

Genesis Foundations Series
Genesis 1:1c – “God created the HEAVENS and the EARTH”

Begin with the Basics

Genesis 1:1a – Is God Your Foundation? Everything Begins with God

- I. The Bible Shows Us that Creation is about GOD – Creation is God-FOUNDED (He exists, is the Creator; Creation about God)
- II. The Bible Shows Us that Creation is for GOD – Creation is God-FOCUSED
 - A. A Belief in GOD is the First Step Towards the Truth (Heb 11:6 “he who comes to God must believe that He is”)
 - B. A Proper Grasp of GOD is the Foundation for All Knowledge and Wisdom (Prov 1:7; 9:10; 14:27; 19:23)
 - C. An Understanding that Creation (Including Ourselves) Was Made for GOD Is Vital (Col 1:16 “for Him”)
 - D. A Proper Response to GOD as GOD is Required of All in Mind and Action (Rom 1:18-25 “did not glorify Him as God”)

Life Principle: God is deservedly to be the Central Focus of our Lives!

Genesis 1:1a – “In the beginning, God”

7 “Beginnings” Referred to in the Bible:

1. Eternity Past (Prior to Creation) – Prov 8:22-23; John 1:1-2; 2 Thes 2:13-14; 1 John 2:13-14
2. The Beginning of the World (Creation) – Gen 1:1; Is 64:4; Matt 19:4,8; 24:21; John 8:44; Heb 1:10; 2 Pet 3:4
3. The Beginning of Jesus’ Earthly Ministry – Luke 1:2; John 2:11; 6:64; 8:25; 15:27; 16:4; 1 John 1:1
4. The Beginning of the Church (Pentecost) – Acts 11:15
5. The Beginning of Paul’s Ministry – Phil 4:15
6. Title or Characteristic of Jesus Christ – Col 1:18; Heb 7:3; Rev 1:8; 3:14
7. The Point of Conversion or Discipleship of Believers – 1 John 2:7,24; 3:11; 2 John 1:5-6

God answers the “where did we come from” question at the very start. God starts at the beginning as far as a human perspective is concerned. The Bible begins at the beginning, and ends at the end – logical, from Genesis to Revelation – the whole of Scripture in one Book.

Life Principle: Begin @ the Beginning – witnessing, instruction, introduction, history, education

What Does the Term “God” (Elohim) Indicate?

1. God is the Subject of the Bible
2. God (*elohim*) is the standard Hebrew term for deity, and is also used for pagan gods, angels, men, and judges.
3. God (*elohim*) is plural possibly the form called the plural of majesty or intensity which can mean “the fullness of deity”
4. God (*elohim*) also hints at the plurality of persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – The Trinity.

The existence of God is assumed (it is logical and obvious) – Romans 1:18-20; Ps 19:1-3

There are only two choices regarding the origin of the universe:

- (1) eternal mass (evolution via randomness – chaos that randomly results in organization) OR an
- (2) Eternal Maker (creation by a Creator; an obviously designed universe by a powerful Designer)

Genesis 1:1b – “...God created...”

“GOD CREATED” – The Concept of Creation

The Usage of the Word “Create” (bārā) (6x in the creation account: 1:1, 21, 27[3x]; 2:3; cf. also 2:4a – about 50+ in OT.)

- Its subject is always God (men do not create); used exclusively of God’s activity with no presence of existing material; it consistently refers to a new activity; it refers to the product, not the material from which it is made.

The Meaning of the Word for “Create” (bārā)

- The context indicates that creation was *ex nihilo* (“out of nothing”). “Create” does not necessarily mean an altogether new thing. “Create” and “make” are used interchangeably for the creation of human life (vv. 26–27; cp. 2:7; 5:1). If the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* is expounded here, it must be from the tenor [context] of the text and not from this single lexical term. The context [here and in all of Scripture] demands that this was a creation without preexisting material.

God and “Create” (bārā)

- One God Did the Creating – “created” (*bārā*) is singular. God Created Everything – The declaration of v. 1 without any intimation of competing preexisting matter is so distinctive from its ancient counterparts that we must infer that all things have their ultimate origin in God as Creator. God Is Not Part of Creation – Since God is Creator of all that exists, he is antecedent to it, distinct from it, while yet intimately involved with it. The God of nature is not subject to the laws of nature.

Scripture Immediately Rejects At Least Nine Philosophies (Col 2:6-8):

- Atheism – Pantheism – Polytheism – Radical materialism – Naturalism – Fatalism – Dualism – Humanism – Nihilism

God Created EVERYTHING Ultimately Out of NOTHING

A. Where is God going to put this creation? *Heavens!* → SPACE

Heavens (1) vs Heaven (8) vs heavens (9)

It seems, however, that the essential meaning of the word corresponds to our modern term space, such as when we speak of the universe as a universe of space and time. Apparently there is no other Hebrew word used in this sense in the Bible, whereas the use of “heaven” is everywhere consistent with such a concept.

Understood in this way, it can also refer either to space in general or to a particular space, just as we may speak of “outer space,” “inner space,” “atmospheric space,” and so forth. In Genesis 1:1, the term refers to the component of space in the basic space-mass-time universe. (Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*)

3 Heavens Are Referred to in Scripture:

The Third Heaven – The Presence of God and Home of the Angels

2 Cor 12:2-4 ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago -- whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows -- such a one was caught up to the third heaven. ³ And I know such a man -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- ⁴ how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

The *third* heaven was populated with hundreds of millions of angelic beings (Dan 7:10), each one a “son of God” in the sense of a direct creation by God (cf. Job 1:6) and therefore perfect in all their ways (Ezek 28:15). They existed on the first day of creation, for Job 38:6-7 tells of their singing and of their shout of joy at the creation of the earth. *The Creation of the Heavens and the Earth*, John Whitcomb, GJ 8:2 (Spr 67) p. 30

The Second Heaven – The Realm of Outer Space

Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

The *second* heaven, the realm of “outer space,” was presumably empty and dark, for the sun, moon, and stars were not created until the fourth day, and the special light source which divided the light from the darkness had not yet been spoken into existence. (Whitcomb)

The First Heaven – The Atmosphere or “Air” (The Sky Where Birds Fly) – Gen 1:6-8

Genesis 1:6-8 ⁶ Then God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.” ⁷ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so. ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

The *first* heaven, or atmospheric blanket, had neither vapor canopy nor clouds, for the waters were not yet lifted above the expanse (“firmament”) in the form of a vast, invisible thermal vapor blanket, as must have existed until the Flood, and thus there was no rain as in our present post-Flood world. Neither Genesis nor geology gives any support to the idea that earth’s primitive atmosphere consisted of ammonia, methane, hydrogen, and water, as the evolutionary theory of spontaneous generation of life requires. Philip Abelson, Director of the Geophysical Laboratory, Carnegie Institution of Washington, has shown that such an atmosphere could not have existed. (Whitcomb)

B. What was God going to make things out of? Earth! → MATTER

Earth in v. 1 is not quite the earth of v. 10!

In like manner the term “earth” refers to the component of matter in the universe. At the time of the initial creation, there were no other planets, stars, or other material bodies in the universe; nor did any of them come into being until the fourth day. The earth itself originally had no form to it (Genesis 1:2); so this verse must speak essentially of the creation of the basic elements of matter, which thereafter were to be organized into the structured earth and later into other material bodies. The word is the Hebrew *erets* and is often also translated either “ground” or “land.” Somewhat similarly to the use of “heaven,” it can mean either a particular portion of earth (e.g., the “land of Canaan”—Genesis 12:5) or the earth material in general (e.g., “Let the earth bring forth grass”—Genesis 1:11).

Not only does the first verse of the Bible speak of the creation of space and matter, but it also notes the beginning of time. The universe is actually a continuum of space, matter, and time, no one of which can have a meaningful existence without the other two. The term matter is understood to include energy, and must function in both space and time. “Space” is measurable and accessible to sense observation only in terms of the entities that exist and the events that happen in space, and these require both matter and time. The concept time likewise is meaningful only in terms of entities and events existing and transpiring during time, which likewise require space and matter.

Thus, Genesis 1:1 can legitimately and incisively be paraphrased as follows: “The transcendent, omnipotent Godhead called into existence the space-mass-time universe.” (Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*)

This “earthy” material was not yet energized, for “light” (i.e., the whole spectrum of electromagnetic energy, as we call it today) had not yet been activated. There was a watery matrix everywhere, with the “earth” (that is, the “dust of the earth,” as it is called later—or perhaps, in modern terminology, the particles that would function as “matter”) suspended therein. (Henry Morris, *Biblical Creationism*)

Science is concerned first of all with the fact that the universe does exist and that things do happen there. It must deal, therefore, with those *things* (Matter) and the *happenings* (Energy). However, there must also be a matrix *in which* (Space) and *during which* (Time) those things can happen. It is difficult to separate, of course, between the “things” and the “happenings.” Each necessarily involves the other and

complements the other, so that Matter-Energy could be considered, as it were, a unitary phenomenon occurring everywhere in Space and Time.

The universe, therefore, in essence must be a continuum of Space, Time and Matter-Energy. No one of the three can exist without the other. Therefore, the entire continuum must have existed simultaneously from the beginning.

This fundamental truth is taught explicitly in the very first verse of the Bible, which is the foundation of everything else. "In the beginning (Time), God created the heaven (Space) and the earth (Matter)" Genesis 1:1. The foundation verse of the Bible thus yields the foundational fact of science! (Henry Morris, *Many Infallible Proofs*)

C. How did God Do This? → ***By His WORD!***

Psalm 33:6-9 ⁶ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. ⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. ⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. ⁹ For He spoke, and it was *done*; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Psalm 148:1-6 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! ² Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! ³ Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! ⁴ Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! ⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created. ⁶ He also established them forever and ever; He made a decree which shall not pass away.

Principle: Identify the Basic Elements and Start There - God starts out with the most basic of elements – space, time, matter, and eventually light (energy). Whether growing in the Lord, raising children, building a home, teaching math, painting a picture, leaving on a trip, or dealing with a problem, identify the rudimentary components and work up from there, building on that foundation of core truths, elements, team members, etc.

A Quick Introduction to the Several Habits of a Highly Successful Creator!

1. God Had a Plan
2. God Had a Purpose (Is 45:18 – to be inhabited)
3. God Had a Pace (each day for 6 days He had specific work or phases)
4. God Began with Principle Parts (started with the basics)
5. God Followed a Progression (worked from simplicity to complexity; chaos to order)
6. God Completed Prerequisites (order) – Places then Population
7. God Had Points of Evaluation
8. God Established a Pattern to Follow
9. God Had a Point of Completion (an end)
10. God Had a Period of Rest

1 Chron 29:11 - Yours, O LORD, *is* the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all *that is* in heaven and in earth *is Yours*; Yours *is* the kingdom, O LORD, And You are exalted as head over all.

Nehemiah 9:6 You alone *are* the LORD; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.

Isaiah 42:5 – Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it:

Isaiah 45:18 For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I *am* the LORD, and *there is* no other.

Isaiah 48:13 ¹³ Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; *When* I call to them, They stand up together.

Isaiah 51:13 – And you forget the LORD your Maker, Who stretched out the heavens And laid the foundations of the earth; You have feared continually every day Because of the fury of the oppressor, *When he has* prepared to destroy. And where *is* the fury of the oppressor?