

# **THEME 4**

## **Creation, God's Gift to All People**

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This theme, consisting of a single unit, discusses the creation story and our responsibility to care for creation. Students will develop a sense of the beauty and complexity of creation and be given opportunities to share their sense of awe. As they discuss people's responsibility to care for the world, students will discover the ways all of creation is interrelated. They will also begin to understand that each individual can make a difference in caring for the earth.

Unit 13: What a Wonderful World!

# Kindergarten—Unit 13

## What a Wonderful World!

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God created a beautifully balanced world with many surprises. We, as humans, have been given a mandate to care for the earth. This unit promotes an intrinsic love and respect for the physical world around us. Children will explore the story of creation through hearing the creation story as it builds and by doing the accompanying activities. In the last lesson, the children will gain some awareness of how people have disregarded the earth. They will be encouraged to find things they can do to care for the earth.

### LESSONS

1. The Beginnings of Creation
2. Water and Sky
3. God Creates Plants
4. God Creates the Sun, Moon, and Stars
5. God Creates Sea Animals and Air Animals
6. God Creates Land Animals and People
7. God Rests
8. Take Care of the World

# Unit 13: What a Wonderful World!

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## Unit Information

### SUMMARY

While hearing the story of creation, students will have opportunities to celebrate and appreciate the marvelous as well as the ordinary aspects of our world. They will become aware of ways they can care for the earth.

### KEY BIBLE TEXTS

- Genesis 1:1–2:15
- Deuteronomy 4:32
- Psalm 8:6-8; 19:1; 24:1-2; 33:6-9; 36:5-6; 96:11-12
- Isaiah 24:4-5; 42:5; 43:5; 45:5, 7; 62:4
- Jeremiah 2:7; 31:35-37
- Ezekiel 34:18
- Amos 4:13
- Luke 4:16-21
- John 1:1
- Romans 8:19-25, 28

### BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

The beginning passages of the Bible use beautiful poetry in a wonderful hymn of praise to God the Creator. We see an orderly and livable world, created systematically under God's control. By this order, we understand that God is trustworthy. Day will follow night, generations will succeed generations, and seeds will always reproduce in kind.

When we put the account in the context of the cultures in existence when Genesis was written, we see that the author reminded people that the world was created by one God. This stood in contrast to the many gods found in other cultures. Genesis also depicts God as good and compassionate, in contrast to the gods of vengeance and capriciousness worshipped by surrounding cultures. Although the Israelites experienced danger and chaos (*as in the Babylonian exile*) at times, God was in charge of an orderly world.

It is important that God's acts of creation were spoken, as shown in Genesis 1. That God created by using the spoken word is mentioned in Psalms, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made . . . For he spoke, and it came to be" (Psalm 33:6, 9). John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." These passages instill an image of God's gentleness. God did not need violent methods to create the world.

### The Beginnings of Creation

God's speaking and acting established a cycle of day and night. God was the creator of light and dark (Isaiah 45:5, 7). To ancient Israel, it was perfectly natural to credit God with the creation of night and day. Our modern minds think in terms of natural law. However, God's speaking and acting continues to be the reason why day follows night.

God created both day and night. What God has created is good. Both day and night are good.

### **Water and Sky**

During the second day, water was brought under control (Genesis 1:6-8). God was creating a livable world. First, the night was put in its place as part of a cycle. Water, necessary for the world, was then put in the sky and on earth. God, the Creator, kept control of the water so that God's love was shown to all of creation.

By gathering the water together and creating land and water (Genesis 1:9-10; Amos 4:13), the elements were present for sustaining life.

### **God Creates Plants**

With the creation of vegetation, God proved predictable and reliable. Plants will always reproduce in kind. The farmer need not be anxious about the results of the harvest. Corn, when planted, would always grow into corn.

As the creation story progressed, God continued to build a livable world. First, night was regulated. Then the waters were brought under control. Next, plant life was added, along with conditions conducive to growth.

### **God Creates the Sun, Moon, and Stars**

Genesis 1:14-19 does not name the two great lights. Some ancient cultures worshipped the sun and the moon. By not naming the two great lights, the writer made it clear they did not hold any special powers. They were not deities to be worshipped or placated. God was the Creator. People were to worship God, not the sun and the moon.

Other scriptures name God as the Creator of the sun, moon, and stars. Jeremiah says the Lord gave the sun, moon, and stars (31:35). Isaiah reminds the people that God created the heavens (43:5).

Again an order emerges. The lights in the sky mark the seasons, the days, and the years (Genesis 1:14). They form the cycle of day and night.

### **God Creates Sea Animals and Air Animals**

God created creatures that live in the sea and fly in the sky. These creatures were created with the ability to pass on the gift of life through bearing young.

By naming sea monsters as part of God's creation, ancient Israel was reassured that there was no need to fear or worship large, unknown creatures. They were a part of the created world, made by God. God ruled over them, just as God was in control over all creation.

### **God Creates Land Animals and People**

When God created animals, they were created in three general categories: domesticated animals (*cattle*), wild animals, and creeping, crawling creatures (Genesis 1:24-25). These animals were not created helpless. They were given the ability to reproduce and care for themselves by natural instinct.

The focus of the sixth day of creation was human beings. They were a unique creation, the only aspect of God's creation that was in God's image, "in our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). Humankind was given a special mandate to care for all the inhabitants of the earth. We were charged to control the earth and make responsible decisions for its care.

The creation of people was the climax of God's creation. All earlier acts of creation

led to this point. The psalmist reminded listeners people were created a little lower than God (Psalm 8:5). The creation of humanity was not an accident of history, but a deliberate choice by God. Humans, although responsible for the earth, are also responsible to God.

We are continually reminded that we are in relationship with God because God is our creator. Moses referred to the day that God created human beings when he addressed the Israelites during their trek to the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 4:32). Isaiah referred to God as the one who created the earth and gave breath to the people who live on it (Isaiah 42:5). Therefore, people should listen to what God has to say!

The Genesis section ends serenely. Plants provided unlimited food for animals and humans. All of creation existed in harmony. God gazed over the entire creation and called it good. It was the picture of the peaceable kingdom; a world without violence.

### **God Rests**

After the heavens and earth and all their multitude were finished, God rested (Genesis 2:1-2). The cycle was complete. It did not continue in endless activity. Satisfied with the work of creation, God took a break and enjoyed it.

A Sabbath, a time of rest, was intended to be a time to enjoy the present. It freed people from the need to look at the world only in terms of what needs to be done.

### **Take Care of the Earth**

In scripture, the beauty and grandeur of creation point us toward God the Creator. Psalm 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” God’s love, goodness, and faithfulness are displayed in creation (Psalm 36:5-6). God called creation “good” (Genesis 1).

Scripture also evokes images of the earth praising God. “Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it; let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy” (Psalm 96:11-12).

Scripture describes people’s inclination to disrupt creation and society. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Unless we actively pursue God’s will by acting to help the earth remain renewable and liveable, we will destroy its capacity to provide for us.

The Old Testament prophets lamented the destruction human beings brought to the earth. “The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the exalted of the earth languish. The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant” (Isaiah 24:4-5).

The prophets chided humans for not thinking about the consequences of their actions. “Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet?” (Ezekiel 34:18). “I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable” (Jeremiah 2:7). Throughout history, people have been short-sighted in regard to the earth as a life-sustaining resource.

“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Psalm 24:1). People were given the mandate to tend to the earth, to be creation keepers (Genesis 2:15; Psalm 8:6-8).

To be stewards of creation is to be faithful to God’s mandate for humankind. It is to realize that all aspects of creation are interrelated. Our lifestyles need to reflect an understanding that all of our actions have an effect on the earth—either helping the earth or degrading it. The kinds of food we buy, the ways we garden, how we dispose of our waste, and the vehicles we choose all contribute to the earth’s overall health or demise.

Even though the earth has been abused, God offers the hope of redemption to all of creation through Jesus. We can live whole, fulfilling lives in relationship to other people as well as to the earth (Luke 4:16-21; Isaiah 62:4). All creation is eagerly awaiting the day when the world will be healed and whole (Romans 8:19-23).

## ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- God created the world.
- The world that God created is wonderful and full of surprises.
- All that God created is unique and special.
- People are special because we are created in God’s likeness.
- The earth belongs to God.
- God called the world “good.”
- People have been careless about taking care of the earth.
- God put us in charge of taking care of our environment.
- Each person’s actions affect the earth.
- We can do great things if everyone helps.

## WORSHIP / BIBLE MEMORY

Each day before you begin the lesson light a candle (*or use a battery powered light*) and call the children to worship with these activities:

### Bible Memory

Genesis 1:1 is a short memory verse. Encourage children to at least memorize the order of creation, as it is described in Genesis 1. They may also be able to recite phrases from the repeated story, such as “God saw that it was good,” and “There was evening and there was morning . . .”

### Songs

All Things Bright and Beautiful, page 46, *Jubilee Songbook*

Hands, Hands, Hands, page 58, *Jubilee Songbook*

*What a Wonderful World* by George David Weiss and Bob Thiele, Atheneum, 1976 (song) and 1995 (illustrations)

### Other Ideas for Worship

Read a different creation story every day. Talk about the similarities and differences in the stories. Examples of good books are:

*The Deep Blue Sea* by Bijou Letord

*The Seven Days of Creation* by Leonard Everett Fisher

*In the Beginning of the World* by Masahiro Kasaya

*And God Said* by Martha S. Riedel

Spend some quiet time in creation, listening to the sounds, touching the textures, smelling the smells, and watching the beauty of everything around you.

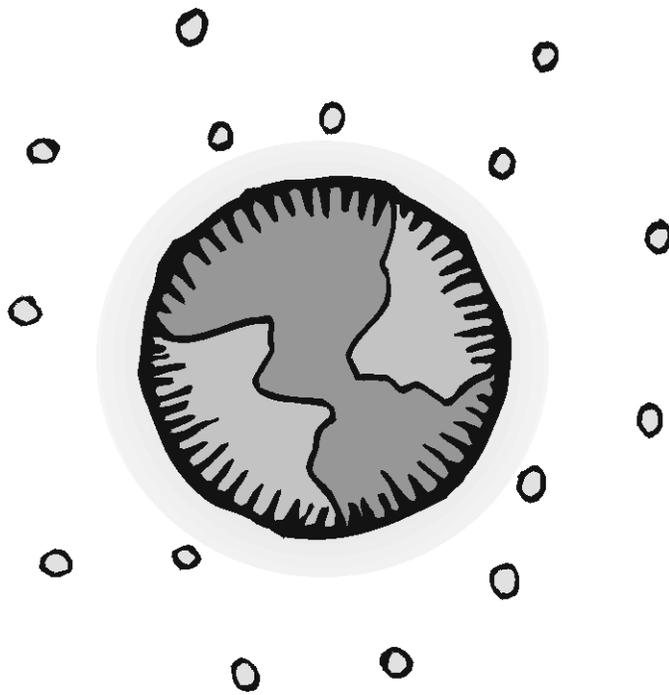
## **ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING**

Kindergarten students have a natural sense of awe and wonder in exploring the created world. While exploring the wonders of creation, listen for the “aha” moments for each child. These are moments when a new idea, difficult concept, or affirmation of the marvelous, connects with the students. Taking note of those times will give you a good idea of the concepts the children have internalized.

Take note of the students’ comments during the final lesson. Are they thinking more about what they throw away? About use of electricity? About letting water run? If they are talking about their use of these things, they are beginning to be aware of the effect they have on the environment.

## **MEMORY PASSAGES**

This unit offers the following verse for students to memorize: Genesis 1:1. Optional verses include Amos 4:13, Psalm 24:1-2, and Psalm 19:1. You will find them in large format on pages 349-352, to copy as take-home sheets for students.



In the beginning  
God created the heavens  
and the earth.

Genesis 1:1



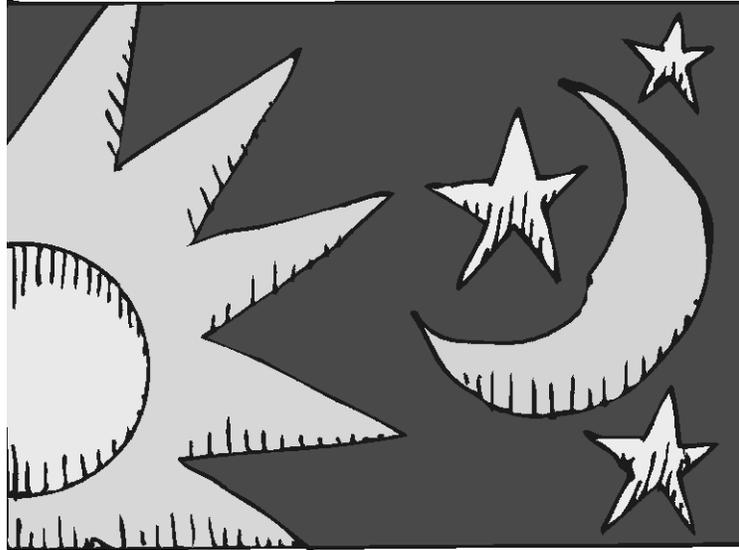
He who forms the mountains,  
creates the wind, and reveals  
his thoughts to man,  
he who turns dawn to darkness,  
and treads the high places of  
the earth—the Lord God  
Almighty is his name.

Psalm 34:4



The earth is the Lord's  
and everything in it,  
the world, and all who live in it;  
for he founded it upon  
the seas and established it  
upon the waters.

Psalm 24:1-2



The heavens declare the  
glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the  
work of his hands.

Psalm 19:1

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 1: THE BEGINNINGS OF CREATION

### Objective

Children will value the wisdom of God in creating day and night.

### Key Concepts

- God created day and night.
- Days are special.
- Nights are special.

**Text:** Genesis 1:1-5

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Very large, flat box
- Large flat pan filled with water (to fit inside box)
- Lamp, extension cord
- Small rattle or shaker to hide in hand
- Creation book page 1 (p. 356), markers/crayons, other art supplies
- Large card or poster board and marker
- For additional materials needed, see specific learning experiences of your choice (p. 254).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Make copies of creation book page, one per child. Fill in words before copying, or have children do it in lesson step 3.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Day and night.** Ask, “What would it be like if it were always day? What if it were always night? What would you miss? What couldn’t we do?” Add, “God gave us two parts of the day—night and day. God knew we needed to rest and that night was the perfect way for our bodies to find rest. God also knew we needed to be able to see to go about the rest of our lives. The light of day helps us do that. Today we’ll hear the story of the beginnings of creation, how God created day and night.”

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story of the beginnings of creation.** To tell the stories in this unit use a large, flat box. For the first few lessons, put a pan of water in the box. As you tell additional parts of the creation story you will add things to the box. Place a lamp near the box that can be turned on at some point in the story. You will

add words to this story as the unit progresses. Read slowly and poetically. Turn the lights out to begin the story.

Long, long, long ago before there was anything, there was God. (*Hide small rattle or shaker in your hand and shake it gently when you say these words.*)

There was no light.

There were no plants.

There were no people.

There was only God and darkness.

The Spirit of God was moving. (*Shake rattle gently, moving hand across box.*)

And God said, "Let there be light!" (*Turn on lamp beside box.*)

And there was light.

And God saw that the light was good.

And God separated the light from the darkness. (*On "darkness" turn off light.*)

God called the light Day, (*Turn on light.*)

And the darkness God called Night. (*Turn off light.*)

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

**2. Wonder about the story**, using the following statements:

- I wonder why God decided to create.
- I wonder how God's spirit moves.
- I wonder what it would be like if there were no day, if there were no night.
- I wonder how God knew how long to make night so we had just enough time to rest our bodies.

Pray, "Dear God, thank you for creating light and dark, night and day. Amen."

**3. Work on creation books.** Provide markers/crayons (*and other art supplies, if desired*) and have children illustrate the first page in their creation books with pictures of day and night. They can write "God," "day," and "night" in the blanks. (*If you prefer, you can fill in these words before you copy the page.*) When they finish, make sure their names are on their pages before storing them in a safe place.

**4. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Talk about how day and night are different. Name activities that can only be done during the day and activities that can only be done during the night. Make a list on chart paper or the chalkboard to use with the following activity.
- Divide the class into two groups: day and night. Name different activities, inviting the each group to stand up when the activity is appropriate for "day" or "night." Be sure to include some that can be done at both times. *Examples:* brushing teeth, eating breakfast, swimming, watching the stars, making shadow pictures, sleeping, breathing, etc.
- Compose a class litany using activities students have suggested. After each line describing an activity, the entire class says: "Thank you, God, for day," "Thank you, God, for night," or "Thank you, God, for day and night."
- Give students their choice of black or white paper. Encourage them to draw either a nighttime scene or a daytime scene. (*Use white crayon or chalk on the*

*black paper.*) On the paper write: “God created day and night.” Be sure to write children’s names on their pages lightly in pencil.

- Make crayon resist pictures of night. Color a scene with crayon, then paint over the picture with black tempera paint.
- Make a collage of daytime activities on a half sheet of paper, and a collage of nighttime activities on the other half.
- Read any of the following books which highlight day and/or night:
  - In the Middle of the Night* by Aileen Fisher
  - Ira Sleeps Over* by Bernard Weber
  - Night Again* by Karla Kuskin
  - Night Becomes Day* by Richard McGuire
  - Dawn* by Uri Shulevitz

**5. Closing litany.** Interactively write the words “Only God Can” on a large card. Use these words the entire unit as the children’s response when you recite a growing litany of celebration for creation. Display the card and use it each day as a prompt for the children’s part of the closing litany.

**Teacher: Who can separate the day from the night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!**

\_\_\_\_\_ created \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 2: WATER AND SKY

### Objective

Children will value the role of water in God's creation.

### Key Concepts

- God created land, water, and sky.
- We need water to live.
- Animals and plants need water to live.

**Text:** Genesis 1:6-8

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Rhythm instruments
- Large, flat pan filled with water
- Lamp and extension cord
- Small rattle or shaker to hide in hand
- For "cloud sticks": small lump of clay, several long thin dowel rods or pencils, cutout clouds (*see description at beginning of Bible story*)
- Creation book page 2 (p. 360)
- "Only God Can" litany poster
- For additional materials, see specific learning experiences of your choice (pp. 358-359).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Make copies of creation book page, one per child. Fill in words before copying, or have children do it in lesson step 3.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Create a rainstorm** with rhythm band instruments. Shake a rainstick or use rhythm sticks to tap a gentle rain. Add cymbals for crashing thunder. Use triangles for the sound of sprinkling rain. Sandpaper blocks could represent windshield wipers. Different drumbeats could be heavy rain or light rain. After you put the instruments away, tell the children, "We have water on the ground and we have water above (*in the clouds*). Today you will hear a story about how God separated the water."

### LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story, "Water and Sky."** To tell the stories in this unit use a large, flat box. For the first few lessons, put a pan of water in the box. As you tell addi-

tional parts of the creation story you will add things to the box. Place a lamp near the box to represent the sun. Have “cloud sticks” nearby. Use several long, thin dowel rods or pencils with cutout clouds attached to the top and a lump of modeling clay stuck to the bottom. On some of the clouds make raindrops to symbolize the “waters above the sky.” You will add words to this story as the unit progresses. Read slowly and poetically. Turn out the lights to begin this story.

Long, long, long ago before there was anything, there was God. *(Hide small rattle or shaker in your hand and shake it gently when you say these words.)*

There was no light.

There were no plants.

There were no people.

There was only God and darkness.

The Spirit of God was moving. *(Shake rattle gently, moving hand across box.)*

And God said, “Let there be light!” *(Turn on lamp beside box.)*

And there was light.

And God saw that the light was good.

And God separated the light from the darkness. *(On “darkness” turn off light.)*

God called the light Day, *(Turn on light.)*

And the darkness God called Night. *(Turn off light.)*

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, “Let there be a space in the middle of the waters. Let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the sky and separated the waters that were under the sky from the waters that were above the sky. *(Stick cloud sticks onto bottom of box so clouds “float” above water.)*

And it was so.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

**2. Wonder about the story**, using the following statements:

- I wonder what a world without sky would be like.
- I wonder how God knew we needed a sky.
- I wonder how old water is.

Pray, “Thank you, God, for making the sky and giving us water. Amen.”

**3. Work on creation books.** Have children illustrate the second page in their creation books with pictures of water and sky. Remind them that no creatures are alive yet at this point—there are only water and air. Have them write the words, “God,” “sky,” and “water” in the blanks. *(If you prefer, you can fill in these words before copying the page.)* When they finish, make sure their names are on the pages before storing them in a safe place.

**4. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Discuss the many places we find water in nature: rivers, ponds, streams, oceans, rain, etc. If students have negative feelings about rain and rainy days, wonder with them about the gifts that rain provides, how rain replenishes the water supply and helps plants grow.
- List the activities we do with water: swimming, taking baths, drinking, wash-

ing dishes, etc. Spend a few minutes imagining what our lives would be like if we did not have water.

- Make rain. With plastic wrap, tightly cover a jar half-filled with water. Place the jar in a sunny window. Watch the moisture condense on the plastic. If the drops do not “rain” down by themselves, help it to “rain” by lightly tapping on the plastic.
- Paint with water outside on sidewalk or driveway.
- Take a walk after a rainstorm. Notice things that are different because of the rain.
- Graph favorite water activities: taking a bath, swimming, drinking, etc.
- Finger paint with shaving cream on desks. Children can make various types of clouds. Wiping the shaving cream off when they are finished is an inexpensive and wonderful way to clean the desks. Citrus-scented shaving cream makes the room smell delightful.
- Put water in the sand-water table or a large dishpan for water play.
- Collect water samples from different places: a river or pond, the tap, a rain puddle. Let the water settle and use magnifying glasses to see what’s in the water. Pour the water through a coffee filter. Use a different filter for each water source. Mark the filters with the sources. Compare the results.
- Visit a water-testing laboratory. Talk about what is in the water that might make the water unsafe to use.
- Read books such as the following, which highlight water:
  - Water Dance* by Thomas Locker
  - Water: Up, Down, and All Around* by Rosinsky
  - The Drop Goes Plop* by Godwin

**5. Closing litany.** Use the phrase “Only God Can” that you wrote with the children last time, to prompt the children in this closing litany.

**Teacher: Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can separate the sparkling water from the blue, blue sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!**

\_\_\_\_\_ separated \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 3: GOD CREATES PLANTS

### Objective

Children will understand that God created plants of all kinds and provided for their reproduction.

### Key Concepts

- God created plants and trees.
- Seeds from plants grow into the same kind of plants.
- Each plant is unique and special.

**Text:** Genesis 1:9-13

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Large, flat pan filled with sand or soil
- Small flat pan or bowl of water
- Lamp and extension cord
- Cloud sticks
- Artificial plants of many kinds
- Small rattle or shaker to hide in hand
- Creation book page 3 (p. 365)
- “Only God Can” litany poster
- For additional materials, see specific learning experiences of your choice (pp. 363-364).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Make copies of creation book page, one per child. Fill in words before copying, or have children do it in lesson step 3.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Pretend to be growing seeds.** Invite students to pretend they are seeds (*curl into balls on floor*). As the sun shines and the rain falls, the seeds sprout and peek above the ground (*children rise a little*). They continue growing (*stretch arms up high*) until they are full-grown plants. Ask students what plants they imagined themselves to be. All together shout: “Hooray for (students say names of plants they imagined)!” Then you add, “Today we will hear how God created plants.”

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story “God Creates Plants.”** To tell today’s story, exchange the water in the pan for soil or sand. Keep one area of the pan free of dirt and large enough

to place a shallow bowl or pan of water. Place a lamp near the box to represent the sun. Place the cloud sticks in the soil. Have artificial plants of many kinds nearby. Read the story slowly and poetically. Turn the lights out to begin the story.

Long, long, long ago before there was anything, there was God. (*Hide small rattle or shaker in your hand and shake it gently when you say these words.*)

There was no light.

There were no plants.

There were no people.

There was only God and darkness.

The Spirit of God was moving. (*Shake rattle gently, moving hand across box.*)

And God said, "Let there be light!" (*Turn on lamp beside box.*)

And there was light.

And God saw that the light was good.

And God separated the light from the darkness. (*On "darkness" turn off light.*)

God called the light Day, (*Turn on light.*)

And the darkness God called Night. (*Turn off light.*)

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, "Let there be a space in the middle of the waters. Let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the sky and separated the waters that were under the sky from the waters that were above the sky. (*Stick cloud sticks onto bottom of box so clouds "float" above water.*)

And it was so.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." (*Set pan of water in middle of soil.*)

And it was so.

God called the dry ground "land," (*point to soil*) and the gathered waters God called "seas" (*point to water*).

And God saw that it was good.

And God said, "Let there be green plants, and tall trees, and grass, and beautiful flowers. And have them make seeds, so there can be new plants when the old ones die. (*Insert artificial plants into soil.*)

And it was so.

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

**2. Wonder about the story**, using the following statements:

- I wonder what the first plants looked like.
- I wonder how God thought of making seeds so we could keep having plants.
- I wonder how beautiful the earth was before anything was there to hurt it.

Pray, "Dear God, Thank you for making land and plants and seeds. Amen."

**3. Work on creation books.** Have children illustrate the third page in their creation books with pictures of plants. Remind them that no animals are alive yet at this point—there are only water, air and plants. Have them write the words "God"

and the name of the plants they drew in the blanks. (*If you prefer, you can fill in “God” and “plants” before copying the page.*) When they finish, make sure their names are on the pages before storing them in a safe place.

**4. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Plant seeds (*lima beans and kidney beans work well*). Plant some in a glass jar to observe how they grow. Allow each student to plant some seeds in a cup. Make a timeline to chart the progress of the plants. Draw and date the new growth. *OR* grow seeds to send home with students at the end of the year (*herbs or lettuce*).
- Make leaf rubbings. Put leaves under a sheet of paper and color over top with the side of a crayon to get the outline of the leaf.
- Take a walk in a wooded area and notice how many kinds of plants you see. Ask the children if they know the names of any of the plants. Listen, look, smell, and touch.
- Collect leaves from as many trees as possible. Invite students (*in groups of 4-6*) to put their leaves into a container. See if students can find their own leaves by feel. Press leaves between wax paper to preserve them.
- Plant different parts of plants—tubers (*potato*), stems (*cuttings from plants*), roots (*top part of carrot*).
- Plant a tree in your schoolyard.
- Make a three-dimensional tabletop map with salt clay. Mold hills, valleys, places for lakes, rivers, and seas. When clay is dry, paint and shellac it. When coatings are dry, add water to lakes, rivers, and seas.
- Display a relief map, showing mountain ranges, bodies of water and land masses.
- Visit a greenhouse. Talk about what plants need to grow and about the varieties of plants. Buy some plants to plant around your school
- Make a tree picture by tracing around each student’s arm and hand (*with fingers opened*). This forms the trunk and branches. Invite students to sponge paint leaves on the trees with green tempera paint.
- Make a soda pop bottle terrarium. Cut the top off a plastic bottle and pull off the thick plastic bottom. Line thick plastic bottom with foil. Fill it  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with potting soil. Plant seeds. (*Use dwarf varieties of flowers or small houseplants.*) Water lightly until soil is well moistened. Flip bottle upside down and fit into thick plastic bottom. Do not remove. There’s no need to water the terrarium again.
- Adopt a tree in your schoolyard. Plant seeds from your adopted tree. Make bark and leaf rubbings. Have a picnic under your tree.
- Read any of the following books that highlight plants and seeds:

*Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney

*The Seed* by Pamela Nash

*The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle

*The Reason for a Flower* by Ruth Heller  
*A Tree Is Nice* by Janice Udry  
*Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert

**5. Closing litany.** Use the phrase “Only God Can” that you wrote with the children last time, to prompt the children in this closing litany.

**Teacher: Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can separate the sparkling water from the blue, blue sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can make juicy, sweet strawberries and a red, red rose?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!**

\_\_\_\_\_ created \_\_\_\_\_.

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 4: GOD CREATES THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS

### Objective

Children will understand that God created the sun, moon, and stars.

### Key Concepts

- God created the sun for day.
- God created the moon and stars for night.

**Text:** Genesis 1:14-19

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Drawings of daytime and nighttime outdoor scenes
- “Creation scene” used in previous Bible stories
- Lamp and extension cord
- Small rattle or shaker to hide in hand
- Poles, string, paper clips, and sun, moon, and stars to hang during story
- Creation book page 4 (p. 370)
- “Only God Can” litany poster
- For additional materials, see specific learning experiences of your choice (pp. 368-369).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Make copies of creation book page, one per child. Fill in words before copying, or have children do it in lesson step 3.
- Make sun, moon, and stars to hang.
- Make drawings of daytime and nighttime outdoor scenes (*see Introducing the Lesson, step 2*).

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Day and night.** Show the children a drawing you made of a daytime outdoor scene with the sun omitted. Ask, “What is missing?” Talk about why we need the sun (*warmth, light, direction, time measurement*). Now show them a drawing of an outdoor night scene. (*You may want to simply hold up a piece of black paper and tell them it is night.*) Ask, “What is missing here?” Then ask, “Do we need the moon and stars like we need the sun? Why?” (*Let children be creative with their suggestions.*) Add, “Today we will learn about God creating the sun, moon and stars.”

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story, “God Creates the Sun, Moon, and Stars.”** Set the scene as you have in previous lessons. Insert a narrow pole, taller than the cloud sticks, in each corner of the box. Attach string to the poles to make an X across the box. Have ready a sun, moon, and several stars, attached to short strings with unfolded paper clips. Read the words of the story slowly and poetically. By now, children may be able to recite some of the repeated phrases with you. Turn the lights out to begin the story.

Long, long, long ago before there was anything, there was God. *(Hide small rattle or shaker in your hand and shake it gently when you say these words.)*

There was no light.

There were no plants.

There were no people.

There was only God and darkness.

The Spirit of God was moving. *(Shake rattle gently, moving hand across box.)*

And God said, “Let there be light!” *(Turn on lamp beside box.)*

And there was light.

And God saw that the light was good.

And God separated the light from the darkness. *(On “darkness” turn off light.)*

God called the light Day, *(Turn on light.)*

And the darkness God called Night. *(Turn off light.)*

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, “Let there be a space in the middle of the waters. Let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the sky and separated the waters that were under the sky from the waters that were above the sky. *(Stick cloud sticks onto bottom of box so clouds “float” above water.)*

And it was so.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” *(Set pan of water in middle of soil.)*

And it was so.

God called the dry ground “land,” *(point to soil)* and the gathered waters God called “seas” *(point to water)*.

And God saw that it was good.

And God said, “Let there be green plants, and tall trees, and grass, and beautiful flowers. And have them make seeds, so there can be new plants when the old ones die. *(Insert artificial plants into soil.)*

And it was so.

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

And God said, “Let there be lights in the sky, to separate the day from the night and to mark seasons, days, and years.

God made two great lights, the golden sun *(hang the sun from string)* to rule the day and the silvery moon *(hang moon from string)* to rule the night. God also made twinkling stars *(hang stars from string)* to shine in the night sky.

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

**2. Wonder about the story**, using the following statements:

- I wonder where light came from before there was a sun and moon.
- I wonder how God made the sun, moon, and stars just the right size.

Pray, “Dear God, thank you for making the golden sun, the silver moon, and the twinkling stars. Amen.”

**3. Work on creation books.** Have children illustrate the fourth page in their creation books with pictures of the sun, moon, and stars. Provide star stickers, if you like. Remind them that no animals are alive yet— there are only water, air, and plants. Have them write the words, “God,” “sun,” “moon,” and “stars” in the blanks. (*If you prefer, you can fill in these words before copying the page.*) When they finish, make sure their names are on their pages before storing them in a safe place.

**4. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Make shadow designs or trace each other’s shadows with chalk on blacktop outside.
- Display a print of “The Starry Night” by Van Gogh (*check your library or see [www.art.com](http://www.art.com)*).
- Make pinhole planetariums. Cover one end of a cardboard tube with black paper. Punch holes in the black paper in the shape of constellations. Shine a flashlight into the tube, toward a sheet of dark paper on a wall or bulletin board. You may want to make one for each student. *Option:* Allow students to punch holes in the paper.
- Make sun and moon puppets. Act out daytime activities and nighttime activities.
- Paint with yellow paint.
- Make a solar snack. For sun tea, put 1-2 tea bags in a half-gallon glass jar. Fill with water. Put lid on—not tight. Leave in sun for 2 hours. To make cheese toast, put slices of cheese on pieces of bread. Put cheese and bread inside a plastic bag and close it. Put bag in sun. Watch sun puff up bag and melt cheese. Eat your cheese toast. (*Watch closely to keep bag from melting.*)
- Make solar prints. Arrange objects with interesting shapes on colored construction paper. Lay the paper in the sun. Check in several hours. Remove the objects and see the design that remains.
- Sing “Mr. Sun” by Raffi (from *Singable Songs for the Very Young*).
- Play shadow tag.
- Read the poem, “I Have a Little Shadow” by Robert Louis Stevenson (*find in many poem books and on the Internet*).
- Cut out cheese stars with cookie cutters for a snack.
- Invite children to watch the moon at night and report what they saw.

- Read any of the following books:

*Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me* by Eric Carle

*Watch the Stars Come Out* by Riki Levinson

*Moon Dance* by Frank Asch

**5. Closing litany.** Use the phrase “Only God Can” that you wrote with the children last time, to prompt the children in this closing litany.

**Teacher: Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can separate the sparkling water from the blue, blue sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can make juicy, sweet strawberries and a red, red rose?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can hang the burning sun, the silvery moon, and the twinkling stars in the sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!**

\_\_\_\_\_ made \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 5: GOD CREATES WATER AND AIR ANIMALS

### Objective

Children will understand that God created water and air animals.

### Key Concepts

- God created all the creatures in the water and all the birds that fly.
- God called all that was created “good.”

**Text:** Genesis 1:20-23

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- *Fish Is Fish* by Leo Lionni (Dragonfly Books, 1974)
- “Creation scene” used in previous Bible stories
- Lamp and extension cord
- Small rattle or shaker to hide in hand
- Small plastic water animals and birds, paper clips, string
- Creation book page 5 (p. 375)
- “Only God Can” litany poster
- For additional materials, see specific learning experiences of your choice (pp. 373-374).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Make copies of creation book page, one per child. Fill in words before copying, or have children do it in lesson step 3.
- Hang small birds from string with paper clip hangers.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Read the book *Fish Is Fish*** by Leo Lionni. Discuss with children how wise it was for God to create all different kinds of animals.

### LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story, “God Creates Water and Air Animals.”** Set up the creation scene as in previous lessons. Have ready one or more toy water animals, and birds attached to a paper clip with string. Read the story slowly and poetically. Have children recite some of the repeated phrases with you. Turn the lights out to begin the story.

Long, long, long ago before there was anything, there was God. (*Hide small rattle or shaker in your hand and shake it gently when you say these words.*)

There was no light.  
There were no plants.  
There were no people.  
There was only God and darkness.  
The Spirit of God was moving. (*Shake rattle gently, moving hand across box.*)

And God said, "Let there be light!" (*Turn on lamp beside box.*)  
And there was light.  
And God saw that the light was good.  
And God separated the light from the darkness. (*On "darkness" turn off light.*)  
God called the light Day, (*Turn on light.*)  
And the darkness God called Night. (*Turn off light.*)  
And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, "Let there be a space in the middle of the waters. Let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the sky and separated the waters that were under the sky from the waters that were above the sky. (*Stick cloud sticks onto bottom of box so clouds "float" above water.*)

And it was so.  
And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." (*Set pan of water in middle of soil.*)

And it was so.  
God called the dry ground "land," (*point to soil*) and the gathered waters God called "seas" (*point to water*).  
And God saw that it was good.

And God said, "Let there be green plants, and tall trees, and grass, and beautiful flowers. And have them make seeds, so there can be new plants when the old ones die. (*Insert artificial plants into soil.*)

And it was so.  
God saw that it was good.  
And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the sky, to separate the day from the night and to mark seasons, days, and years.  
God made two great lights, the golden sun (*hang the sun from string*) to rule the day and the silvery moon (*hang moon from string*) to rule the night. God also made twinkling stars (*hang stars from string*) to shine in the night sky.

God saw that it was good.  
And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

And God said, "Let the water be full of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth."

So God created shiny fish and great whales. (*Put toy water animals in water.*)  
God created singing birds. (*Hang toy bird from string holding sun.*)  
"And let the fish have baby fish, and the birds have baby birds, so there will always be new birds and fish."

God saw that it was good.  
And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

**2. Wonder about the story**, using the following statements:

- I wonder how God thought to create such big water animals called whales.
- I wonder what kinds of animals lived then that are not alive now.
- I wonder how God taught the birds to sing.

Pray, “Thank you, God, for making birds and fish and whales, and all the interesting creatures that live in the water and the air. Amen.”

**3. Work on creation books.** Have children illustrate the fifth page in their creation books with pictures of water and air animals. Remind them that no land animals or people are alive yet—only water, air, plants, and water and air animals exist. Have them write the words “God” and the name of an animal they drew, in the blanks. (*If you prefer, you can fill in the words “God” and “water and air animals” before copying the page.*) When they finish, make sure their names are on their pages before storing them in a safe place.

**4. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Provide paper, crayons, and markers and invite children to make water and air creatures to cut out. Glue animals onto a mural of water and air, placing them in the correct habitat.
- Make fish shadow boxes. Paint or color the inside of a shoebox. You will not use the lid. Turn the box on its side and hang cutout fish from the top with tape and thread. If students are interested, they can add seaweed on the bottom of the box.
- Make scratch-art pictures. Have children completely cover a small sheet of paper with crayon. (*You may want to put newspaper under their papers to catch stray crayon marks.*) Make thick sea-green paint by mixing blue, green, and black tempera together. Students can paint over the crayon, then after paint is dry, scratch water creature designs on the page.
- Make origami birds. You can find instructions in your local library or on the Internet.
- Visit a pet store or aquarium to look at fish and birds. Talk about the variety God made.
- Listen to and sing “Baby Beluga” by Raffi (from the CD *Baby Beluga*).
- Play “Birds in a tree.” Put the students in groups of three. Two put hands on shoulders to form the “nest”. One stands inside as the bird. One student is a bird without a nest. When the one who is a bird without a nest claps hands everyone finds a new nest. The one who ends up without a nest will clap hands for the next turn.
- Buy a fish bowl or aquarium and fish for the classroom. Name the fish and make up stories about what they do and say.
- Learn to identify and name a few common birds in your neighborhood. Go for a walk and see if you can locate them.
- Listen to a recording of bird songs (*available at your local library*).

- Read any book that highlights sea and air animals, such as the following:

*Fishes* by Brian Wildsmith

*Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell

**5. Closing litany.** Use the “Only God Can” poster to prompt the children in this closing litany.

**Teacher: Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can separate the sparkling water from the blue, blue sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can make juicy, sweet strawberries and a red, red rose?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can hang the burning sun, the silvery moon, and the twinkling stars in the sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can put the mighty whale in the ocean and the tiny hummingbird on the flower?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!**

\_\_\_\_\_ created \_\_\_\_\_.

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 6: GOD CREATES LAND ANIMALS AND PEOPLE

### Objective

Children will understand the importance of rest.

### Key Concepts

- God created all the land animals on the earth.
- God created people in God's likeness.

**Text:** Genesis 1:24-31

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- "Creation scene" used in previous stories
- Lamp and extension cord
- Small rattle or shaker to hide in hand
- Small toy land animals, male and female dolls
- Creation book page 6 (p. 380)
- "Only God Can" litany poster
- For additional materials, see specific learning experiences of your choice (pp. 378-379).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Make copies of creation book page, one per child. Fill in words before copying, or have children do it in lesson step 3.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Play an animal guessing game.** Say, "I'm thinking of an animal that lives on land and . . . (*give another clue*)." Keep on giving clues until children guess the animal. Then let them take turns giving clues and guessing. Make sure they understand that they can only choose animals that live on the *land*. For the last turn, you give the following clues: "I'm thinking of an animal that lives on land, walks on two legs, and was created in God's image." When the students guess "people," tell them that your story today tells about God creating land animals and people.

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story, "God Creates Land Animals and People."** Use the pan as you prepared it in previous lessons. Have ready several toy land animals and one male

and one female doll. Invite children to recite some of the repeated phrases with you. Turn out the lights to begin the story.

Long, long, long ago before there was anything, there was God. (*Hide small rattle or shaker in your hand and shake it gently when you say these words.*)

There was no light.

There were no plants.

There were no people.

There was only God and darkness.

The Spirit of God was moving. (*Shake rattle gently, moving hand across box.*)

And God said, "Let there be light!" (*Turn on lamp beside box.*)

And there was light.

And God saw that the light was good.

And God separated the light from the darkness. (*On "darkness" turn off light.*)

God called the light Day, (*Turn on light.*)

And the darkness God called Night. (*Turn off light.*)

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, "Let there be a space in the middle of the waters. Let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the sky and separated the waters that were under the sky from the waters that were above the sky. (*Stick cloud sticks onto bottom of box so clouds "float" above water.*)

And it was so.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." (*Set pan of water in middle of soil.*)

And it was so.

God called the dry ground "land," (*point to soil*) and the gathered waters God called "seas" (*point to water*).

And God saw that it was good.

And God said, "Let there be green plants, and tall trees, and grass, and beautiful flowers. And have them make seeds, so there can be new plants when the old ones die. (*Insert artificial plants into soil.*)

And it was so.

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the sky, to separate the day from the night and to mark seasons, days, and years.

God made two great lights, the golden sun (*hang the sun from string*) to rule the day and the silvery moon (*hang moon from string*) to rule the night. God also made twinkling stars (*hang stars from string*) to shine in the night sky.

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

And God said, "Let the water be full of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth."

So God created shiny fish and great whales. (*Put toy water animals in water.*)

God created singing birds. (*Hang toy bird from string holding sun.*)

“And let the fish have baby fish, and the birds have baby birds, so there will always be new birds and fish.”

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

And God said, “Let there be all kinds of animals that move along the ground, walking, running, crawling, and jumping.”

God made the cuddly rabbits and the fierce tigers.

God made the mighty elephants and the tiny chipmunks. (*Put animals on land.*)

God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let there be people in the world, and let them be like me. Let there be men and women, so they can have children and fill the world. (*Put dolls on land.*)

God looked at all the world, and all the beautiful animals and plants.

And God saw that it was very good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

**2. Wonder about the story**, using the following statements:

- I wonder how people were created to be like God.
- I wonder if God was tired yet.
- I wonder how clean and fresh the world looked when it was young.

Pray, “Thank you, God, for creating lots of different animals and plants. Thank you for creating people, like us. Amen.”

**3. Work on creation books.** Have children illustrate the sixth page in their creation books with pictures of land animals and people. Have them write the words, “God,” “land,” and “people” in the blanks. (*If you prefer, you can fill in these words before copying the page.*) When they finish, make sure their names are on their pages before storing them in a safe place.

**4. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Have an animal parade. Students can bring live or stuffed animals to join the parade. How many different animals are represented?
- Bring various pets into the classroom. Talk about the animals, their similarities and differences.
- Play animal charades. Students take turns acting like an animal and the other students try to guess which animal it is.
- Make a people collage, using magazine pictures. Show as many different kinds of people as possible. Title the collage “Made in God’s Image.”
- Create a class poem about animals. Students can finish lines such as the following (*these are only examples*):  
God created dogs to \_\_\_\_\_  
God created ducks to \_\_\_\_\_  
God created horses to \_\_\_\_\_

- Show a video of natural wonders, such as a *National Geographic* video.

- Make self-portraits. You may want to make several small mirrors available. Title the portraits: “I am made in God’s image.”
- Read any book that highlights land animals and/or people.

**5. Closing litany.** Use the “Only God Can” poster to prompt the children in this closing litany.

**Teacher: Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can separate the sparkling water from the blue, blue sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can make juicy, sweet strawberries and a red, red rose?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can hang the burning sun, the silvery moon, and the twinkling stars in the sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can put the mighty whale in the ocean and the tiny hummingbird on the flower?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can give the lion his roar and the baby her cry?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!**

\_\_\_\_\_ created \_\_\_\_\_ animals and \_\_\_\_\_.

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 7: GOD RESTS

### Objective

Children will understand that God created land animals and created people in God's image.

### Key Concepts

- When God's work was finished, God rested.
- We need times of rest, too.

**Text:** Genesis 2:1-2

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Small ball of clay for each child
- "Creation scene" used in previous stories
- Lamp and extension cord
- Small rattle or shaker to hide in hand
- Creation book page 7 (p. 385)
- "Only God Can" litany poster
- For additional materials, see specific learning experiences of your choice (pp. 383-384).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Make copies of creation book page, one per child.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Play an animal guessing game.** Give each child a ball of clay about the size of a walnut. Ask them to create something. Encourage them to be quiet, to think and feel. As they create, read the following:

*We can't even imagine all the kinds of life God created. Only a small part of them are still living today. Fantastic plants and animals are gone forever.*

*Think about our Creator, God, and tall the created things that are in our world today. Think of the tiny insects with perfectly formed features—millions and millions of them, flying, crawling, creeping. (Silence)*

*Think about all the fish that live in the rivers, lakes, and seas—gigantic fish that swim farther below the surface than anyone has ever gone, tiny fish that are so small they can't be seen with our eyes, yet they are perfectly formed—millions and billions of fish. (Silence)*

*Think about the plants that grow in our world—every color ever known, every*

combination, each with its own smell. Big leaves, little leaves, each pattern perfect. (Silence)

*There is so much creation we can't begin to imagine it all.*

*Our God creates and creates and creates—anything and everything.*

Now ask the children to show the items they created by placing them on the palms of their hands and extending them outward. Take a few moments to look at the objects and think about our Creator God. (Silence)

Then ask: Was it hard work to create? Was it hard to think of something and how to make it? Add, "God worked hard to create our wonderful world. In the story today, you will hear about God resting."

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story, "God Rests."** Use the pan as prepared for previous lessons. Invite the children to recite some of the repeated phrases with you. Turn out the lights out to begin the story.

Long, long, long ago before there was anything, there was God. (*Hide small rattle or shaker in your hand and shake it gently when you say these words.*)

There was no light.

There were no plants.

There were no people.

There was only God and darkness.

The Spirit of God was moving. (*Shake rattle gently, moving hand across box.*)

And God said, "Let there be light!" (*Turn on lamp beside box.*)

And there was light.

And God saw that the light was good.

And God separated the light from the darkness. (*On "darkness" turn off light.*)

God called the light Day, (*Turn on light.*)

And the darkness God called Night. (*Turn off light.*)

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, "Let there be a space in the middle of the waters. Let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the sky and separated the waters that were under the sky from the waters that were above the sky. (*Stick cloud sticks onto bottom of box so clouds "float" above water.*)

And it was so.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." (*Set pan of water in middle of soil.*)

And it was so.

God called the dry ground "land," (*point to soil*) and the gathered waters God called "seas" (*point to water*).

And God saw that it was good.

And God said, "Let there be green plants, and tall trees, and grass, and beautiful flowers. And have them make seeds, so there can be new plants when the old ones die. (*Insert artificial plants into soil.*)

And it was so.

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

And God said, “Let there be lights in the sky, to separate the day from the night and to mark seasons, days, and years.

God made two great lights, the golden sun (*hang the sun from string*) to rule the day and the silvery moon (*hang moon from string*) to rule the night. God also made twinkling stars (*hang stars from string*) to shine in the night sky.

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

And God said, “Let the water be full of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth.”

So God created shiny fish and great whales. (*Put toy water animals in water.*)

God created singing birds. (*Hang toy bird from string holding sun.*)

“And let the fish have baby fish, and the birds have baby birds, so there will always be new birds and fish.”

God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

And God said, “Let there be all kinds of animals that move along the ground, walking, running, crawling, and jumping.”

God made the cuddly rabbits and the fierce tigers.

God made the mighty elephants and the tiny chipmunks. (*Put animals on land.*)

God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let there be people in the world, and let them be like me. Let there be men and women, so they can have children and fill the world. (*Put dolls on land.*)

God looked at all the world, and all the beautiful animals and plants.

And God saw that it was very good.

And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

By the seventh day, God had finished the work, so on the seventh day God rested. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all the work of creating.

**2. Wonder about the story**, using the following statements:

- I wonder how God rests.
- I wonder if God was happy with all of creation.
- I wonder if God is still happy with all of creation.

Pray, “Thank you, God, for doing your hard work of creation. You needed to rest, and we do, too. Amen.”

**3. Work on creation books.** Have children illustrate the seventh page in their creation books with a picture of God resting. Have them write the word “God” in the blank. When they finish, make sure their names are on their pages before storing them in a safe place.

**4. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Take students outside or to the gym, if possible. Encourage them to run and play hard for 15-20 minutes. When you return inside, talk about their natural

reactions. What do they want to do after hard work? Tell students that, after God finished the work of creating the world, God rested. Think of all the thought and care that went into creating the beautiful flowers, the sky, the different colors of the sea, the stars, the planets, all the many different animals and plants, and each person.

- Invite students to lie down and think about “rest.” What do you do when you “rest”? Is it a good word or bad word? Do you need to rest sometimes? When do you rest?
- Discuss how the children’s parents rest. What do they do after a hard day’s work?
- Listen to “Big Beautiful Plant” by Raffi (from *Rise and Shine* CD).
- Read any of the following books that highlight rest:
  - Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown
  - Going to Sleep on the Farm* by Wendy Lewison
  - The Napping House* by Audrey Wood
  - Dr. Seuss’ Sleep Book* by Dr. Seuss

**5. Closing litany.** Use the “Only God Can” poster to prompt the children in this closing litany.

**Teacher: Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can separate the sparkling water from the blue, blue sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can make juicy, sweet strawberries and a red, red rose?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can hang the burning sun, the silvery moon, and the twinkling stars in the sky?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can put the mighty whale in the ocean and the tiny hummingbird on the flower?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can give the lion his roar and the baby her cry?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: Who can rest after creating all of the world?**

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher: O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!**

\_\_\_\_\_ rested.

# What a Wonderful World!

## LESSON 8: TAKE CARE OF THE WORLD

### Objective

Children will recognize the importance of caring for our earth and commit to ways to save the earth's resources.

### Key Concepts

- God made a beautiful, wonderful world.
- God put us in charge of caring for the world.

**Text:** Genesis 1:28-30

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Varies

### Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Creation book pages made in previous lessons
- Binding materials for creation books (*for example:* hole punch and string, stapler, plastic combs)
- Round paper world shape (to be torn into large pieces and taped together again)
- “Only God Can” litany poster
- For additional materials, see specific learning experiences of your choice (pp. ).

### Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Bind students' book pages together. (*Fasten with staples or string, or bind with plastic combs.*)

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**1. Worship and Bible memory.** See Unit Information, page 347.

**2. Pass out the creation books** the children made during this unit. (*Assemble the books before the lesson.*) Read the finished books together as a way to review the creation story. Have students take turns reading the book to each other. Then set books aside and talk about what comes next. “God made this beautiful world. God gave people the job of taking care of the earth and everything on it. We haven't done such a good job lately. Today we will talk about how we can do a better job of taking care of the world.”

### LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell the story, “Creation Destroyed.”** Begin the story time by reading Genesis 1:28-30. Say, “God made the world and then asked people to take care of the animals, plants, and everything in it.”

As you read the story, tear pieces off the premade paper world, as directed.

After the story, ask students to share their ideas of ways we can take better care of the earth. As they share their ideas, tape the paper world back together again. Look at the taped earth and talk about why it can never be exactly the same as before, but at least it is better than when it was in pieces.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in it. You might say that God *loved* the world into being. God created day and night and provided an abundance of water. God created the land and the seas, the plants and the trees. God made the sun, the moon, and the stars.

Then God created animals to inhabit the earth. God made animals to live in the water and animals to live on the earth. God created people to care for all these wondrous things. God looked at the newly created world and exclaimed: “It is good!”

For a while, the people took their job seriously. They respected the earth by taking care of the soil and keeping the waters clean. But soon the people of earth started using wondrous inventions that would make their lives easier.

They made cars that would get them places faster, trains and buses and airplanes for people who needed to go far. It didn’t matter that the smoky fumes from these new inventions changed the color of the air, made it unhealthy for us to breathe, and made a hole in the sky that lets the sun shine too warmly on our earth. (*Tear piece from world.*)

And when people were on their trips, they threw soda pop bottles and potato chip bags out the windows. (*Tear piece from world.*) Why should they clutter up their cars? They needed as much room as they could get!

People began killing animals to sell for money. Whale oil brought lots of money. (*Tear piece from world.*) Many people wanted elephant tusks. (*Tear piece from world.*) A rhinoceros head mounted on the wall sure made an impression! (*Tear piece from world.*)

Factories and businesses started dumping their wastes into rivers, lakes, and oceans, until the fish began to die (*tear piece from world*) and much of earth’s water became unsafe for humans and animals to drink. (*Tear piece from world.*) Countries made big weapons that destroyed lots of people to solve disagreements. (*Tear piece from world.*)

Families started buying products that were individually wrapped in plastic and Styrofoam to keep food hot. The plastic and Styrofoam went to the dump, where it will stay for hundreds of years. (*Tear piece from world.*)

Yes, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in it. You might say that God *loved* the world into being. And God looked down at the world and exclaimed, “It is good.” I think that today God looks down from heaven with teary eyes and says, “It *was* good.” God created you and me. And we can make a difference.

Let’s discover ways we can take care of the earth.

For God.

For one another.

And for the children each of you might have one day.

Teach us, God, how to best care for your creation. Amen.

**2. Choose a learning experience.** Choose from the following list learning experiences that you find meaningful and practical for your class:

- Eat a picnic lunch together and before disbanding talk about the trash. Hold up each leftover item and ask what can be done with it. Can it be composted?

Can it be recycled? Can anything be done to reduce the amount of trash thrown away?

- Visit a landfill. Talk about how much trash we create each day.
- Be litter cleaners. Go to a park, playground, or other public place and clean up all the trash. Be careful and wear gloves. Discuss: Where does litter come from? Why do we want to keep the earth clean? What can we do to help?
- Make a trash terrarium. Put a layer of dirt in a large jar. Add some garbage, then some stones. Continue the layers with different kinds of garbage. Include food waste, paper, leaves, Styrofoam, and glass. Fill the jar with water. Put the lid on. After several weeks, empty the jar into a trash can. Talk about what happened to the different kinds of garbage.
- Introduce recycling by starting in the classroom. Recycle aluminum, glass, and paper. Reuse plastic and avoid Styrofoam. Teach children to read the different numbers on the bottoms of plastic containers, to separate glass and aluminum cans. Invite students to bring in items to recycle.
- Make a junk sculpture.
- Keep track of all the trash you throw away during one week (*or several days*). Collect it all in one place. Does it look like a lot? Talk about the types of trash you have. Could some of it be recycled? Glass, paper, and aluminum can be recycled.
- Bring in the same item, packaged in many different ways (*for example: potatoes in a paper bag, potato chips in a plastic bag, mashed potatoes in a take-out Styrofoam container*). Talk about which way is best for the earth.
- Have each child make a commitment to reduce, reuse, or recycle in some way. For example:
  - Turn off the water while brushing teeth.
  - Turn out the lights when leaving a room.
  - Go shopping with parents to remind them what kind of packaging will preserve the earth.
  - Pass on used clothing and toys to a secondhand shop.
  - Plant a tree or garden.
- Bring in packaging from several different fast-food restaurants and compare the trash. Which restaurant gives you less trash? Which restaurant gives you trash that can be recycled?
- Discuss Styrofoam as “permanent garbage.” It cannot be recycled and does not decompose. Encourage children to tell their parents not to buy Styrofoam plates or cups.
- Bring in items that can be reused. Have children come up with creative ways to use each item. Some examples: a hanger (*reuse it*); plastic margarine container (*reuse it*); apple core (*add it to compost*), newspaper, glass, or soda can (*recycle*); magazine (*share with friend, put in pile for cutting*), outgrown clothing (*donate to charity*).

- Read a book, such as the following, that highlights conservation:  
*Farewell to Shady Glade* by Bill Peet  
*Hey, Get off Our Train* by John Burningham
- Make your own recycled paper. You will need:
  - Used rough paper like newspaper, paper towels or newsprint
  - A deep bowl
  - An electric mixer
  - 8 towels
  - 2 pieces of thin cotton cloth
  - Water
  - Old catalog

What to do:

1. Tear paper into small pieces.
2. Stuff pieces into bowl and cover with water. Let bowl sit for two days. Add more water if it starts to dry out.
3. Make pulp out of soaked paper pieces and water using electric mixer. Mix for five minutes.
4. Lay four towels on top of each other. Put piece of cotton cloth on top. (*Works best on floor.*)
5. Spread some of pulp onto cloth. Use fingers or a cup or strainer. Keep pulp thin, but do not leave empty spaces.
6. Lay other thin cloth on top, then add four more layers of towels. Pat towels down, squeezing out some water.
7. Lay catalog on top. Stand on it for several minutes.
8. Lift up towels and cotton cloth. Carefully lift up paper and lay out to dry.

**5. Closing litany.** Repeat the litany learned in previous lessons. Tell children that you will add one new line at the end, but instead of responding with “Only God can,” they should respond with, “Only *we* can.” (*Prepare these words on a card, if you like.*)

**Teacher:** Who can make the sun rise and set every morning and night?

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher:** Who can separate the sparkling water from the blue, blue sky?

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher:** Who can make juicy, sweet strawberries and a red, red rose?

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher:** Who can hang the burning sun, the silvery moon, and the twinkling stars in the sky?

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher:** Who can put the mighty whale in the ocean and the tiny hummingbird on the flower?

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher:** Who can give the lion his roar and the baby her cry?

Children: Only God can!

**Teacher:** Who can rest after creating all of the world?  
Children: Only God can!  
**Teacher:** Who can take care of God's wonderful world?  
Children: Only *we* can!  
**Teacher:** O Lord, how wonderful are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all!