

# IN THE BEGINNING

## A Study of Genesis 1-4

*St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Minot, ND*



### Matter, Space, & Time Created

It is important to understand what God creates in Genesis 1. As a way of overview, we see that God creates three things: matter, space, and time. Verse 1 captures all three aspects of matter, space, and time.

The word 'beginning' captures the notion of time. The phrase 'heavens and the earth' expresses both matter and space. And so, matter, space, and time are not infinite but finite. They are created things.

### Study 1

#### An Overview

God Creates:  
*Matter, Space, & Time*

The Three Stages of Creation:  
*Ex Nihilo, Ordering, and Filling*

Ontology of Creation:  
*Rock, Plants, Animals, & Humans*

Arguments for Creation:  
*Cosmological, Teleological, Morality, and the Resurrection*

### The Three Stages of Creation

The creation of the world is presented in three distinct stages. First, we see the declarative creation of matter out of nothingness in verses 1-2. As we will cover in future studies, this is the 'ex nihilo' work of God (i.e., creating something out of nothing via the Spoken Word). The second stage of creation is the ordering of creations on days 1 and 2 (verses 3-8). As we will cover in future

studies, these are literal 24-hour days where God orders and prepares what he created for the use of mankind. And finally, the third stage of creation is the filling of creation in verses 9-31. In other words, God cannot fill creation with animated beings without it being properly ordered and prepared first. And finally, the three stages conclude with God resting on the seventh day.

# Ontology of Creation

God, Himself, has no beginning. He is eternal. He is the Creator of time, space, and matter. To ask the question, "what came before God," is to make time infinite and God finite. No, God created time! Time is not eternal; God is eternal. And so, there are two categories that Genesis creates: the Creator and the created. The Creator is infinite; the created is finite. The Creator is eternal; the created is not.

Secondly, when considering Genesis 1, there is no hint of evolutionary changes in the ontological makeup of plants, animals, and humans. There is no progression from bacteria-like microorganisms that supposedly originated billions

of years ago to the diversity we see today. Instead, rocks, plants, animals, and humans are distinctly different with different states of being. For example:

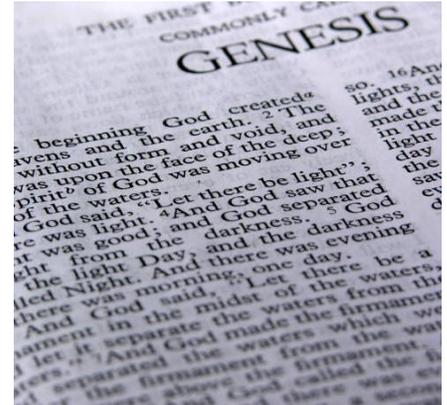
Rocks: matter

Plants: matter & life

Animals: matter, life, & consciousness

Humans: matter, life, consciousness, & self-reflection

Indeed, God separates rocks, plants, animals, and humans into distinct ontological categories in Genesis 1.



*It is important to note that in creation there is not a gradual change in the nature of substances. But rather, there are distinct differences created in the nature of their being.*

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## Arguments for Creation

Cosmological Argument: The cosmological argument argues that something caused or continuously causes the universe to exist. In other words, the existence of the universe requires an explanation. Indeed, whatever begins to exist has a cause. Nothing comes from nothing; something comes from something. Therefore the cosmological argument asserts that our universe exists because the 'first cause' is God.

Teleological Argument: The teleological argument argues that we see a clear indication of design, aims, and intentions in creation, our bodies, etc... In other words, we certainly see within creation the evidence of intelligence and order. The teleological argument asserts that creation couldn't have happened by dumb luck or chance, for the design of creation is just too complex for random chance.

Argument from Morality: The argument of morality argues that since there is a moral standard of evil and good, that objective standard is evidence of God. In other words, if there is no God, no objective standard/creator, then morality is neutral. If there is no God, then there is no such thing as evil or good. Indeed, if there is such a thing as evil and good, where do the criteria of evil and good come from? If there is a such thing as evil and good, who is responsible for this moral standard? The argument from morality asserts that the

Christological Argument: The Christological argument argues that if Jesus is who he says he is; if Jesus rose from the dead defying the laws of death-life, then we must take him at his word. In other words, if Jesus is indeed the Son of God, then we must take Jesus at his word, and thus, we must affirm the claims of the Bible that there is indeed a creator.