Opening

Gathering: Give an example of something in life that can only be explained through faith in God.

Today’s Focus: To recognize God’s powerful and loving hand through His creation of the universe, our world, our selves and each other.

Key Verses: 
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1
Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our own likeness, … and let them rule … over all the earth.” Genesis 1:26

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Bereishit

Tanach - Acronym for Torah, Nevi'im, Kesuvim = Law, Prophets, Writings
Why did the Jews call the five volume set of books the Torah?
Luke 24:44 = The Law of Moses - Hebrew for Law is Torah
Pentateuch - Greek for five-fold = Greek name for first 5 books
Septuagint - Latin for seventy = OT translated Hebrew to Greek in 300 BC by 70 (or 72) scholars
Bereishit - Hebrew for In the beginning = Jew’s name for Genesis, Title is first word
Genesis - Greek for origin, coming into being = Title describes contents
Originated from Greek word for generation = 10 generations in book: 5 of all people, 5 of Jews
Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 37:2

Who Wrote Genesis?

Jews and Christians have historically named Moses as author & compiler of the Pentateuch
Most of Genesis clearly originated around 2000 BC (time of the patriarchs)

What are some examples where the Bible implies that Moses wrote the Torah?
John 5:46 (Exodus 17:14; Joshua 8:31-32; Acts 15:1) = Jesus said, Moses … wrote about Me

What are a couple of examples that point to possible involvement in Genesis after Moses’ time?
Genesis 35:20 = … to this day that pillar marks Rachel’s tomb
Genesis 36:31 = … before any Israelite king reigned

Some scholars over the last 300 years have divided the Pentateuch into 4 sources, 3 in Genesis
J - 50% of Genesis, J sections use YHVH as name for God (Jehovah or Yahveh)
E - 35% of Genesis, E sections use Elohim as name for God (God)
P - 15% of Genesis, P sections added to J & E and used to merge into our current Genesis

Recent scholars have argued for one skillful author who purposely used repetition & variation

Does it matter who wrote Genesis and when?
2 Timothy 3:16-17 = No, God breathed (inspired) it for the purpose of teaching us
Should we be concerned that some parts might have been added or changed?
2 Peter 1:20-21 = No, it was written by God as He wanted it despite who & when

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Bible Stories for Adults

Creation

Page 2

In the Beginning (Genesis 1:1)

What do the first few words of Genesis tell us?
- **In the beginning** = There was a beginning
- In the beginning **God** = One divine God, not gods; God was already there at the beginning
- In the beginning God **created** = Purposely originated, no random chaos or evolution
- In the beginning God created the **heavens and the earth** = Everything we know

The Song of God's Creation (Genesis 1) = Prelude to God's Story, Opening song

What is the literary style of Genesis 1? (see page 6) = Poetic prose; not pure poetry, not narrative
What is the message of each verse part?
- "And God said" (Psalm 33:6-9, John 1:1-3) = All it took was God's Word
- "Let there be" (Isaiah 55:11) = God wanted what he was creating
- "And it was so" (Jeremiah 10:12-13) = No question of God's power
- Particulars are restated
- God gives names or blessings (Psalm 145:17) = God loves & owns his creation
- "And God saw that it was good" (Psalm 135:6) = Creation is good, God is pleased
- "And there was evening and there was morning" (Isaiah 25:1) = God's plan steps

The Days (Genesis 1:1-25)

Where did God get the original matter for creation?
Genesis 1:1 = He created it
How is the earth described in its beginning?
Genesis 1:2 = Formless & empty
How did God give form to the chaos to create order? = Complete days 1-3 of chart
- Genesis 1:3-5 = Separated light from darkness
- Genesis 1:6-8 = Separated sky from waters
- Genesis 1:9-13 = Separated land from sea
How did God fill His creation? = Complete days 4-6 of chart on board
- Genesis 1:14-19 = Populated lights in day and night
- Genesis 1:20-23 = Populated birds in air & fish in sea
- Genesis 1:24-25 = Populated animals on land

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forming From Chaos</th>
<th>Filling the Empty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Light / Darkness</td>
<td>4 = Lights in Day / Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 = Sky / Waters</td>
<td>5 = Birds in Air / Fish in Waters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = Land from Sea</td>
<td>6 = Animals on Land</td>
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What does this pattern say about God and His creation?
Isaiah 14:24 = He had a plan, didn't just haphazardly put things together
Was the order important?
Psalm 104:13-14 = Yesterday supports today's creation; created laws of nature
What is significant of "according to its kind" in verses 11, 21 and 24?
1 Corinthians 4:7 = God made diversity on purpose

How long were the days in Genesis 1? (see page 5 on Science and God for example explanation)
Psalm 90:4 = Depends on from whose perspective - 24 hours from God's perspective
Why did God allow this to be a confusing mystery?
Ephesians 3:4-5, 10-12 = God's mysteries are accepted by faith, revealed as He desires
Man (Genesis 1:26-30)

What else did God create on the sixth day?
Genesis 1:26-30 = Man, the crown of His creation

What does it mean to be created in God's image?
Ephesians 4:24 = be like God in true righteousness & holiness

Why is man's life so sacred?
Genesis 9:6 = for in the image of God has God made man

Why did God say "Let us make man in our image"? = Ideas include: Triune God; royal "we"; angels
Isaiah 64:8 = God our Father is the potter, we are the clay
John 1:1-3 (Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16) = Christ was with God, through him all were made
Genesis 1:2 = The Spirit of God hovered over formless earth

Creation Completed (Genesis 1:31-2:3)

What responsibilities did God give to...
- the sun and moon (16-18)? = Govern day & night
- the animals (22)? = Be fruitful & increase
- man and woman (26, 28)? = Be fruitful; fill, subdue & rule earth
- plants (29-30)? = Provide food for man & animals

How did God feel about His creation after it was finished?
Genesis 1:31 = It was very good, perfect, as He desired

How did God celebrate His creation?
Genesis 2:1-3 = He rested – Sabbath is Hebrew word for rested or ceased, verb form
Twice states this was work He had done = Stresses that God did it, didn't just happen

How do we remember this today?
Exodus 20:8-11 = We rest on 7th day just as God, Keep it holy in remembrance

What is missing from the last stanza? = there was evening & morning
Why? = There is not a 2nd week of creation. Creation is complete.

Purpose of Genesis 1

Is Genesis 1 intended to explain the details of creation?
Ecclesiastes 3:11 = No, man cannot fathom or begin to understand what God did

What is the purpose of Genesis 1?
Deuteronomy 3:24 = To show God's majesty and supreme power & love

How is Genesis 1 used to dispel beliefs of other religions?
- There are many gods = One God
- There are male and female gods = One God, no gender
- Gods evolved or were created by other gods = God always existed
- Creation resulted as offspring from gods = God created
- Creation occurred violently = Created carefully in love
- Creation is chaotic = Chaos was put into order
- Creation is evil = It was good, very good
- Sun, moon & stars are gods or are holy residences of the gods = Only parts of God's creation
- Man was an afterthought of creation = Crown of God's creation
- Man was made to be slaves, servants or pawns of the gods = Made in image of God
- Man "worships" to influence the gods = We worship to thank and praise God
- Order relies on man's rituals to encourage gods = God created laws of nature in love
Crown of God’s Creation  (Genesis 2:4-7)

What is the literary style of Genesis 2?  =  Same phrase starts new family histories in Genesis (10)
   Genesis 2:4a  =  Narrative; Belongs more with Chapter 3 than Chapter 1
How much of the creation story does Chapter 2 repeat?  =  No crop yet tilled by man, other plants lived
   Genesis 2:4b-6  =  None, defines point of reference during creation
If not creation, then what is the focus of Genesis 2?
   Genesis 2:7  =  Creation of the Crown of God’s Creation – man
What is the only other thing we see God putting His breath into?
   2 Timothy 3:16  =  His Word

Garden of Delight  (Genesis 2:8-17)

How do we see the special love and concern that God had for this creature?
   Genesis 2:8-9  =  Built a garden just for man, Eden is Hebrew for delight or enjoyment
Where was this beautiful garden?  =  See map - Other two rivers likely wiped out by the flood
   Genesis 2:10-14 = Probably where Tigris & Euphrates begin in southern Turkey (a real place)
Was this man that God created supposed to just sit back and delight in what God have him?
   Genesis 1:28; 2:15  =  Had responsibilities to multiply, make use, take charge & take care
Was this man given “free rein” over what he did in God’s Garden and how he did it?
   Genesis 2:16-17  =  He was given “free rein” up to a specific limit - freedom within limits

Man is a Social Creature  (Genesis 2:18-25)

What was missing in God’s perfect creation?
   Genesis 2:18  =  A partner for mutual support and companionship
How did God show the need to Adam (the man) before just filling it?
   Genesis 2:19-20  =  Paraded all of the animals before him to be named
   Adam is Hebrew for man.  Adamah is Hebrew for ground.
How did God make a helper that Adam would accept as equal and not just another animal?
   Genesis 2:21-23  =  He made Eve from Adam - flesh of my flesh, same as me
What are the three parts of God’s plan for man and wife?  =  1 flesh to 2 to 1
   Genesis 2:24  =  Leave his father & mother; Be united to his wife; Become one flesh
How did these partners relate to each other at the beginning?
   Genesis 2:25  =  There was no shame because there was no sin

Closing Prayer

Response

1. How is God’s almighty and creative hand evident in the world around me?
   (Job 38-41; Psalm 19:1-6; Jeremiah 10:12-13; Romans 1:20)
2. How should I respond when others say that the Bible has been proven false by science?
   (Job 36:24-26; 37:5; Proverbs 3:5-7, 19; 8:22-31; 1 Corinthians 1:19-25)
3. Do I take serious my responsibility as the crown of God’s creation?  How should I change?
   (Genesis 1:26, 28; 2:15; Psalm 8:3-8; Micah 6:8)
4. What freedoms have God given me to enjoy within what limits?
   (Genesis 1:16-17; John 8:34-36; Romans 6:15-23; 1 Corinthians 6:12; Galatians 5:1, 13-25)
5. How do the Bible’s comments on marriage affect my relationships with my spouse and others?
   (Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 7:1-17; Ephesians 5:21-33)

Moses Maimonides (medieval philosopher): *Conflicts between science and the Bible arise from either a lack of scientific knowledge or a defective understanding of the Bible.*

**Schroeder’s Golden Apples**

*A word well spoken is like apples of gold in bowls of silver.* Proverbs 25:11

“Seen from a distance, only the silver bowl [Bible text] and its beauty are noticed. With closer inspection [deep study] the more valuable apples of gold [quiet truths] are discovered within.”

First Golden Apple - *The Six Days That Preceded Adam and Eve*

Genesis 2 and rest of Bible count days from creation of Adam and Eve

Genesis 1 counts 6 days from the creation of the universe

Second Golden Apple - *Understanding Time*

Einstein’s Law of Relativity - Flow of time at a location is a function of its gravity (G) and velocity (V)

The duration between clock ticks in a high-G or high-V environment is longer than in low-G or low-V

Third Golden Apple - *The Many Ages of Our Universe*

The age of anything (including the universe) will differ per the location where it is measured

Fourth Golden Apple - *A Universal Clock*

Archaeology confirms that dates given in Bible (Genesis 2 and on) are from the earth’s perspective

Genesis 1 cannot use earth-based time because there was no earth during the first two days

The only perspective available for the entire Six Day period is that of the total universe

Fifth Golden Apple - *When the Universe Was Small*

The “big bang” produced tremendous energy which allowed matter to form (\(E = mc^2\))

For each doubling of universe’s size, relative time halves (distance between radiation wave crests)

Sixth Golden Apple - *The Ages of Our Universe*

Redshift factor (z) is ratio of observed stretched wavelength relative to its emitted wavelength

Redshift observed today is \(10^{12}\) - Works out to 15.75 billion years looking back from today

Genesis 1 states time looking forward from the creation - 15.75 billion years works out to 6 days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Earth’s Perspective</th>
<th>Main Events of the Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looking Forward</td>
<td>Looking Back</td>
<td>Scientific Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Since Creation</td>
<td>Before</td>
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<td>Duration (days)</td>
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<td>(hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Creation of the universe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15.75</td>
<td>Light separates from dark</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Heavenly firmament forms</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Oceans &amp; dry land appear</td>
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<td>First life (plants)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>First life (plants)</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Sun, moon &amp; stars become visible</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>First animal life abundant</td>
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<td>Reptiles</td>
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<td>Winged animals</td>
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<td>Land animals; mammals</td>
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<td>Humankind</td>
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Fossil record shows that all animal phyla appeared almost simultaneously 530 million years ago. All further development was confined to variations within each phylum. No new phyla have appeared since that explosion of life. This burst of life can only be explained by God creating it. There were no “billions of years” for the amino acids to combine randomly into life.
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. 

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. 

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 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 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. 

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. 

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let him 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. God blessed them and said, "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." 

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 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. 

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. 

And there was evening, and there was morning - the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 

And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.