



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 1: The First Week
Suggested Week of Use: December 3, 2023
Core Passage: Genesis 1:1-5,26-2:3

News Story Summary

On October 14, a solar eclipse took place that was visible in large portions of the United States. Those living in the western United States, as well as Mexico and Central America, had some of the best viewing since they were in the “path of totality.” One interesting astronomical experience for those in the path of totality was the “ring of fire.” This occurs when the moon passes directly in front of the sun so that only the outer edge of the sun is visible. This creates the visual effect of a fiery circle. It really is an amazing natural phenomenon and spectacular sight. Another popular eclipse viewing experience is the image referred to as the “diamond ring.” This takes place just before and just after the ring of fire, as solar flares produce what looks like a diamond on a ring.

Both solar and lunar eclipses happen because of how the moon orbits the earth and how the earth orbits the sun. The next solar eclipse visible in the United States will take place on April 8, 2024. Its path of totality will move diagonally from Mexico and central Texas toward New England and eastern Canada.

For more about this story, search “Solar eclipse 2023.” You can also find many photos from this solar eclipse that would be great to share in class.

Engage

To supplement Engage, poll class members to determine if anyone viewed the solar eclipse on October 14. Share any photos you found online. For those who viewed the eclipse (or a previous eclipse), allow them to summarize their experiences. Discuss how a solar eclipse is a visual example of God’s creative wonder. Say: *God created all—and we can witness that creation in an eclipse.* Explain that this session begins an extended study of Genesis, starting with God’s work in creation. Emphasize that God’s creation of humans—man and woman—is the pinnacle of creation because we are created in His image.

Challenge

To supplement Challenge, ask if anyone has witnessed a lunar eclipse. Be prepared to share some photos. Ask: *In what ways do you find the night sky fascinating? How often do you look up at the stars and praise God for His creative wonder?* Explain that eclipses, super moons, and other nighttime displays are visible examples of God’s amazing creativity. Encourage adults to spend some time this week praising God as they see the stars and moon at night or as they watch a sunrise or sunset. Close in prayer using the suggested prayer idea in the Leader Guide.