

Genesis Foundations Series

Genesis 1:1 – “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

When Was “The Beginning?”: The Answer Is in the Word

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

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) – (2) The Beginning of the World (Creation) – (3) The Beginning of Jesus’ Earthly Ministry – (4) The Beginning of the Church (Pentecost) (5) The Beginning of Paul’s Ministry – (6) Title or Characteristic of Jesus Christ – (7) The Point of Conversion or Discipleship of Believers

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 (the existence of God is assumed)
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.

There are only two choices regarding the origin of the universe: (1) eternal mass, or (2) an Eternal Maker

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.

God and “Create” (bārā) – One God Did the Creating – (*bārā*) is singular. God Created Everything – God Is Not Part of Creation

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

“THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH”

- 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 Cor4 12:2-4)

The Second Heaven – The Realm of Outer Space (Ps 19:1)

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

- B. **What was God going to make things out of? Earth! → MATTER (Earth in v. 1 is not quite the earth of v. 10!)**

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*)

- C. **How did God Do This? → By His WORD! (Ps 33:6-9; 148:1-6) – Ps 33:6 “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.”**

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.

When Was the Beginning?: Three Views of the Timing of Verse 1

- (1) **Verse 1 Refers to a Previous Creation** – Verse 1 refers to the heavens and earth which existed prior to the creation account. *This view is held by those who may hold to either **theistic evolution** or the **gap theory**. The idea is that there was a prior creation that had been previously destroyed. The terms “formless and void” are taken to be a result of judgment. The text is taken to mean, “When God began to create, the heavens and earth were formless and void”. This is textually possible, and some translations translate the verse this way.*
- (2) **Verse 1 Refers to a Preview of Creation** – Verse 1 is a summary statement of what is to follow: “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, the details of which are to follow.*”
- (3) **Verse 1 Refers to a Part of Creation on Day 1** – Verse 1 is part of Day 1. *The heavens and the earth are the first components of creation as God begins to create on Day 1. The evidence:*

A. **Genesis 2:1-4 Includes Verse 1 as Part of the Six Days of Creation (Gen 2:1-4)**

Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. This [is] the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,

B. **Conjunctions and Connectives Require a Single Day for Verses 1-2:**

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; **and** darkness [was] on the face of the deep. **And** the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. **Then** God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.*

C. **The Presence of Earth and Water Components on Day 2 is Explained Only by Verse 1:**

On Day Two, water now exists, and it is separated from earth that exists. There is no other explanation of where these came from except for Verse 1.

D. **Other Passages Combine the Heavens and the Earth in the Six Days of Creation (or their Events):**

*Ex 20:8-11 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. [In it] you shall do no work ... **For [in] six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that [is] in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.***

*Ex 31:14-17 'Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations [as] a perpetual covenant. 'It [is] a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; **for [in] six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.**' "*

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

Prov 8:27-29 When He prepared the heavens, I [was] there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep, When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep, When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth,

Is 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:

Is 45:12 I have made the earth, And created man on it. I – My hands – stretched out the heavens, And all their host I have commanded.

Jer 10:12-13 He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, And has stretched out the heavens at His discretion. When He utters His voice, [There is] a multitude of waters in the heavens: “And He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain, He brings the wind out of His treasures.”

Zech 12:1 The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:

Rev 10:6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer,

IT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!: *A literal 6-day creation defines the method of interpretation of the Bible, and lays the foundation for understanding the rest of Scripture, which builds many teachings upon the normal sense (historical-grammatical) of interpretation.*