

# The Bible Unpacked

## Comprehensive Study Series

A compilation of the Bible's teaching  
for believers established in the faith

paul mallison

## 6. God's Creation

This series of studies is based on the  
*Comprehensive Edition of The Bible Unpacked*.

There are seven editions of *The Bible Unpacked*.  
These aim to address the needs of  
NON-CHRISTIANS through to MATURE CHRISTIANS,  
from TEENAGERS to ADULTS.

For more information and free downloads go to:  
[www.thebibleunpacked.net](http://www.thebibleunpacked.net)



## An Appeal on Behalf of Persecuted Christians

Over 200 million Christians in at least 60 countries are denied basic human rights solely because of their faith. (Source: World Evangelical Alliance) Every year many Christians are killed because of their faith.

Through prayer, encouragement and practical assistance we can assist and fellowship with persecuted Christians in their suffering. You can play a vital part in this through contacting one of the organizations listed below. Most produce regular news/prayer letters.

### **Barnabas Fund** – [www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org)

It provides material and spiritual support in response to needs identified by local Christian leaders.

### **Christian Faith and Freedom** – [www.cffreedom.org](http://www.cffreedom.org)

It advocates on behalf of and aids persecuted Christians.

### **Christian Solidarity International** – [www.csi-int.org](http://www.csi-int.org)

CSI works to defend religious liberty and help persecuted Christians.

### **Christian Solidarity Worldwide** – [www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk)

It advocates for freedom of religion and justice for persecuted believers.

### **Compass Direct** – [www.compassdirect.org](http://www.compassdirect.org)

This is a Christian news service providing news, reports, interviews and analyses of situations facing persecuted Christians.

### **Open Doors** – [sb.od.org](http://sb.od.org); [www.opendoors.org.au](http://www.opendoors.org.au)

It provides Bibles and other Christian materials, to prepare believers for persecution and equip them to maintain a witness to the Gospel.

### **Religious Liberty Commission** – [www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/rlc/](http://www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/rlc/); [www.ea.org.au/ea-family/Religious-Liberty.aspx](http://www.ea.org.au/ea-family/Religious-Liberty.aspx)

RLC defends and aids persecuted Christians. See also [www.idop.org](http://www.idop.org)  
Receive weekly updates by sending a blank email to [join-rpb@hub.xc.org](mailto:join-rpb@hub.xc.org).

### **The Bible League** – [www.bibleleague.org/persecuted](http://www.bibleleague.org/persecuted); [www.bibleleague.com](http://www.bibleleague.com)

It supplies Bibles to persecuted Christians and also provides training.

### **Voice of the Martyrs** – [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com); [www.persecution.com.au](http://www.persecution.com.au)

VOM provides Bibles, literature, radio broadcasts and other assistance to help persecuted Christians spread the gospel. They also send material aid.

*Then the King will answer, 'I tell you the truth, anything you did for even the least of my people here, you also did for me.'* Matthew 25:40 NCV

# The Bible Unpacked™

## Comprehensive Study Series

A compilation of the Bible's teaching for believers established in the faith

## 6. God's Creation

Composed by Paul Mallison

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## Overview of *The Bible Unpacked*


There are seven editions of *The Bible Unpacked*, as shown below. Each edition is an abbreviated version of the next longest edition. As such they have similar structures. Four of the editions have studies based on them, with the same text along with questions. For more details and free downloads of all the material, go to [www.thebibleunpacked.net](http://www.thebibleunpacked.net).


 **Two-Minute Edition:** Key Bible teachings for people “on the run”  
For giving to non-Christians.


 **Pocket Edition:** Key Bible teachings for seekers of truth  
Largely for giving to inquiring non-Christians or young new Christians.

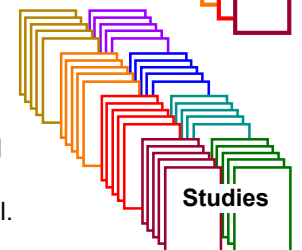
 **Concise Edition:** A look at the Bible's teaching for new and young believers. For either new or young Christians. Suitable to give to non-Christian friends. Has study series based on it.

 **Foundations Edition:** A compilation of the Bible's teaching for believers consolidating their faith. For newer Christians. Study series is ideal for studies with newer believers.

 **Intermediate Edition:** A compilation of the Bible's teaching for believers growing in the faith. For developing a sound understanding of the faith. Studies are excellent for Bible study groups.

 **Comprehensive Edition:** A compilation of the Bible's teaching for believers established in the faith. For a comprehensive knowledge of the faith. Useful as a study or a devotional tool - and preparing talks. Studies are ideal for studying topics in detail.

 **In-Depth Edition:** A compilation of the Bible's teaching for teachers and students of the Bible. For Christians keen to gain a deep understanding of their faith. Useful for speakers preparing talks, study groups leaders, Bible students and Bible colleges. It is also in an electronic version, which is a PDF file.



## Section II. What to Do

### Part E. Relating to God

#### 21. Being Right with God

- I. Getting Right with God
- II. Staying Right with God

#### 22. Having Faith in God

- I. Faith and Hope
- II. What Not to Do

#### 23. Loving, Fearing and Obeying God

- I. Loving and Fearing God
- II. Obeying God

#### 24. Connecting with God

- I. Being Close to God
- II. Praying to God

#### 25. Exalting God

- I. Instructions
- II. Reasons to Exalt God

### Part F. Church Life

#### 26. Being One Body

- I. General
- II. Caring for the Body

#### 27. Worshiping God

- I. General
- II. Offerings

#### 28. Serving God

- I. Preliminary Instructions and Insights
- II. Doing God's Work

#### 29. Significant Practices

- I. Symbolic Rites
- II. Other Significant Practices

#### 30. Church Leadership

- I. General
- II. Teaching in the Church

### Part G. Relating to People

#### 31. Love

- I. Loving Qualities
- II. Antitheses of Love

#### 32. Justice

- I. Justice in Action
- II. Being True

#### 33. Wisdom

- I. Being Wise
- II. Antitheses of Wisdom and Knowledge

#### 34. Common Relationships

- I. Family Relationships
- II. Civil Relationships

#### 35. Spreading the Gospel

- I. Instructions
- II. Insights

### Part H. Persevering

#### 36. Standing Firm

- I. General
- II. Spiritual Warfare

#### 37. Rejecting Sin

- I. Encountering Sin
- II. Avoiding Sin and Being Holy

#### 38. Major Pitfalls

- I. Pride
- II. Riches and Sex

#### 39. Hard Times

- I. General
- II. Praying in Hard Times

#### 40. Persecution

- I. The Persecution of God's People
- II. What to Do in Persecution

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## A Quick Word

This series of studies aims to present a compilation of the Bible's teachings in a clear and readable order. There are 40 booklets in the series, based on the 40 chapters of the book *The Bible Unpacked - Comprehensive Edition*. Each booklet has two sections, which can be used for two or more studies.

See *Topics in This Series* towards the end of this booklet for a full listing of all the topics. Note that studying booklets alternatively from the two major sections (*What to Know* and *What to Do*) would add variety.

The material contains Bible verses. Before the verses are headings, which reflect what the verses say – in particular the parts of the verses in *italics*. The verses are sometimes followed by a comment.

The verses often have a brief introduction. Usually these state who is speaking and often who they are speaking to. Apart from God and Jesus Christ, the main speakers are:

- Moses – who led the Israelites out of Egypt and taught them God's laws;
- David – Israel's greatest king who wrote many of the psalms, most of which are essentially prayers;
- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and other prophets – who spoke to the people of Israel on God's behalf; and
- Paul, Peter, John and other leaders of the early church – who spoke to various groups and wrote letters to believers.

Much care has been taken in order to correctly interpret the verses. Nevertheless, if you encounter a verse that is used to teach something that is contrary to or goes beyond your understanding, assess its use by doing such things as: reading the passage it is from; and considering how its teaching fits in with Scripture as a whole (e.g. interpret OT teaching in the light of NT teaching).

For more information on *The Bible Unpacked* and free downloads, go to the website: [www.thebibleunpacked.net](http://www.thebibleunpacked.net)

Paul Mallison

## Topics in This Series

### Section I: What to Know

#### Part A. God and Spiritual Powers

##### 1. God's Being

- I. Basics
- II. God's Pre-Eminence

##### 2. God's Character

- I. Holy Characteristics
- II. Loving Characteristics

##### 3. Jesus Christ

- I. General
- II. Jesus Christ and God

##### 4. The Holy Spirit

- I. General
- II. God, Christ and the Holy Spirit as One

##### 5. Angels, Satan and Demons

- I. Angels
- II. Satan and Demons

#### Part B. God and the World: Basics

##### 6. God's Creation

- I. General
- II. God's Creation of People

##### 7. God's Sovereignty

- I. God's Supreme Authority
- II. God's Control over the World

##### 8. God's Word

- I. General
- II. Key Old Testament Covenants

##### 9. The Problem of Sin

- I. General
- II. The Law's Provision for Israel's Sin

##### 10. God's Judgment

- I. Basics
- II. The Manifestation of God's Judgment

#### Part C. God and the World: Jesus Christ

##### 11. God's Promised Messiah

- I. The Messiah's Identity
- II. The Messiah's Purpose and Person

##### 12. Jesus Christ's Mission

- I. God's Enablement of Jesus Christ
- II. Jesus Christ's Ministry, Death and Resurrection

##### 13. Salvation through Jesus Christ

- I. Salvation from Sin
- II. Salvation for the World

##### 14. The New Order

- I. Jesus Christ and the Law's Diminished Role
- II. Key Elements of the New Order

##### 15. 'The Last Things'

- I. Jesus Christ's Return and the Final Judgment
- II. The Afterlife

#### Part D. God and His Own People

##### 16. The Standing of God's People

- I. Belonging to God
- II. Being 'in' Jesus Christ

##### 17. Keys to God's Interaction with His People

- I. Basics
- II. God's Holy Spirit in His People

##### 18. God's Transformation of His People

- I. General
- II. Spiritual Attributes

##### 19. God's Care of His People

- I. God's Saving of His People
- II. God's Preservation of His People

##### 20. God's Plans for His People

- I. General
- II. God's Plans for Israel

## Notes

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## Suggestions for Study Groups

### Preliminary matters:

- Beforehand the leader should: check the context of any verses they are not familiar with; and review the questions. If need be, they should compose questions more applicable to the group.
- Each person should have a Bible, for things such as checking a verse's context. It would also be helpful to have Bible commentaries on hand.
- Pray before beginning the study. Ask God for help in understanding the meaning of the verses and to affect your lives through them. Also pray together at the end.

### Doing the study:

- Ideally, read the material and answer the questions prior to the meeting. Then share answers and discuss any issues arising from the material in the meeting.
- Alternatively, read the material and answer the questions in the meeting – reading either aloud as a group or individually (prior to sharing answers). If reading as a group, **try having one person read the headings, another read the verses and another read the comments.** Additionally, a fourth person could read the Bible references.
- Answers need not be limited to only what is mentioned in the material.
- The group should feel free to diverge from the study if related issues arise.

### General or concluding questions:

If time permits, conclude with one or more of the following questions:

- What is something that you either: **did not know** before; gained **greater insight** into; or **needed reminding** of?
- What verse would be helpful to memorize and bear in mind during the next week?
- In taking the verses seriously, is there anything you should change in:
  - (a) how you relate to God or to other people; or
  - (b) any other area of your life (e.g. attitudes, values or behavior)?

If so, are there any specific steps you could take to do this?





## a) God Made All Things

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### God has made all things

**REV 4:11** “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, since *you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created!*”

### God made the heavens and the earth – and everything in them

**NEH 9:6A** You are the only LORD. *You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, with all the stars. You made the earth and everything on it, the seas and everything in them; you give life to everything.*  
NCV™

**Ex 20:11** For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. ESV

Some believe that these “days” are literally six 24-hour days, while others take them to indicate six undetermined periods of time. The fact that God did not make the sun until the fourth “day” (cf. Gen 1:14–18) arguably supports the latter.

### God made light, alongside the darkness

**GEN 1:2–5** Now the earth was without shape and empty, and *darkness was over the surface of the watery deep*, but the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water. <sup>3</sup>*God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light!* <sup>4</sup>*God saw that the light was good, so God separated the light from the darkness.* <sup>5</sup>*God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.”* There was evening, and there was morning, marking the first day.

Note that this and the following subsections listing the things God created are in chronological order (cf. Gen 1).

### God made the sky

**GEN 1:6–8** *God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate water from water.”* <sup>7</sup>*So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water*

How has God revealed himself to you?

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How could you present (to a non-Christian) the creation and continuation of the world as evidence for God's existence?

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How is God known through Jesus Christ?

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## God's creation perpetually evidences and reveals God to all people . . .

**ROM 1:19–20** [PAUL, REFERRING TO WICKED PEOPLE:] For *what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.* <sup>20</sup>*For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.* So they are without excuse.

ESV

## . . . God's ongoing control over nature likewise testifies to him

**ACTS 14:17** But *he has always given evidence of his existence by the good things he does: he gives you rain from heaven and crops at the right times; he gives you food and fills your hearts with happiness.*

GNT

God's provision through his regulation of nature is evidence to people of his existence and reveals his goodness.

## God is revealed in his acts of judgment and of salvation

**EZEK 35:11B** [GOD, TO THE PEOPLE OF EDMON:] I will deal with you according to your anger, and according to your envy, by which you acted spitefully against them [Israel and Judah]. *I will reveal myself to them when I judge you.*

**PS 106:8** Yet *he* [God] *saved them for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power.* ESV

## Most clearly, God is revealed and known through Jesus Christ

**JOHN 17:6A** [JESUS, PRAYING TO GOD:] *I have made you known to those you gave me out of the world.* GNT

**1JN 5:20** And we know that *the Son of God has come and has given us insight to know him who is true*, and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life.

*above it. It was so.* <sup>8</sup>*God called the expanse "sky."* There was evening, and there was morning, a second day.

Verses 6–7 may mean that the sky (the "expanse") separated the atmospheric waters (or clouds) from the waters of the earth, or that the earth was enveloped by a dense layer of moisture (cf. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*).

## God made land and sea

**GEN 1:9–10** *God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear." It was so.* <sup>10</sup>*God called the dry ground "land" and the gathered waters he called "seas."* God saw that it was good.

## God made vegetation

**GEN 1:11** *God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds." It was so.*

## God made the sun, moon and stars

**GEN 1:14–16** *God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be signs to indicate seasons and days and years, <sup>15</sup>and let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." It was so.* <sup>16</sup>*God made two great lights — the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night. He made the stars also.*

Genesis 1 indicates that God made "light" on the first "day" (cf. vv. 3–5), but did not make the sun and stars until the fourth "day" (cf. vv. 14–18). There are different explanations for this. Possibly these entities were made from that through which God first provided light and first marked off each "day" (cf. v. 5); i.e. the fourth "day" may speak of the source of light being made into the sun and stars.

## God made all creatures and people

**GEN 1:21, 25, 27** *God created the great sea creatures and every living and moving thing with which the water swarmed, according to*

*their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. God saw that it was good. . . .*<sup>25</sup>*God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the cattle according to their kinds, and all the creatures that creep along the ground according to their kinds. God saw that it was good. . . .*<sup>27</sup>*God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.*

**Note: All that God makes is good**

**GEN 1:31A** *God saw all that he had made – and it was very good!*

Do you believe that God made everything? Why or why not?

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Is there anything that you find hard to understand or accept about the Genesis account of creation? If so, discuss this with your group.

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What inspires you the most - or what do you appreciate the most - about God's creation, all of which is "very good" (Gen 1:31a)?

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## d) Epilogue: God's Self-Revelation to People

(➔ *God's Communication of His Word*, in 8. *God's Word*; *God's Judgment Reveals God*, in 10. *God's Judgment*; *God Is Revealed in Saving His People*, in 19. *God's Care of His People*)

### People cannot in themselves perceive or know God

**JOB 37:23** [ELIHU:] *The Almighty—we cannot find him*; he is great in power; justice and abundant righteousness he will not violate. ESV

**1COR 1:21A** For *God in his wisdom made it impossible for people to know him by means of their own wisdom.* GNT

### But, God reveals himself . . .

**1SAM 2:27** A man of God came to Eli and said to him, "*This is what the LORD says: 'Did I not plainly reveal myself to your ancestor's house when they were in Egypt in the house of Pharaoh?*"

**1SAM 3:21** Then the LORD again appeared in Shiloh, for it was in Shiloh that *the LORD had revealed himself to Samuel through the word of the LORD.*

### . . . God also reveals his plans and will

**AMOS 3:7** Certainly *the sovereign LORD does nothing without first revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.*

**ACTS 22:14** He [Ananias, addressing Saul] said, '*The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see his righteous Servant, and to hear him speaking with his own voice.*' GNT

### God reveals himself by what he does

**EZEK 20:9** [GOD:] I acted for the sake of my reputation, so that I would not be profaned before *the nations among whom they lived, before whom I revealed myself by bringing them out of the land of Egypt.*

By delivering the Israelites out of Egypt, God revealed himself to the surrounding peoples.

Think of one person who you should treat differently, bearing in mind that they have been made by God in his image. How could you treat them differently?

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How are people different to other creatures?

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What could you do to better care for other creatures and/or the environment?

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## **b) God Maintains Creation**

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### **Every creature's life is dependent on God**

**JOB 12:10** *The life of every creature and the breath of all people are in God's hand.* NCV™

**Ps 36:6** [DAVID, TO GOD:] Your justice is like the highest mountains, your fairness like the deepest sea; *you preserve mankind and the animal kingdom.*

### **God provides food for all creatures . . .**

**Ps 145:15** [DAVID, TO GOD:] *Everything looks to you in anticipation, and you provide them with food on a regular basis.*

### **. . . God sends rain on the earth, making it productive**

**JER 14:22** [JEREMIAH:] *Do any of the worthless idols of the nations cause rain to fall? Do the skies themselves send showers? Is it not you, O Lord our God, who does this?* So we put our hopes in you because *you alone do all this.*

**ISA 55:10** *The rain and snow fall from the sky and do not return, but instead water the earth and make it produce and yield crops, and provide seed for the planter and food for those who must eat.*

### **God's provision of rain and food is abundant . . .**

**JOB 36:27–31** *He [God] draws up drops of water; they distill the rain into its mist,<sup>28</sup> which the clouds pour down and shower on humankind abundantly.<sup>29</sup> Who can understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings of his pavilion? <sup>30</sup>See how he scattered his lightning about him; he has covered the depths of the sea. <sup>31</sup>It is by these that he judges the nations and supplies food in abundance.*

### **. . . God's provision satisfies his creation**

**Ps 145:16** [DAVID, TO GOD:] *You give them enough and satisfy the needs of all.* GNT

### God regulates all aspects of the weather

**JOB 37:6** For to the snow he says, 'Fall to earth,' and to the torrential rains, 'Pour down.'

**JER 10:13** When his voice thunders, the heavenly ocean roars. He makes the clouds rise from the far-off horizons. He makes the lightning flash out in the midst of the rain. He unleashes the wind from the places where he stores it.

The first statement attributes to God thunder and the associated massing of waters in the sky that lead to a storm.

### God controls the cycle of day and night . . .

**AMOS 5:8A** The LORD made the stars, the Pleiades and Orion. He turns darkness into daylight, and day into night. GNT

### . . . God also controls the seasons

**GEN 8:22** [GOD:] "While the earth continues to exist, planting time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night will not cease."

God's promise that these things will continue is indicative of his control over them.

### God regulates and maintains the other aspects of nature

**ISA 51:15** I am the LORD your God, who churns up the sea so that its waves surge. The LORD who commands armies is his name!

**JER 33:25** But I, the LORD, make the following promise: I have made a covenant governing the coming of day and night. I have established the fixed laws governing heaven and earth.

God has established and also maintains "the fixed laws" of nature that regulate the sky and earth (cf. CEV, GNT, NCV, NLT).

### Note: God made the earth and all creation to last

**Ps 78:69** He made his sanctuary as enduring as the heavens above; as secure as the earth, which he established permanently.

### . . . and so people can choose between these things

**Ps 37:27A** [DAVID, EXHORTING HIS LISTENERS:] Turn away from evil! Do what is right!

**ISA 7:15** He will be eating milk curds and honey when he learns to reject what is evil and to choose what is good. NCV™

Note that this tells of a coming child, understood by many people to be ultimately speaking of the Messiah (cf. v. 14; Matt. 1:21–23).

### People are of much more value than other creatures

**MATT 10:31** So do not be afraid; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

**MATT 12:12A** How much more valuable is a person than a sheep!

### God has made people ruler over all other creatures

**Ps 8:6–8** [DAVID, TO GOD:] You appointed them [people] rulers over everything you made; you placed them over all creation: <sup>7</sup>sheep and cattle, and the wild animals too; <sup>8</sup>the birds and the fish and the creatures in the seas. GNT

### As such, people are to care for other creatures . . .

**PROV 12:10** A righteous person cares for the life of his animal, but even the most compassionate acts of the wicked are cruel.

### . . . Furthermore, people are to act responsibly towards all creation

**HAB 2:17A** [GOD, TO THE BABYLONIANS:] For you will pay in full for your violent acts against Lebanon; terrifying judgment will come upon you because of the way you destroyed the wild animals living there.

The Babylonians' desolation of the forests of Lebanon (cf. CEV, GNT, NLT) and their destruction of animals contravened humankind's responsibility towards nature – and they would be punished for it.

## c) The Uniqueness of People

### God has made people in his own image

**GEN 1:26–27** Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness, so they may rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth.” <sup>27</sup>God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.

That God has made people in his own image is evident in that they reflect such things as his personal traits – e.g. aspects of his character and intellect – and that they have a spirit (as discussed in the previous subsection). Additionally, it is noteworthy that although God essentially is spirit, some descriptions of God speak of him in terms of a discernible human-like form (cf. Ezek 1:26–28; Dan 7:9).

### People have an able mind, with which to think and reason intelligently

**JOB 38:36** Who has put wisdom in the heart, or has imparted understanding to the mind?

God has given people a mind with the ability to understand things.

**ACTS 17:2–3** And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, <sup>3</sup>explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.” ESV

### People have the moral capacity to know good from evil . . .

**GEN 3:22** And the LORD God said, “Now that the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not be allowed to stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”

**Ps 148:3–6** Praise him, O sun and moon! Praise him, all you shiny stars! <sup>4</sup>Praise him, O highest heaven, and you waters above the sky! <sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he gave the command and they came into existence. <sup>6</sup>He established them so they would endure; he issued a decree that will not be revoked.

How should we respond to the teaching in Job 12:10 (cf. *Every creature’s life is dependent on God*)?

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The Bible speaks of God’s provision of rain and food as being abundant, satisfying “the needs of all” (Ps 145:16). How do we reconcile this with the increasing deprivation and starvation in the world?

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How mindful and appreciative are you of God’s provision? How could you be more so?

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### c) How God Made and Maintains Creation

#### God made all things with his wisdom . . .

**Ps 104:24** *How numerous are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is filled with your creations.* ISV

**PROV 3:19–20** *The LORD created the earth by his wisdom; by his knowledge he set the sky in place. <sup>20</sup>His wisdom caused the rivers to flow and the clouds to give rain to the earth.* GNT

#### . . . and God made all things with his power

**JER 27:5** [GOD:] *I made the earth and the people and animals on it by my mighty power and great strength, and I give it to whomever I see fit.*

#### God made and maintains all things by his word or command

**Ps 33:6, 9** *By the LORD's decree the heavens were made; by a mere word from his mouth all the stars in the sky were created. . . . <sup>9</sup>For he spoke, and it came into existence, he issued the decree, and it stood firm.*

**2PET 3:5B** *By the word of God heaven was made, and the earth was made from water and with water.* NCV™

**Ps 147:15–18** *He sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. <sup>16</sup>He gives snow like wool; he scatters hoarfrost like ashes. <sup>17</sup>He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs; who can stand before his cold? <sup>18</sup>He sends out his word, and melts them; he makes his wind blow and the waters flow.* ESV

This suggests that in addition to creating all things by his command, God continues to control nature (vv. 16–17a, 18b) through his command or word (vv. 15, 18a).

#### God made and sustains all things through Jesus Christ . . .

**JOHN 1:3** *All things were created by him [Christ], and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.*

What is our spirit?

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Give at least one reason why our spirit is significant.

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In what sense or in what way do our spirits exist after death?

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### . . . and they are linked with one's desires

**ISA 26:9A** [ISAIAH, TO GOD:] *My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me earnestly seeks you.* ESV

### The spirit is involved in one's thinking . . .

**PS 77:6–7** [A PSALMIST:] I remember my song in the night and reflect on it. *My spirit searches for an answer: <sup>7</sup>Will the Lord reject me for all time? Will he ever accept me?* GW

**1COR 2:11A** Who knows the thoughts that another person has? Only a person's spirit that lives within him knows his thoughts. NCV™

### . . . and the spirit is fundamental to one's attitude and actions

**PROV 18:14** *A person's spirit sustains him through sickness – but who can bear a crushed spirit?*

**JOB 32:18** [ELIHU:] I am full of words, and *the spirit in me causes me to speak.* NCV™

### People are dead without their spirit

**JAMES 2:26** For just as *the body without the spirit is dead*, so also faith without works is dead.

### People's spirits and souls exist after death

**ACTS 7:59** *They [Jews] continued to stone Stephen while he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"*

**REV 6:9–10** [JOHN, DESCRIBING A VISION OF A SCENE IN HEAVEN:] Now when the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar *the souls of those who had been violently killed* because of the word of God and because of the testimony they had given. <sup>10</sup>They cried out with a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Master, holy and true, before you judge those who live on the earth and avenge our blood?"

Here John is recounting a vision involving believers in heaven, who had died.

**HEB 1:2B–3A** *He is the one through whom God created the universe, the one whom God has chosen to possess all things at the end.* <sup>3</sup>He reflects the brightness of God's glory and is the exact likeness of God's own being, *sustaining the universe with his powerful word.* GNT

### . . . The Holy Spirit also has a role

**PS 104:30** [A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *When you send forth your Spirit, they [creatures] are created, and you renew the face of the ground.* ESV

### Note: On finishing creation, God rested on the seventh day – and made it holy

**GEN 2:2–3** *By the seventh day God finished the work he had been doing, so he rested from all his work.* <sup>3</sup>*God blessed the seventh day and made it a holy day, because on that day he rested from all the work he had done in creating the world.* NCV™

Jesus Christ has a major role in God's making and maintaining of creation. What does this illustrate about how God interacts with his world?

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How can it be that things were created by God simply speaking (cf. *God made and maintains all things by his word or command*)?

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Would scientists generally agree that “the earth was made from water and with water” (2Pet 3:5b)? If this is the case, what is the significance of this statement being in the Bible?

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## b) The Human Spirit

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### God has made people with a spirit

**ZEC 12:1B** The LORD – he who stretches out the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth, *who forms the human spirit within a person* – says, ...

### The spirit is distinguished from one's body

**MATT 26:41** [JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] Stay awake and pray for strength against temptation. *The spirit wants to do what is right, but the body is weak.* NCV™

### The spirit and the soul are closely associated

**JOB 7:11** [JOB:] Therefore, I will not refrain my mouth; *I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.*

Note that some commentators caution against attempting to make categorical distinctions between the spirit and the soul. Having said this, “spirit” is typically used when speaking of the will and thoughts, whereas “soul” is more prominent when speaking of emotions and desires or of the person themselves.

### The spirit and the soul are at the core of one's being

**PROV 20:27** *A person's spirit is the lamp of the LORD; it searches through all of one's innermost being.* ISV

**LAM 3:20** [JEREMIAH:] *My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me.* ESV

### The spirit and the soul are linked with one's emotions . . .

(⇒ Lam 3:20 ↑)

**ECC 7:9** *Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools.* ESV

**JOB 30:25** [JOB:] Have I not wept for him who was in trouble? *Has not my soul grieved for the poor?* NKJV

Choose one thing that you find particularly significant about God's creation of people, and say why.

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Think of at least one way that the brevity of our lives should affect our thinking and/or our actions.

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How is blood used in the Bible to signify life?

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## d) Implications of God Being Creator

(⇒ *God's creation perpetually evidences and reveals God to all people . . . , p.26; . . . God's ongoing control over nature likewise testifies to him, p. 26*)

### God is sovereign over all things

**ACTS 17:24A** *The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth.* ISV

Because he has made all things, God has the right of sovereignty over all things. God's almighty power and incomparable wisdom enable him to enforce his sovereignty.

### All things belong to God

**Ps 24:1–2** *The LORD owns the earth and all it contains, the world and all who live in it. <sup>2</sup>For he set its foundation upon the seas, and established it upon the ocean currents.*

Verse 2 speaks poetically of God creating the world.

### All things exist for God

**ROM 11:36** *For all things were created by him, and all things exist through him and for him.* To God be the glory for ever! Amen. GNT

This suggests that because God created and sustains all things, all things exist for him.

### Creation attests to God's greatness and glory . . .

**Ps 8:3–4** [DAVID, TO GOD:] *When I look at the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you established—<sup>4</sup>what is man that you take notice of him, or the son of man that you pay attention to him?* ISV

God's wondrous creation prompts David to question why God bothers with humankind, alluding to God's surpassing greatness.

**Ps 19:1** *The heavens declare the glory of God; the sky displays his handiwork.*

### . . . Likewise, creation attests to God's power

**ISA 40:26** *Look up at the sky! Who created all these heavenly lights? He is the one who leads out their ranks; he calls them all by name. Because of his absolute power and awesome strength, not one of them is missing.*

### Moreover, creation and God's control over it show his power and wisdom to be incomparable

**JOB 9:4–10** [JOB, SPEAKING OF GOD:] *He is wise in heart and mighty in strength – who has resisted him and remained safe? <sup>5</sup>He who removes mountains suddenly, who overturns them in his anger; <sup>6</sup>he who shakes the earth out of its place so that its pillars tremble; <sup>7</sup>he who commands the sun and it does not shine and seals up the stars; <sup>8</sup>he alone spreads out the heavens, and treads on the waves of the sea; <sup>9</sup>he makes the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades, and the constellations of the southern sky; <sup>10</sup>he does great and unsearchable things, and wonderful things without number.*

Verse 4 implies that God's wisdom and power is incomparable. Verses 5–10 then illustrate that this is the case, speaking of things that are done by God "alone" (v. 8).

*good person, also happens to the sinner; what happens to those who make vows, also happens to those who are afraid to make vows.*

### Once a person dies, they do not return

**JOB 7:9–10** *As a cloud is dispersed and then disappears, so the one who goes down to the grave does not come up again. <sup>10</sup>He returns no more to his house, nor does his place of residence know him any more.*

### Note: Blood signifies life – and a person's life is taken by the shedding of their blood

**GEN 9:5–6** [GOD, TO NOAH AND HIS SONS:] *And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. <sup>6</sup>“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. ESV*

Blood sustains life (cf. Lev 17:11, 14) and as such it is often used in Scripture to signify life. The correlation between blood and life is shown here by the term "lifeblood" (v. 5) and by the complementary usage of "life" and "blood" in vv. 5b-6a.

## a) Life and Death

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### God creates people

**Ps 119:73** [A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *Your hands made me and formed me. Give me understanding so that I might learn your commands.*

**PROV 22:2** *The rich and the poor are alike in that the LORD made them all.* NCV™

### God creates the various aspects of people's beings . . .

**Ps 139:13** [DAVID, TO GOD:] *Certainly you made my mind and heart; you wove me together in my mother's womb.*

**PROV 20:12** *The ear that hears and the eye that sees – the LORD has made them both.*

### . . . and God gives people life and breath

**ACTS 17:25B** *He gives life, breath, and everything else to all people.* CEV

### People's lives are very brief

**Ps 39:5–6A** [DAVID, TO GOD:] *You made my life short, so brief that the time means nothing to you. "Human life is but a breath, <sup>6</sup>and it disappears like a shadow.* CEV

As many older people would affirm, in a relative sense life is very brief.

### Each person is destined to die . . .

**EccL 7:2** *It is better to go to a funeral than a feast. For death is the destiny of every person, and the living should take this to heart.*

### . . . All people die no matter who or what they are

**EccL 9:2** *Everyone shares the same fate – the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, the ceremonially clean and unclean, those who offer sacrifices and those who do not. What happens to the*

What does God being the creator of us and our environment mean for our relationship with him?

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What are some implications of all things belonging to God and existing for him?

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What is something about creation that exemplifies for you the incomparableness of God's power and wisdom? (Perhaps you could use a phrase from a verse in your answer.)

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## **II. God's Creation of People**

Most would agree that the most significant part of God's creation is his creation of people. God not only gives people life and a spirit, he has made people quite unique amongst all creatures. Furthermore, of all his creatures, it is primarily to people that God reveals himself and relates.