

**The Book of Genesis**  
**The Origin of the Universe (1:1-5)**  
**08/14/2019 Wednesday PM**

**Genesis 1:1-5**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. <sup>3</sup>And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup>God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

**Summary**

- Since this is the very beginning of the Scriptures, it is no surprise that it introduces us to our Creator straight away
- That we have a Creator, is the only logical explanation for the fact that the universe has a beginning.
- This is what sets the biblical worldview apart from all other worldviews that are out there.
- God's creatorship is a vital doctrine of God, and it proves his divine rights and sovereignty.
- Right on the first day, God brings the universe into existence out of nothing in **v. 1**.
- On this first day, God makes lights (**v.3**), and already declares it to be 'good' (**v.4**).
- The current day-night cycle of about 24 hours is initiated from this day (**v.5**).
- The language of Genesis teaches plainly creation in six consecutive normal-length days.
- In these earliest parts of the Bible, we also see hints of the plurality of the Godhead.
- These include the plural Elohim for God (**v.1**), and the spirit of God hovering over the waters (**v.2**).
- On this 1<sup>st</sup> day of the universe, the earth was unformed and unfilled, because the creative process had just begun.
- There are no grounds for any notion that the earth was judged at this point, so that it 'became' formless and empty, as the gap theorists claim.
- The earth was still 'good' at this point.

**THE VERY BEGINNING (1.1)**

- In a sense, this first verse is the most important one in the entire Bible because if God can create the whole universe, then the rest of the extrabiblical events in the Bible would have been easy.
- Also, in this one verse, all other false religions are rejected. (Atheism, Agnosticism, Evolutionism, Pantheism...)
- We notice that the first words of this verse say, "In the beginning". This is the Hebrew *re'shiyth*.
- In its context, it means an absolute beginning or "the first of its kind."
- Some sceptics have asserted that the Hebrew here should be translated, "in the beginning when God created" or "in the beginning of God's creating."
- It should be noted, that throughout history, **Genesis 1:1** has been consistently translated as "In the beginning" meaning the origin of everything. It was translated this way in the LXX, Vulgate, and the Targums as well.
- The Hebrew word in **v.1** for created is *bara'* which is only ever used of God creating something and not man.
- Not only is **v.1** teaching the origins of the universe, but also of time itself.
- Time is a creation of God, and this is something that even scientist hold to, at least in part.
- Albert Einstein's Theory of General Relativity shows that time is connected with matter, and where there is no matter, there is no time. Since God created matter, he also created time. Science finally caught up with the Bible.
- God is eternal, which means that he exists outside of space and time, not within infinite time, but beyond time.
- He is seeing the beginning of everything and the end of everything all at the same time.
- **Illustration:** The Hebrew word that we see in this verse for "God" is *Elohim*. This is extremely significant, because it is the first mention of God in the Bible and it is the plural form of God which refers to the Trinity.
- So far, we have looked at, "In the beginning God created." A lot of people usually ask, Who created God?
- No one created God, he has always existed. He has no beginning and will have no end.
- Logic tells us that everything which has a beginning has a cause. The universe has a beginning; thus the universe has a cause. God is the First Cause.
- Science again confirms the Bible with Newton's First Law of Thermodynamics which states that natural processes can neither create nor destroy mass-energy. Basically, the universe could not have created itself.
- Newton's Second Law of Thermodynamics states that the amount of energy "available for work" is running out. If the total amount of mass-energy is limited, and the amount of useable energy is decreasing, then the universe cannot have existed forever and must have had a starting point.
- The verse goes on to say, "...the heavens and the earth."

- Throughout the Bible, this phrase has always meant the totality of creation, not just the earth and its atmosphere, or our solar system alone. (e.g. **Genesis 14:19, 22; 2 Kings 19:15; Psalm 121:2**)
- The Bible is the only holy book that records the creation of the universe. The rest record the creation of beings or matter within an already existing universe.

## HOW THE EARTH ORIGINALLY APPEARED (1:2)

- **V. 2** runs on from **v.1**, describing the condition of the earth. God had not yet formed or filled the earth, thus it was formless and empty.
- ‘Formless’ here means that it has yet to have the organized ‘form’ it would have at the end Creation Week, including the separate land and seas. With that being said, it could have already been a sphere.
- What comes next in this passage is God forming and filling the earth. **Vv.3-5** describe the rest of Day 1, and the rest of the chapter describes the entire Creation Week. So, **v. 2** is part of Day 1 of Creation Week.
- “The deep,” mentioned in this verse is the Hebrew word *têhowm* a common biblical word for the oceans.
- **2 Peter 3:5** says, “But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water.” This suggests that God first created an enormous ball of water.
- In this verse we also see the first mention of the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.
- He was already moving over the waters, which seemed to cover the whole earth.
- **Illustration:** Gap Theories: It is important to note that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, people began to attempt to fit ideas from ‘science’ into the Bible. They tried to squeeze billions of years into the text.
- People that hold to the Gap Theories, believe in six-normal length creation days, but they also accept billions of years for the age of the earth.
- The classical gap theory inserts this long period of time between **Genesis 1:1 and 1:2** and this time period includes a great catastrophe that took place such as the meteor that they say killed the dinosaurs.
- The plain reading of the text never lends itself to such beliefs. They only come when you try to make worldly ideas fit into the pages of the Bible.

## CREATION OF LIGHT (1:3-5a)

- **V. 3** - In these verses we see God creating light with his spoken word.
- **Psalm 33:6, 9** says, “<sup>6</sup>By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth... <sup>9</sup>For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.”
- This light was not God, it was something that he created. Yes, light is used to describe God in the Bible, but this is different. It is not teaching that God created himself.
- **V.4** – Here, we also see God’s first of seven declarations that the Creation was “good.”
- He then goes on to make light and darkness. This is the first mention of the day-night cycle.
- This was in fact prior to the sun being created, however, all you need is light coming from one direction to have a day-night cycle.
- The point is that God created the entity of light, the sun produces light, but God created light itself on Day 1.
- “Darkness” as we see here is not evil; it is merely the absence of light.
- It was at this point that God created the first day-night cycle and he provided the light himself.

## COMPLETEING DAY 1 (1:5b)

- **V.1:5b** says, “And there was evening, and there was morning-the first day.” This is the first biblical reference to these words
- When you read this part of the verse, what comes to your mind about how the word “day” here?
- Normal-Length Creation Days: Day 1 sets the pattern for all the other creation days. They have a repeating formula of *evening + morning + numeric*. If we compare Scripture with Scripture, we can see this means a ~24 day.
- “Day”, singular or plural, used with a number is used 410 times outside of Genesis 1 and always means a normal-length day.
- “Evening” plus “morning” without “day” is used 38 times outside of Genesis 1 and always means normal-length day.
- “Evening” plus “morning” with “day” is used 23 times outside of Genesis 1 and again, always means a normal-length day.
- “Night” with “day” is used 52 times outside of Genesis 1 and is a normal-length day.
- **Illustration:** The only reason to believe that the days in Genesis 1 are not normal-length days, is when you are trying to fit outside ideas into the Bible. (Day-Age Theory, Literal Day with Gaps Theory, Revelatory Day Theory)
- The plain reading of the text shows us that Moses intended for us to understand this as a literal 24 hour day and that will follow into the rest of Creation Week.

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