

# Genesis 1:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

## Analysis

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**And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth ...** This verse is part of the creation account that establishes God's sovereign power and purposeful design. The structured pattern of the seven days reveals divine order, intentionality, and progressive development from formless void to a world prepared for human habitation.

The recurring phrases "And God said," "and it was so," "And God saw that it was good" create a liturgical rhythm emphasizing:

1. creation by divine decree
2. immediate fulfillment of God's word,
3. divine evaluation of creation's goodness.

This pattern refutes both polytheistic chaos-and-conflict creation myths and modern materialistic chance-based origins.

Each stage builds toward the climax of human creation in God's image. The theological themes include divine transcendence and immanence, purposeful design, creation's inherent goodness, and humanity's unique role as God's image-bearers and stewards. The creation account provides the foundation for understanding work and rest (Sabbath), male and female relationships (marriage),

human dominion (stewardship), and moral accountability to the Creator. These opening chapters establish the worldview framework for all subsequent biblical revelation.

## Historical Context

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Genesis 1 stands in stark contrast to ancient Near Eastern creation accounts like the Babylonian Enuma Elish, Egyptian creation myths, and Ugaritic texts. While these portrayed creation resulting from conflicts between deities or sexual generation of gods, Genesis presents a sovereign monotheistic God who creates effortlessly by divine decree. This would have been revolutionary to ancient readers accustomed to polytheistic cosmogonies.

The Hebrew text's literary structure (seven days, recurring formulas) suggests careful composition as theological proclamation rather than primitive mythology. Archaeological discoveries of creation tablets from Mesopotamia (2000-1500 BCE) reveal that Genesis addresses similar questions but provides radically different answers about the nature of God, humanity, and the cosmos. The absence of theogony (origin of gods) and theomachy (conflict between gods) distinguishes Genesis from its ancient Near Eastern context.

For Israelites emerging from Egyptian bondage or later facing Babylonian captivity, this truth that Yahweh created everything would have been profoundly liberating and countercultural. The gods of Egypt and Babylon were mere creations, not creators. Genesis 1 establishes that Israel's God alone is supreme, rendering pagan deities powerless and their worship futile.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does this verse deepen our understanding of God's character and His relationship with creation?
2. What specific changes in thinking or behavior does this verse call us to make?
3. How does this verse fit into the broader biblical story culminating in Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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בָּשָׂר	כָּל	אֵת	הַגָּדָל	יְמִם	הַתְּבִינָה	מִן	אֱלֹהִים	אָתֶת	יְמִם	תִּבְרַכְתָּ	אֶת	
<b>created</b>	<b>And God</b>	H853	<b>whales</b>	H853	<b>great</b>	H853	H3605	<b>creature</b>				
H1254	H430		H8577		H1419		H5315					
וְאֶת	שְׁרָצֶן	וְאֶת	שְׁרָצֶן	וְאֶת	שְׁרָצֶן	וְאֶת	שְׁרָצֶן	וְאֶת	שְׁרָצֶן	וְאֶת	שְׁרָצֶן	
<b>and every living</b>	<b>that moveth</b>	H834	<b>brought forth abundantly</b>	H8317	<b>which the waters</b>	H4325						
H2416	H7430											
לְמִינֵּה	וְאֶת	כָּל	וְאֶת	לְמִינֵּה	וְאֶת	לְמִינֵּה	וְאֶת	לְמִינֵּה	וְאֶת	לְמִינֵּה	וְאֶת	
<b>after his kind</b>	H853	H3605	<b>fowl</b>	H5775	<b>and every winged</b>	H3671	<b>after his kind</b>	H4327	<b>saw</b>	H7200		
H4327												
בָּוֶבֶן	כִּי	אֱלֹהִים										
<b>And God</b>	H3588	<b>that it was good</b>	H2896									
H430												

## Additional Cross-References

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**Genesis 1:25** (Creation): And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

**Genesis 8:19** (Parallel theme): Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.