation has changed, as we will see, but in the beginning it was just right! God said, *it was good*. It was perfect.

## **GOD CARES**

God could have created all plants and animals black and white, but instead he made everything with an endless variety of pigmentation and hues. Not only did he invent color, but also created eyes able to see the color.

God ensured a vast variety of foods that would taste good. The Lord not only created endless flavors, but he also provided us with taste buds able to enjoy the fine nuances of a seemingly endless variety of cooking styles.

Along with many other things, he gave fragrance to flowers and he created the nose with its ability to appreciate a multitude of scents.

God could have limited His creation of plant life to a few kinds. Indeed, just a few would have provided our needs quite adequately. But no, we see an overwhelming variety. It is evident that the Lord is a God who truly cares. The Scripture says that he ...

*... richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.*

*1 Timothy 6:17*

Not only did God have all the ability and power to create the boundless variety, but that power was combined with loving concern. God is great. He has revealed himself with acts of kindness in the world about us.

God is still impressing mankind with his creation. For centuries, much has been hidden from man's view because of our inability to see and understand it. But then, as we developed electron microscopes, atom-smashers, orbiting telescopes and other technology, we were able to peer into some of those hidden areas. And we have not become bored in our discoveries. Rather the more we discover, the more fascinated we are; the more impressed we become, and the more we are aware of what we do not know. And yet, it has been there all along, created by an awe-inspiring God.

*Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable.*

*Psalms 145:3*

There was yet one more step before the sun set on Day Six—before God's universe was complete; that step was the creation of man and woman.

### 3 MAN AND WOMAN

*For this is what the LORD says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: “I am the LORD, and there is no other.”*

*Isaiah 45:18*

#### DAY SIX (CONTINUED)

The sixth day began with the creation of animals. Now the focus of the whole story changes. Up to this time, God had been preparing the earth *to be inhabited*. The watching

angels must have wondered what God had in mind for the grand finale. Would the earth be for them? Whether such angelic conjecture went on or not we don't know, but certainly the way God went about the creation of man held its share of surprises.

*Then God said, "Let \*us make man in \*our image, in \*our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

*Genesis 1:26,27*

\* Perhaps you are wondering who God was talking to when he said "Let *us* make man in *our* image..." We will cover that later in the book.

## THE IMAGE OF GOD

The Scripture says the Lord created man in the *image of God*. Now obviously this doesn't mean we are exact duplicates. None of us are all-knowing, all-powerful, or everywhere present at one time. Nor does the Bible teach that we are *little gods*. Rather, man is like a mirror which reflects the image of the object but is not the object itself. In a sense, when you look at man, you see many things that he holds in common with God.

First of all, God created man with a **mind**. In a sense, God gave us a dab of his intellect. Because we have a mind, we are able to investigate, understand and create, which are abilities God has. But, although we have an intellect, we are not all-knowing. Indeed, we are born into this world with very little knowledge. All our *knowing* must be learned.

God also created man with **emotions**. The word *emotion* can have negative overtones, but there is a positive side. The ability to *feel* is a very important aspect of being human. Without *feelings*, your response to others would be like that of a robot—cold and calculated. In contrast to an emotionless robot, the Scripture tells us that the Lord is compassionate; he is tender; he feels anger when he sees injustice. A heartless, unaffected god without the capacity to feel love or show compassion would be truly frightening. God created us with *feelings*, because *he* has feelings.

God also created man with a **will**. Man's ability to make decisions for himself is often taken for granted. But the capacity to choose and have preferences is what gives mankind endless variety. Some like rice, others prefer potatoes. For breakfast you can have grape, apple or orange juice. The choices are unlimited.

The ability to choose separates us from the world of robots which cannot make independent decisions—they only feed back what is programmed in. Man was given a *will* so he could freely follow God, not as a robot, but as one who has intelligently grasped that God cares for him, and therefore knows that God is looking out for his best interests.

Having an *intellect*, *emotions* and a *will* are all aspects of being created in God's image. There are other areas we could look at as well, but let's move on in the story. The Scripture says ...

... the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

*Genesis 2:7*

The words *breath of life* are often associated with the *spirit* or non-material side of man. This is an additional reflection of God's image, for God too is Spirit. As we stated before, spirits cannot be seen since they have no bodies. However, in man's case, God chose to provide a physical house of flesh and bones for man's spirit to dwell in—a *house* formed from *the dust of the ground*. Once formed, the body would have laid there, complete in every way, but entirely lifeless. It was when God breathed the spirit into man, that the body became alive. Only God can impart life; no person or angel has that ability. Once again, we see that the Lord is completely distinct from all his created beings—He is greater than them all.

### A COMPANION

The first and only man God created was named *Adam*, which means *man*. God then created the woman.

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

*Genesis 2:18*

*So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.*

*The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*

*Genesis 2:21-23,25*

These few verses have generated heated arguments. Some have understood that when God made woman, he made her a second-class citizen. This is not so. God took woman out of man's side—to be a companion, not from man's heel—to be his slave. Adam gave his wife the name *Eve*, meaning *lifegiver*.

### **THE PERFECT GARDEN**

God took Adam and Eve and placed them in a special garden which he had created for them. The garden was called *Eden*.

*Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.*

*Genesis 2:8,9*

All the gardens and zoos of the world could not compare with God's garden. It was a perfect paradise—with luxuriant foliage, sparkling clear water teeming with a myriad of fish, an incredible variety of animals, with beauty beyond description! The weather was different too. The Scripture says ...

*... the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth ... but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground.*

*Genesis 2:5,6*

We have very little idea of what Eden was like—but obviously, God did not create a garden where Adam and Eve were struggling to survive. The garden had an abundance, and everything they could possibly need was adequately provided by God. It was a perfect world in which to live.

### **CREATOR-OWNER**

God didn't ask Adam and Eve if they would like to live in Eden—he knew what was best for them. God could act without



consulting anyone simply because, as Creator, he was also Owner. (Remember the tribal illustration: He who makes the canoe paddle also owns the paddle.)

*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours.*

*1 Chronicles 29:11*

*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it...*

*Psalm 24:1*

*Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people...*

*Psalm 100:3*

Just as the angels belonged to God because he created them, so man belonged to God because the Lord was his Creator. And just as the angels were given the position of being God's servants, so God gave man the responsibility of taking care of the earth.

*The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.*

*Genesis 2:15*

### **TRIAL PERIOD**

Just because God did not consult with Adam and Eve about them being placed in the garden, did not mean that they were without a choice. God had created man with a will—the ability to choose. However, when it comes to some areas of life, such as love, having the capacity to choose is meaningless unless there are alternatives. So God placed before man a very simple option involving two trees.

*... In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

*Genesis 2:9*

The first tree mentioned is the *tree of life*. If man ate of this tree, he would live forever. No problem.

The second tree, however, came with a warning. It was the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. Adam and Eve knew about *good*, but *evil* was another matter. They had both been created perfect and were innocent of all wrong. Their experience was limited to God's goodness. The Scripture says that if Adam and Eve ate the fruit of this one tree, then not only would they know what was good but also what was evil.

*And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but **you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”* *Genesis 2:16-17*

Earlier on, we saw that to defy one of God’s physical laws, such as gravity, has repercussions. That principle—a *broken law has consequences*—applies to any of God’s laws or commands. In this case, God gave man one simple rule. “Don’t eat the fruit from that one tree.” The consequence of breaking that command was made just as plain—man would die. We will discuss death in detail later.

This single tree was what distinguished man as a human and not a robot. Man had a choice—to eat or not to eat, to obey or disobey. Given that choice, Adam and Eve were removed from the realm of androids, programmed to do only what they were told. There is a big difference between a person who is programmed to say “*I will obey you*” and someone who does so of their own free will. Having the ability to *choose* is what gives the word *obey* meaning and depth. Choice makes a relationship genuine.

This one restriction on the first humans was scarcely a hardship. The situation was not as some paintings depict with Adam and Eve sitting under two lonely trees having very little fruit to choose from. They had an abundance.

*... the LORD God made **all kinds of trees** grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.* *Genesis 2:9*

### CREATED FOR HIS GLORY

In giving Adam and Eve a choice, God was not intending them to run off and establish their own agenda. Rather, man was created to reflect God’s grandeur—to honor Him.

*“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”* *Revelation 4:11*

When a son is obedient to his dad, he honors his dad. So it is between man and God. Man was created with a will, so

that by the obedient choices he made, he would honor the Lord. Indeed as Creator of the universe, God deserves all the honor man could give him. Showing such respect would result in tremendous benefits. The Scripture says that when man fits into God's plan for him, he finds the greatest happiness, fulfillment and reality. So it was for Adam and Eve.

*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."* *Genesis 1:28*

### **MAN—THE FRIEND OF GOD**

God was committed to Adam and Eve's well-being. He was there to fill every need they had.

*Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.* *Genesis 1:29,30*

The Scripture speaks of God coming in the cool of the evening to walk with man. This is a very difficult concept for us to grasp. How man could live in God's presence is beyond our power to reason—obviously, something has changed. Nevertheless, the Scripture is quite clear that God wasn't a distant, elusive Creator—he was Adam and Eve's friend. Moreover, because Adam and Eve were innocent of any sort of evil or wrong—they had a perfection that allowed them to be in God's company—*only perfect people<sup>2</sup> can live in the presence of a perfect God.*

In life, the ideal family relationship is one in which the parents give loving care, and a child in turn gives honor to his parents by loving obedience. This was the relationship Adam and Eve had with God. God lovingly provided for them, and they lovingly obeyed the Lord—honoring him. It was the way God created things to be.

**CREATION COMPLETED**

*God saw all that he had made, **and it was very good.** And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.*

*Genesis 1:31*

We often start projects with great gusto, dabble sporadically, and finally peter out, placing the half-finished product on a shelf high in the closet. But God always finishes what he sets out to do. We may change our mind about our plans, but God never does.

*... the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

*Psalm 33:11*

Creation was done. The Scripture tells us that God rested on the seventh day, not because he was tired, but because his creation was complete. It was time to lean back and enjoy!

### WHAT ABOUT EVOLUTION?

The Scripture does not mention evolution. The Creation-Evolution debate has generated much controversy, couched as a debate between religion and science. This book is not written to address this topic, but here is a little food for thought.

First of all, it is not entirely safe to designate Evolution as science, and Creation as religion. Since Charles Darwin first published the theory in 1859, classic Darwinism has been largely replaced by Neo-Darwinism and Punctuated Equilibrium—theories that differ greatly from each other. No agreed-upon body of facts exists that explains origins. Many well-studied people argue that Evolution is not pure science, but embraces key aspects of religion. This religion presupposes that there is no God, choosing to put its faith in massive amounts of time and chance. They point out that *molecules-to-man* evolution violates basic laws of physics.

On the other hand, to put Creation wholly in the religion category may not be correct either. A significant community of scientists have concluded that this complex universe could only exist if there was a designer (such as God), or a team of designers. Solely using science, they point out that the world has an irreducible complexity,<sup>3</sup> at even the smallest level. They demonstrate that such universal complexity and order could only exist if it was planned from the ground up—it could not evolve by random chance. Though some of these scientists do not categorize themselves as Bible believers, many do take the Scripture at face value. The latter group is often referred to as Creation Scientists.

Since the mid-sixties, there has been an explosion of written material on the subject (see Appendix). Much of it is readable for the lay person. I would encourage you to keep reading and studying before you make up your mind.

Some wonder about the feasibility of the Creation account as it relates to the dinosaurs. From a scriptural viewpoint, there is no reason not to believe that God created them along with the rest of the animals. Evidence exists that the dinosaurs lived at the same time as man.

Others wonder about the earth's age—some say it is very old, but the Scripture does not allow for eons of time. It is true that scientists have developed numerous astronomical, solar, terrestrial, and biological clock models<sup>4</sup> in an effort to determine the age of the universe, but while these models employ reasoned calculations, of necessity they are based on assumptions. Additionally, the computed ages have left scientists scratching their heads. Depending on the clock used, ages range from a few thousand to billions of years. Darwin theorized 400 million years for biological evolution. Today, a common estimate starts at 4.6 billion years. Whose clock is right?

Is there a reasonable answer that fits the biblical account? Going strictly by the Scripture, we know that God created a mature earth. On the day of his creation, Adam could have walked among towering trees, marveled at immense animals, and gazed at stars in the night sky. Perhaps he thought, *"Wow! This place has been around for a long time."* However, God would have told him that it was, at most, six days old—he had created the whole universe in a fully functioning state. Scientists, in looking back, try to determine the past by what they observe—just like Adam. The Word of God, however, records the origins of the earth from the perspective of an eyewitness—God himself.

So, did God mean it when he said he created the universe? Who are we to believe? Whose word is to be trusted? Centuries ago, a king pondered his place in the world:

*When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,  
what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man  
that you care for him?*

*You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and  
crowned him with glory and honor.*

*You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you  
put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and  
the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of  
the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. O LORD, our  
Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!* Psalm 8:3–9