

# GOOD NEWS *of* GREAT JOY

## What was Jesus doing before Bethlehem?

December 4, 2022

### 1. Jesus is the creator of all things.

#### A. The stars of the night sky are uncountable.

*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world...* Psalm 19:1–4 (ESV)

- There are 4,000 visible stars in the night sky. Giant telescopes reveal there are  $10^{25}$  stars in the sky. We can not count the stars, but God has given each of them a name and purpose.

*He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.* Psalm 147:4 (ESV)

#### B. The size of the universe is unfathomable.

- The universe is vast. We can fit 1.2 million earths and 4.3 million moons inside our sun.

#### C. God made the earth the center of His plan for the universe.

#### D. John 1:1-3, 14 — Jesus is the Word who created all things.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* John 1:1–3 (ESV)

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.* John 1:14 (ESV)

- Jesus created everything instantly and out of nothing.

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. Psalm 33:6 (ESV)

For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. Psalm 33:9 (ESV)

By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. Hebrews 11:3 (ESV)

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. Genesis 1:3 (ESV)

- Jesus' miracles were creating something out of nothing. He created things with the appearance of age simply by the words of his mouth.

#### **E. Colossians 1:16 — Jesus is the creator of all things.**

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:16 (ESV)

- The universe was not just created by Jesus, it was created for Jesus. Everything Jesus created was made to give glory to Him.

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9–11 (ESV)

#### **F. Hebrews 1:2 — Jesus is the creator of time.**

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. Hebrews 1:1–2 (ESV)

- "Through whom also he created the world" is literally "Through whom also he created the ages." This means Jesus is the creator of time.

And, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands;..." Hebrews 1:10 (ESV)

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Psalm 8:3-4 (ESV)

## 2. Jesus is the sustainer of life.

### A. Jesus sustains the universe.

- The planet exists in a delicate balance. It is preserved in that balance by Jesus, not by us.

### B. Colossians 1:17 — In Jesus, all things hold together.

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians 1:17 (ESV)

### C. Hebrews 1:3 — Jesus is the sustainer of the world.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power... Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)

- Jesus is not just maintaining the universe, but he is moving it forward toward its God-appointed purpose. If God sustains the universe and moves it forward to God's purpose, God will sustain me and move me to my purpose for Him.
- Jesus sustains the universe and our life by His powerful words.

### D. Jesus sustains His people.

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 (ESV)

- Jesus provided the Israelites with water in the desert.
- Jesus provided the Israelites with manna in the desert.

- Jesus sustained His people's clothes and shoes.

*I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn off your feet. Deuteronomy 29:5 (ESV)*

- Jesus led His people with the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

## What was Jesus doing before Bethlehem?

1. **Jesus created everything in the universe.**
2. **Jesus continues to sustain all things in the universe.**
3. **Jesus saved God's people from earthly death in Egypt and then sustained them through 40 years in the wilderness to bring them to the Promised Land. In Bethlehem, Jesus took on flesh to save us from eternal death in the lake of fire. Today Jesus saves us and sustains us in our relationship with God until we are home in heaven to be with Him forever.**

## Life Group Questions

1. **Read Colossians 1:17 and Hebrews 1:3.** One of Elon Musk's goals is to create a civilization on Mars. He hopes this will lead to sustaining the human race if the earth is destroyed. After what you learned in this message, how would you respond to concerns about humans inadvertently destroying the planet?
2. In school, students are taught that life on earth came about through gradual evolution, which took place over billions of years. From what you learned in this study about how Jesus created things instantly, out of nothing, and with the appearance of age, how would you answer a Christian who believed the world to be the result of billions of years of evolution because scientists say it appears that old?
3. **Read John 1:1-3, 14.** What do we learn from these verses about Jesus? How do Jesus' miracles in the New Testament help us better understand (and believe) the creation account in Genesis?
4. **Read Colossians 1:6 and Philippians 2:9-11.** In these verses, we learn the universe wasn't just created by Jesus, *but it was created for Jesus*. Not just the universe but our lives exist to bring glory to Jesus. How does this change the way you think about the purpose of life and what you value in life?
5. **Read Psalm 8:3-4.** How does looking at the number of stars in the universe, their size, and the vastness of creation, then realizing that God hasn't forgotten you but passionately loves you, change how you feel about life and Jesus?
6. **Extra Credit: Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.** In these verses, Jesus sustained his people by providing them with water in the desert. In other parts of the Bible, we learn Jesus provided the Israelites with manna for food and preserved their clothing and shoes so they did not wear out. How do these examples of Jesus' sustaining love for his people help you better understand some of the ways he sustains us today?