

The Book of Genesis

Chapter 1

1:1 In the beginning God [Hebrew: "Elohim" (plural)] **created** [Hebrew: "barah" = "to bring into being"] **the heavens and the earth.**

"In the beginning..."

Since God inhabits eternity (ISA 57:15), He has no beginning and no end. Therefore, this reference to the beginning must be to the start of the physical creation. After completing their planning and design, the God Family [God, who became the Father, and the Word, who became Jesus Christ] initiated physical laws, matter, and life, by converting spirit from their eternal existence into the physical, three dimensional universe. Paul proves this in several passages:

- HEB 11:3—*the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*
- 2CO 4:18—*for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*
- ROM 1:20—*for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead. (KJV)*

"Heavens"

"Heavens" refers to the areas we have termed atmosphere and space. The third heaven (2CO 12:2) is the spirit dimension where God has always existed, and therefore cannot be included with the other two heavens as being created at this time, since the third heaven has, like God, always been.

Duality of Scripture

The passage from chapter 1:2 through 2:3 holds a dual meaning. The first is at the surface level—the account of the restoration of life on earth. The second is cloaked within the symbolism contained within the actions God takes on each of the seven days. It is the overview of the plan of God and how man will ultimately be restored to God and enter into a family relationship in the family of God.

1:2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face [NIV: "surface"] **of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.**

Satan's Rebellion & Re-Creation

The NIV margin states that the first "was" can also be translated "became," and is rendered as such in 2:7 and 19:26. Since God is not the author of confusion (1CO 14:33), and since we are told that He "*created it not in vain [tohu], He formed it to be inhabited*" (ISA 45:18), we understand that the earth was not originally formless and empty [*tohu va bohu*], but became that way.

We find in ISA 14:12-17 and EZE 28:15-18 that a being called Heylel [later known as Satan] attempted to overthrow God but was thrown to the earth where he defiled the planet, destroying the life God had established upon it.

After this rebellion and its aftermath, God renewed the surface of the earth (PSA 104:30) so that life could once again thrive. This account focuses on this renewal process—showing how God undoes the damage created by Satan.

"The Deep"

"Darkness over the surface of the deep" not only describes the physical condition of the planet [flooded by water and enveloped by the thick cloud of dust, ash and smoke left from Satan's rage], but also details the condition of mankind after his overthrow by Satan in the Garden. "The deep" represents humanity (DAN 7:2,17; REV 17:15). In his state of severance from God, man is totally lacking the understanding of why he is (PSA 82:5; PRO 4:19) and is therefore in darkness and blind to God's plan.

"The Spirit of God" refers to the power God is about to use for the restoration of life, as well as the power of God that is not yet in the "waters" of humanity.

1:3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

God used His power to clear the cloud of debris preventing the light of the sun from reaching the surface of the planet. In like manner, God has reached down into humanity and commanded the light to shine out of darkness in the lives of a few, so that they can comprehend His truth (2CO 4:6; 1PE 2:9).

1:4 God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. (NIV)

Light was good for two reasons. Physical life without light is impossible. Man can only be restored to God through the Light of God. As ACT 26:18 shows, the darkness of this world is compared to the "power of Satan," while the light represents the power of God, the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God which separates those upon whom the Light shines and those who are still in darkness.

1:5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. (NIV)

The First Day

This was not the first day of the physical creation—not the first time the earth made a revolution. It was the first day of the first week which God delineated to be the model of the timetable He would use for the reproduction of Himself.

The day is separated into two parts—evening and morning. The darkness comes first, then the light. This is the same sequence of conditions that occurs to man: he is first in darkness, then the light of God's truth dawns in his mind. Likewise, God separates those He calls from those He has yet to enlighten by designating His begotten as belonging to the day, and those still under the sway of Satan as belonging to the night. 1TH 5:5 (KJV): "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."

1:6 And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." (NIV)

The implication is a thick fog was settled upon the waters, covering the earth so that it was difficult to distinguish where the one ended and the other began. God cleared the atmosphere of the planet by separating the fog from the seas. Just as God put a distinction between the two types of water by pulling them apart, so He puts a distinction between the people upon whom the light has shined and the people who are still in darkness.

1:7 So God made [Hebrew: "asah" = "to put in order"] the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. (NIV)

Proportionately, there is an enormous difference in the amount of water in the seas and in the clouds. Likewise, there is an enormous difference in the number of people God has called out of darkness and those He has not. Just as the waters of the clouds are above the other waters and of a different composition, the people God has begotten [those given His Spirit] are to be different in thoughts and in actions (2CO 6:14,17; EPH 5:8,11).

1:8 God called the expanse "sky" [KJV: "heaven" – first "heaven"] And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. (NIV)

The second day, or stage, of God's plan has now been defined.

1:9 And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. (NIV)

At this point God caused the flood waters to recede so that the continents could be prepared for new life.

1:10-11 God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters He called "seas." And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. (NIV)

Once God gathered the waters together into one place, He created trees to produce fruit. The people of God, the children of light, are called to come out of the world and are gathered into one body [the Church] where they are expected to be producers of fruit (GAL 5:22-23), and are even compared to trees that produce fruit in season (PSA 1:1-3).

1:12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. (NIV)

Tree Rings

The study of dendrochronology [dating by tree rings] applied to dead bristlecone pines, has produced an unbroken record of tree rings dating back 8200 years. Does this mean some trees lived through the devil's rebellion and survived the destruction pictured in vs 2? We must note here that God created mature, fruit-bearing trees on the third day. Mature trees would have been created with growth rings.

1:13-14 And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day. And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, (NIV)

Signs & Seasons

The KJV says "*let them be for signs, and for seasons...*" Use of the KJV rendering can refer to signs as the events such as the sun and moon standing still in the days of Joshua (JOS 10:12), the sun going backward in the days of Hezekiah (2KI 20:8), and the heavenly signs at the end of the age (MAT 24:29). The duality of the scriptures also leads to the conclusion that the holydays, instituted by God and based on a measurement of time, are signs that show how His plan would develop.

1:15-16 and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made [Hebrew: "asah"] two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. (NIV)

God simply appointed the order of the lights. Night would not be a time of total darkness, but would be illuminated by the moon, reflecting the light of the sun.

1:17 God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, (NIV)

Christ, the sun of righteousness (MAL 4:2), will govern the earth at His return. In the meantime, He governs His Church, which reflects His light (MAT 5:14-16) in the darkness of this world (EPH 6:12). We find several instances in the Bible which refer to the Church as being symbolic of the moon, such as the statement Jesus makes about His mother (LUK 8:21) and in Joseph's dream (GEN 37:9-10).

Just as the stars were appointed to help govern the night, angels have been sent to assist those with whom God is now working (HEB 1:14).

1:18-20 to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day. And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." (NIV)

Until this time, life could not be found in the seas or the air. In the same manner, the world today is devoid of real life; that is, life without death. The devil, who is now allowed to reign as the prince of the power of the air (EPH 2:2), envelops this world in darkness and death. Therefore, as long as man is in the darkness of this world, he is separated from real life (EPH 4:17-18).

1:21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. (NIV)

When Satan is removed from his position on earth, life will spring forth to all (ISA 32:10,15; 11:9).

1:22-27 God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day. And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God [Hebrew: "Elohim" (plural)] said, "Let Us make man in Our image, in Our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created [Hebrew: "barah"] man [Hebrew: "adam" = "human beings" (REB)] in His own image ["outward shape and form"], in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (NIV)

Created in His Image

Although having the same likeness, or features which God has, physical man was only created a temporary being, yet has the capacity to become permanent like God.

1:28-29 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. (NIV)

Meatless Eden

God does not mention that man could eat animal flesh at this point. However, when He created the animals, He distinguished a certain group as cattle or livestock (vs 24), showing that certain animals might be added to the plants at a later time. These animals were added after the first sin was committed because animal blood was required for sin offerings. At the time God added animal flesh to man's diet, it became necessary to show that not all animals had been created with flesh that man could safely eat. Therefore, He revealed which were appropriate [1TI 4:3—"meats which God has created to be received"] and had that understanding recorded later in LEV 11 and DEU 14.

1:30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. (NIV)

Harmony

This was the condition at recreation: all of the animals were herbivorous, living in harmony. During the Flood of Noah, animals were herbivorous, living on the ark as they will in the Kingdom. God states that after Christ returns all animals will once again be herbivorous (ISA 11:7). However, fossil evidence shows that prior to recreation, during the time of Satan's rule, there were carnivores. Therefore, since the nature of man was under Satan's influence after being evicted from Eden, it seems logical that the nature of the animals would be influenced as well, being carnivorous during the period of time from Adam to Noah.

1:31 God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. (NIV)