

# **The God of Creation**

**Truth and Gospel in Genesis**

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**EP Books** (Evangelical Press), Registered Office: 140  
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EP Books are distributed in the USA by:  
JPL Books, 3883 Linden Ave. S.E.,  
Wyoming, MI 49548  
order@jplbooks.com  
www.jplbooks.com

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First published 2018

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data available**

ISBN 978-1-78397-220-3

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# I

## *In the Beginning*

Genesis 1:1

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

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION MAKE? According to the apostle Paul, creation makes a lot of difference! It is not by chance that when Paul began his long exposition of the gospel in the book of Romans, he began with God as the Creator. Why is everyone accountable to believe in God? Paul answers, since “what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them” (Romans 1:19). But when did God reveal himself to every person? Paul replies, “ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made” (Romans 1:20). Creation matters! Because God is first and foremost our Creator.

Man’s big problem is that he forgets about God. One great remedy is the creation that surrounds us. Seldom has the impact of God’s creation been more potently stated than on Christmas Eve, 1968, as the *Apollo 8* spacecraft orbited the moon for the first time ever. Never before had human eyes beheld the planet Earth rising above the surface of another sphere. The world held its breath at the images beaming back

from the lunar capsule window and the broadcasters were literally speechless. What do you say in response to the first view of our planet rising over an alien horizon? Astronaut William Anders knew, breaking the silence in the crackling hiss of the distant radio with the words of Genesis 1:1: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”<sup>1</sup> In this way, the marveling human race fulfilled the purpose of creation by giving glory to God!

### **The Beginning of All Things**

Little children ask, “Mommy, where did we come from?” Even at a young age we realize that our origins say much about who we are. In its opening sentence, Genesis answers this important question.

It is from this opening statement—actually, from its very first word—that the Bible’s first book receives its name. The Latin word for “In the beginning,” is *Genesis*. This is a fitting title, because Genesis is the book of origins. Here we learn about the beginning of the universe and of history. If we want to understand the world, the meaning of life, the nature of our own selves, the salvation for which we hope, and the destiny awaiting us in the end, the origin of all these things are recorded in Genesis.

These words, “In the beginning,” form the initial basis for a Christian worldview. That there was a beginning means that things have not always been. Matter and life had a definite start, and by identifying that origin we learn vital truths about them.

In the 1950s, scientists taught a “steady-state” theory of the

universe, stating that it has always existed. This theory needed to be replaced when Edwin Hubble observed that the stars and galaxies are moving apart from one another, evidence which suggests that there was a beginning which launched this matter into all directions. The currently dominant scientific theory is therefore called the “Big Bang,” which supposedly took place some 13.7 billion years ago. This idea holds that first there was nothing, then there was an explosion (or a “singularity” as it is sometimes called) that caused everything. The Big Bang theory leaves numerous questions unanswered, most important of which is the question of origins. If the universe started with the Big Bang, we inevitably ask, “What caused the Big Bang?” Moreover, we ask, how is it rational to believe that something came from nothing? If you can believe that something came from nothing, the Christian asks the secularist, please do not complain about the supposed irrationality of the resurrection of Jesus!

Genesis 1:1 agrees with the Big Bang Theory in that there was a beginning to the universe, even if it radically disagrees on the source of that beginning. Even this agreement is worth something, since the idea of a beginning rejects the circular idea of history common to Eastern religions and so popular in our culture today. If there was a beginning, then history really is not a never-ending circle. If there was a point where everything began, then things have not always been. Time is not a circle, but a trajectory. We may therefore ask where the line is pointing. Before we see what the answer is, the question itself is important. If there is a beginning, there is history, meaning, direction, and purpose. We are already on our way to a Christian worldview! What, then, is the source of this beginning, and therefore of history and meaning?