



# Traveling God's Word

A chronological study of the Bible

## WEEK 1

### Inside this issue:

Spotting Christ 2

The Best of 3  
Creation

Marriage 4

Learning the 4  
Language

Food for Thought 4

Time Warp 5

The Garden of 6  
Eden

Point of Interest 6

Puzzle 7

Puzzle Answers and 8  
Sources

### READ:

Genesis 1-2

## Who is this God?

As the Israelites emerged as an intact and unique nation from Egypt and its extensive religious system and prepared to move into a new land that held its own gamut of gods, Moses wrote the words of THE God, the God of the Israelites. It wasn't like God had been unknown to the people of the world. Stories had been handed down since the time of Adam and Eve. Noah's sons had scattered with first hand accounts of the great flood, and the stories that had been handed down to them of creation. Nearly every culture and cult worldwide has its own versions of creation and flood stories. Elements of the true story had remained, but in twisted versions. So, God, through Moses, introduces Himself to the world as the One who can take credit for the source of all the stories. He is writing an introduction for Himself, like when a speaker is introduced with his credentials before He speaks. It's the introduction that tells us why this Guy is worth listening to. He is also making it clear to the Israelites and to the world that these are the people who He is trusting to be the messengers of the true story, His own authorized biography. He is letting the Israelites know who this God of theirs is. God is laying out for them His provision, plan, purpose, power, promise and place for them. He is putting it down in writing that there might be no more confusion about Him. He is giving the Israelites, and the world, a spiritual GPS - God's Plans Said to us. God's purpose for Genesis 1 and 2 are just as relevant now as they were when they were first written. God said you know how you look at the night sky and marvel at the stars, well, **I AM** the one who made them and moves them. You know how the Egyptians worship Ra, and the Canaanites worship Shemesh, both as god the sun? Well, **I AM** the one who made the sun, as well as all of the billions of other suns. You know how you measure time according to the speed of light? Well, **I AM** the one from before time that made there be light, and therefore time. You know how you can't explain the mysterious "dark energy" that keeps our universe in the perfectly balanced state that can sustain life? (Folger 56) Well, **I AM** that energy that fine tuned the universe.

God takes only one short chapter of a very large book to explain His creation of the universe (or "multiverse" as some scientists now speculate). We have written volumes and volumes debating the how, when, and where. God seems to be only interested in revealing WHO He is for the benefit of the object of His creative hospitality - that would be us. God's real focus here is the relationship between the Creator and the created who alone are like Him. All of creation, in both its expansive bigness, and infinitesimal smallness, testify to His glory, in ways that every new discovery continues to show. The more capable we become, the bigger we realize God is. Yet what our enormous God chooses to reveal in Scripture is His intimate interaction with the human race, the rise and fall of nations, and especially the lives of individuals very much like you and I.

## Spotting Christ

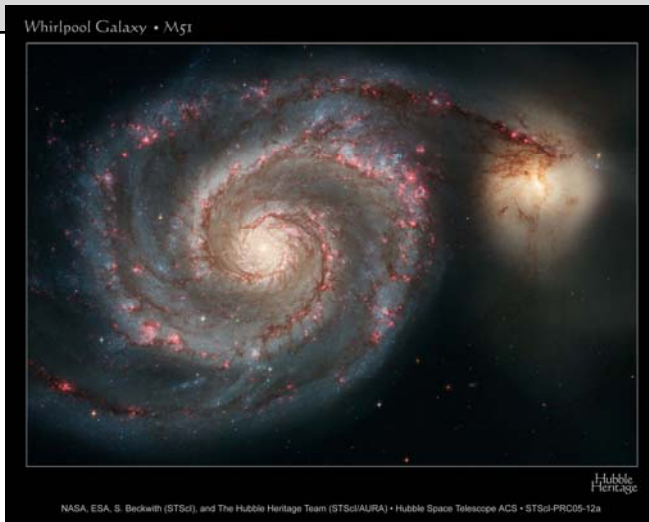
*“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”*  
Colossians 1:13-17 (ESV)

NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope has presented us with incredible photographs of the universe as it has never been seen before. The Whirlpool galaxy pictured above presents us a face on view from 31 million light years (one light year is 6,000,000,000,000 miles!) away. The expanse and beauty of a universe that extends so far beyond what our limited vision can behold raises all kinds of questions, beginning with a simple “why?” This galaxy was created long before we had the ability to view it, and before man was even brought into existence. Why did He create a universe so big?

According to Colossians 1:13-17, who was it created by and for? \_\_\_\_\_

Scientists have long realized that even “empty” space contains some inexplicable activity that implies an unknown form of energy that physicists call dark energy. What they are only beginning to realize is that the dark energy seems to be perfectly balanced to supply an amount that is “exactly enough to accelerate expansion, yet not so much that the universe would rapidly rip itself apart.” (Folger 56) In other words, it is perfectly calibrated to allow the existence of galaxies, and stars, and earth and us! What are some of the ways that God says He fine tuned creation for our existence in Genesis 1? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Colossians 1:13-17, what is that energy that is holding all things together? \_\_\_\_\_



Louie Giglio features this same Whirlpool galaxy, along with many other stunning shots of space in his DVD Indescribable. For more information, go to <http://www.268generation.com>



A close-up of the nucleus of the Whirlpool galaxy reveals a black hole that may have a mass equivalent to one million of our suns. The bars are thought to be a view of the edges of dust rings 100 light years in diameter. (hubblesite.org) Is the resulting cross shape a coincidence? Possibly, but never-the-less it seems an apt reminder waiting millennia for us to discover its testimony to the creative power, and eternal redemptive plan of Christ our Lord.

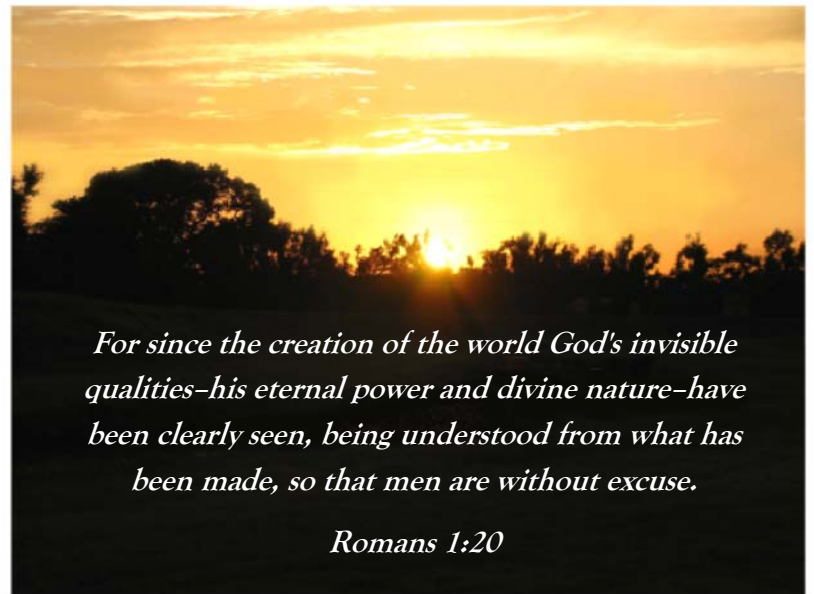


## The Best of Creation

When I read Romans 1:20, my mind immediately jumps to the exquisite beauties of nature; a majestic mountain, a glorious sunrise, or the vastness of a clear night sky.

Several years ago, I was challenged to pay more heed to the glory of a different aspect of God's creation. Our church was having an early morning sunrise service outdoors. As the sun was rising we were singing songs of praise to God. It was one of those magical moments where I felt like I was really grasping the awesome identity of God. He is so worthy of every ounce of praise that we can offer to Him. Just as the sunrise reached its peak of magnificence, a vehicle obstructed our view as it slowed to

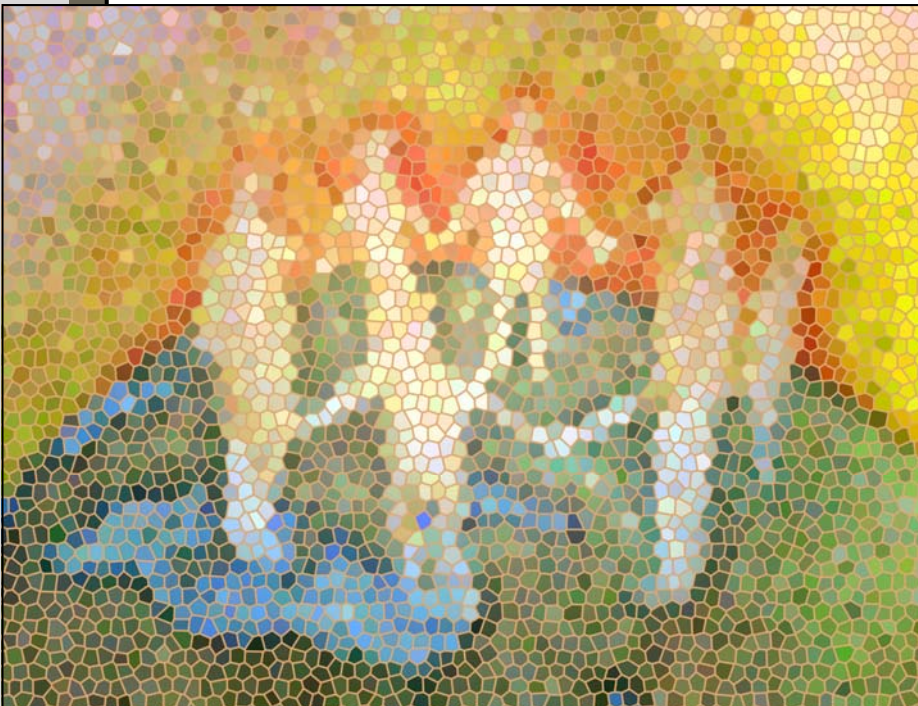
turn into the driveway. It belonged to a woman whose patchy attendance reflected her unsteady, but striving relationship with God. But here she was, arriving only a little late to this early morning worship service. I couldn't have gotten God's message any more clearly if He had shouted in my ear, or inflamed a nearby bush. His **people** are His crowning creation. The beautiful sun in all of its amazing splendor was not created in His image, and was not created for relationship with Him, but this woman was. The budding trees, blooming flowers, green grass, stretching expanse of blue sky all do testify to the greatness of God, but not anything like His best piece of work – people. All



of those wonderful, beautiful things were created **for** the messy and flawed humanity around me. The earth was created as the ultimate act of hospitality by a loving God that gave us not only life and a place to live, but also the community of relationship and purpose to live for.

*Just wondering.....*

*Did Adam and Eve have belly buttons?*



## Marriage

**Genesis 2:20-24** The creation of man and woman was followed by the creation of the special relationship that they were to enjoy with each other called marriage. Just as God had created water, and light, and plants for food, God created marriage not only so man would not be alone, but also to give us a very tangible way to understand our relationship with Him. When we get it right in our marriages, we honor Him.

The verb translated cleave, be joined, or united, in Gen. 2:24 is *dabaq* (daw-bak') and means not only to cling or adhere, but to catch by pursuit, to follow close, to overtake and hold fast. (Meyers) It implies some passionate commitment doesn't it? How is this same word used in reference to our relationship with God in Deut. 4:4? \_\_\_\_\_

What does Jesus repeat in Matt. 19:5? \_\_\_\_\_

What does Paul repeat in Ephesians 5:31? \_\_\_\_\_

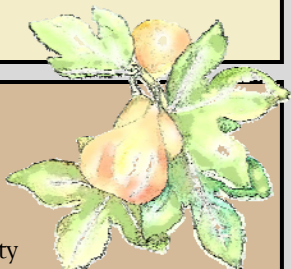
In what ways is the need for men to cleave very great in our world today? \_\_\_\_\_



Worth writing  
home about:

What part of  
God's creative work is the easiest for you to appreciate?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Food for Thought

Yale university has created the Overall Nutritional Quality Index that gives foods ratings from 1 to 100 based on a variety of nutritional criteria. For example, broccoli and blueberries score 100, while hot dogs and salami fall in the single digits. (Williams) How does that compare with the menu God gave Adam and Eve?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Learning the Language

אלהם

**Elohim** is the name used for God in these opening words from Him. It means, basically, the supreme God, or THE God. It is

plural in form, but the reference in number is to one, and so is used with a singular verb.

In Genesis 1:27 we are told that God created male and female in His image. The Hebrew word that is translated image is **tselem** (say it *tseh'lem*). It is from an unused root meaning to *shade*; a *phantom*, that is, an *illusion*, *resemblance*; a representative figure, especially an *idol*: - image, vain shew. (Meyers)

Describe what you think it means to be created in God's image: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Time Warp

“Reality is merely an illusion,  
albeit a very persistent one.”

Albert Einstein

Since a black hole has  
so much mass that  
light cannot escape,  
what would time mean  
in that black hole?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Compared to the speed of light, time in the three dimensional environment in which we live and operate, barely moves at all. That perception is the standard by which we define reality. Our discernment of time is valid, and even accurate, but might appear different from a different perspective. The theory is that if we could come close to traveling at the speed of light, while wearing a watch, the seconds ticking by on that watch would appear to be going very slowly compared to the watch of someone moving at earth speed, and vice versa. To both parties, their own watch seems to be the accurate one. Speaking to each other would be similarly difficult since the “normal” rate of speech would seem much slower to the other. In addition, as we approached that speed, our mass would increase. So it is thought that the speed of light cannot be reached by anything other than light because mass would, at that speed, become infinite and require more energy to accelerate than the universe contains. And so we exist in a time-bound world. But that does not mean that we must limit our limitless God to the same reality that we perceive from our own limits. We persist on defining God’s actions as if He operated under the same constraints of time that we do.

What did God create first? \_\_\_\_\_

On what “day” did God create the lights that give us signs and seasons and days and years?

\_\_\_\_\_

In 1 John 1:5-7, who is light? \_\_\_\_\_

What does this tell you about God’s timing and ways? \_\_\_\_\_

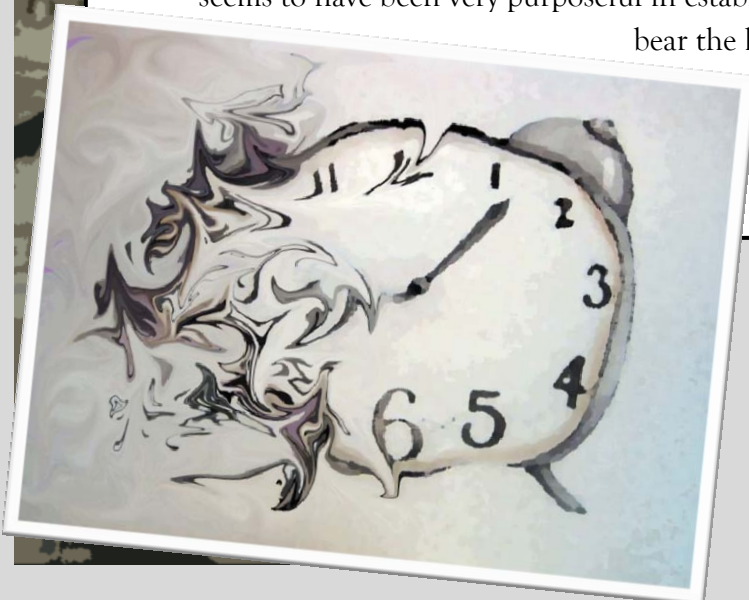
What is one explanation of why God’s timing seems so slow to us? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

God did not create time in order to measure His creative ability like the winner of a 100 yard dash. Those matters of time that we find extremely important and consuming, and even defining, appear totally different to God. We expend enormous amounts of energy arguing about dates and times, yet ignore God’s purposes for time. God makes it clear that He was before time, before there could be any days, before there could be a beginning. He is bigger than time. Yet, He also seems to have been very purposeful in establishing time for us. The first thing in Scripture to bear the label holy is a point in time.

What possible reason does Gen. 2:3 give for the establishment and recognition of time?

\_\_\_\_\_



“But do not forget this one thing, dear  
friends: With the Lord a day is like a  
thousand years, and a thousand years  
are like a day.”

2 Peter 3:8



## The Garden of Eden

Of course, no one knows for sure exactly where Garden of Eden was, but that does not stop us from speculating!  
What clues are we given in Genesis 1 and 2?

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Do you think these specific places would have remained after the flood? Is it possible that new rivers were named with pre-flood names? Or were the old rivers in the same river beds restored?

Or, is it possible that the Garden still exists in some spiritual dimension, still faithfully guarded by the cherubim? Is this the new earth of Revelation?

Where do you think Adam was created?

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How big do you think the Garden of Eden was?

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## POINTS OF INTEREST

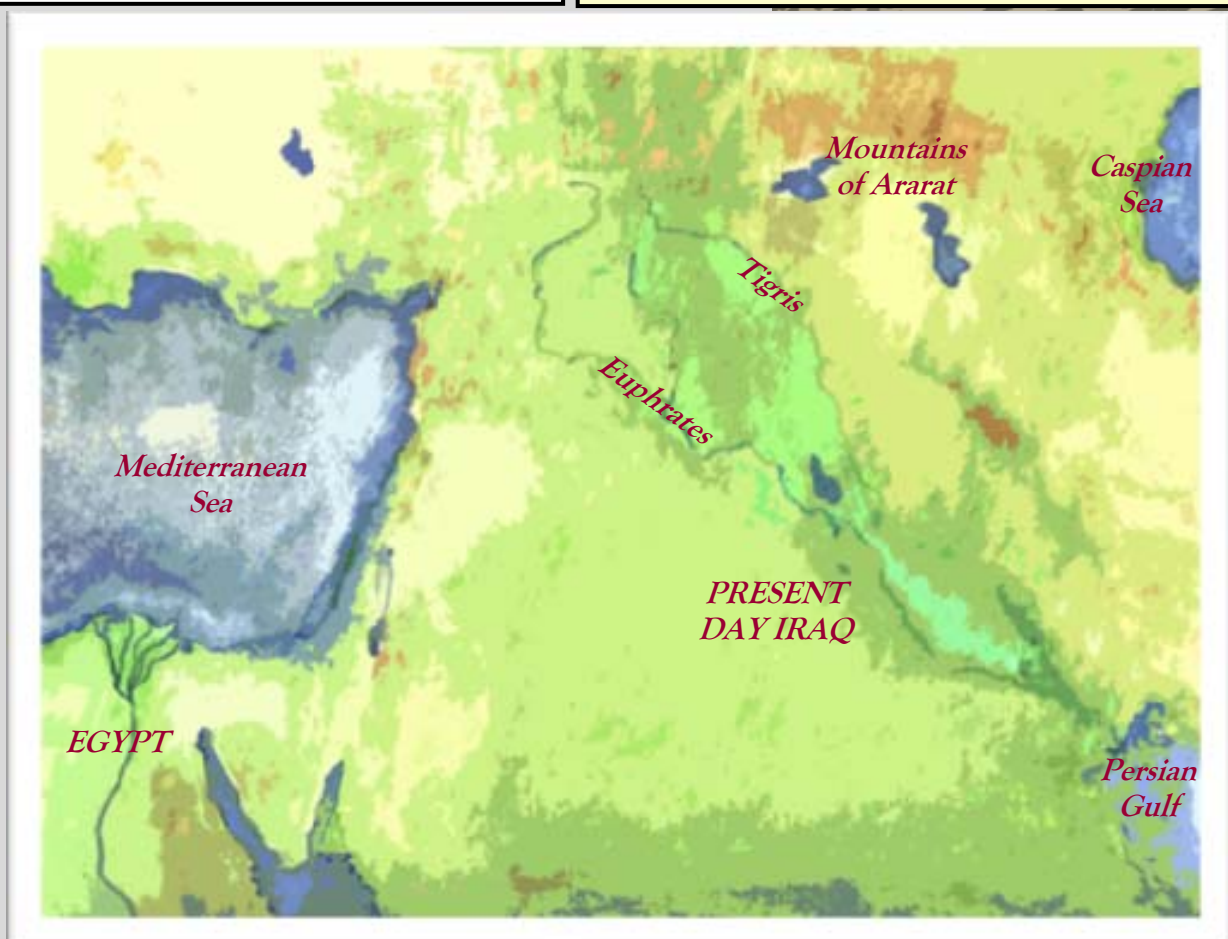
Many cultures and religions have stories of creation that have some similarities to the one we have just read in our own Bible. That is not surprising since man had been telling stories for quite some time before Moses wrote the torah (Pentateuch) account. Some scholars claim that the Hebrew version, being written later, copied elements from the creation stories of other cultures. I believe that God gave Moses the real story to set straight all the rumors that were flying about the nature and actions and identity of God!

In the hymn to Ptah which has its origins in Egypt some 1200 years or so before the birth of Christ, we read lines like this:

*"The ka-souls of all the living were created in the image of Ptah. All formed in his heart and by his tongue."*

In the Enuma Elish stories, compiled around 1100 years before Christ in the area that is now Iraq, we read:

*"When on high, no heaven had been named, when no earth had been called, when there were no divine elders..."*



# Puzzle Page

THINGS THAT GOD CREATED

P	V	P	N	H	C	L	Y	M	V	V	A	B	M	S	F	I
T	C	I	Z	H	E	L	N	H	Y	S	V	J	A	R	X	B
D	R	G	C	I	X	O	L	W	E	J	Z	E	J	A	H	X
I	E	C	S	E	M	S	Y	E	D	Y	S	S	O	U	H	H
V	A	V	S	E	G	A	R	D	E	N	R	T	M	S	T	E
O	T	X	V	W	X	T	N	B	A	A	H	M	I	W	W	L
J	U	N	S	Q	G	P	Y	F	Q	G	R	F	X	G	F	P
Q	R	C	C	R	S	P	A	O	I	N	D	T	Z	S	S	E
I	E	W	Y	S	R	S	H	N	H	K	V	C	H	O	K	R
B	S	R	F	C	V	S	T	R	S	D	J	K	A	C	O	Y
H	R	E	Y	G	L	H	F	A	F	E	A	L	Y	S	C	O
A	N	F	E	A	A	Z	X	R	R	N	I	Y	N	J	B	P
X	V	G	M	X	W	W	D	F	U	S	O	E	F	Y	K	L
V	L	I	G	H	T	S	M	B	B	I	V	L	A	N	D	A
J	N	B	I	R	D	S	W	B	O	A	T	H	Y	I	Z	N
A	R	O	L	D	P	P	N	M	E	I	N	E	U	O	I	T
D	F	H	J	X	E	V	T	H	R	I	T	M	A	N	W	S



Unscramble these words and find them in the word search puzzle:

MANSAIL

DBISR

CUTEREARS

AYD

HEART

AXEPENS

HIFS

ITFUR

DANGER

SEVENHA

PEELHR

DALN

SLIGHT

NAM

THING

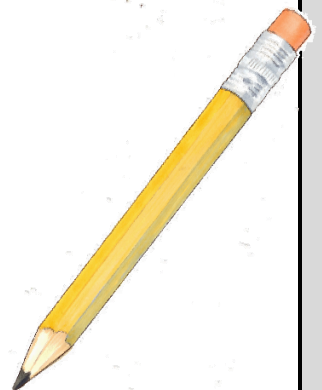
SNAPLT

ESSA

YSK

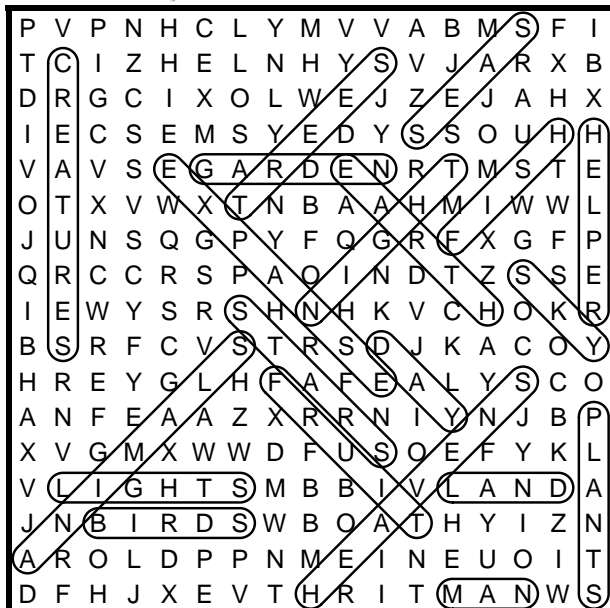
SARTS

TERSE





# ANSWERS AND SOURCES



ANIMALS	LAND
BIRDS	LIGHTS
CREATURES	MAN
DAY	NIGHT
EARTH	PLANTS
EXPANSE	SEAS
FISH	SKY
FRUIT	STARS
GARDEN	TREES
HEAVENS	
HELPER	

## SOURCES AND SUGGESTIONS:

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### Spotting Christ p. 2

Whirlpool galaxy: photograph by STScI

<http://hubblesite.org/newscenter/archive/releases/2005/12/image/a>

X structure in whirlpool galaxy: photograph by STScI and NASA

[http://imgsrc.hubblesite.org/hu/db/1992/17/images/a/formats/full\\_jpg.jpg](http://imgsrc.hubblesite.org/hu/db/1992/17/images/a/formats/full_jpg.jpg)

### Marriage and Learning the Language p. 4

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### Food for Thought p. 4

Williams, A.R. "Shopping by the Numbers." National Geographic. September 2008.

To see a sample list of foods scored, go to:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/3241667/Health-food-Yale-Universities-Overall-Nutritional-Quality-Index.html>

### Time Warp p. 5

<http://journeystarlight.blogspot.com/2007/07/to-relativity-and-beyond.html>

### Points of Interest p. 6

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To listen to the song Center by Charlie Hall, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KE3HKym0tRE>



For comments or questions, contact me at [victoryrd@hotmail.com](mailto:victoryrd@hotmail.com) or for more studies visit [www.downvictoryrd.com](http://www.downvictoryrd.com)