

GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

Chapter I
January 4, 2004

GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

Small Group Discussion Questions

- 1) As you read the account of creation (**Genesis 1**), notice that God created light on the first day, but He did not create the Sun and Moon until the fourth day. How do you explain this? Where did they get their light?
- 2) **Genesis 1:20-24** talks about God creating animals according to their kind. What does “according to their kind” mean? Are there any “kinds” that were not created by God...but were created through evolution? Can a “kind” mix with another kind?
- 3) In **Genesis 1:26** you read the following, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...”. Who is the “Us” and the “Our” He is talking about?
- 4) What are the first 5 books of the Bible called? What are they?
- 5) Can you name some things that began in Genesis?
- 6) Are the people in your group writing out the book of Genesis? Have you heard of this project?
- 7) In **Genesis 1:28**, we read the following, “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”
 - a. Define “Be fruitful and multiply”
 - b. Define “Subdue”
 - c. Define “Dominion”
 - d. Restate this verse in your own language, and discuss how you would explain this to a non believer.

GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

I. BACKGROUND & CULTURE

“Delve into the Torah and continue to delve in the Torah, for everything is in it, look deeply into it; grow old and gray over it, and do not stray from it, for you can have no better portion than it.” Avos 5:26 – from the MISHNAH.

What is the Torah?

- The word literally means - *instructions or teachings of God.*
- The Torah consists of the five books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).

Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

Genesis 1 & 2 - Creation	Genesis 4 - Sacrifice
Genesis 2 - Man & Woman	Genesis 4 - Grace
Genesis 2 - Sabbath	Genesis 4 - City Life
Genesis 2 - Marriage	Genesis 2 & 4 - Agriculture
Genesis 2 - Home	Genesis 3 & 4 - Trade
Genesis 3 - Childbirth	Genesis 10 - Races
Genesis 3 - Sin	Genesis 11 - Languages
Genesis 4 - Murder	Genesis 12 - Chosen People

“The TORAH relates the story of the 6 days of creation ‘ex nihilo’ (to create something out of nothing) to refute the theories that the Universe came into being through some massive coincidence or accident. The story of creation speaks only in general terms, because its primary purpose is to state that nothing came into being except at God’s command.” Rabbi Ramban

“There are two kinds of creation, there is a creation of mountains and valleys, of solar systems and brain cells – and there is the creation of the people who give meaning and purpose to the universe they inhabit. The commentators refer to Genesis as “the Book of Creation”, but the events of the six days when heaven and earth and all their fullness were brought into being occupy but a small fraction of the book, rather the primary emphasis of the book of creation is how the patriarchs fashioned a family into the nation that became the chosen people.” Rabbi Rashi



GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

Contradictions between world views and the book of Genesis:

Doctrine/Belief	Genesis says
Atheism - The doctrine or belief that there is no God	All things were created by God
Pantheism - The belief that all reality is essentially divine; i.e. there is no distinction between the creator and creation	God is transcendent/distinguishable
Polytheism - The belief in many gods	There is only one God
Materialism - The philosophical theory that matter is the only reality	Matter has a beginning
Humanism - A movement concerned with human ability and achievement. God is a non-issue.	God, not man, is the ultimate reality
Uniformism - The philosophical theory which stresses unchanging constant	God intervenes

GEOGRAPHY

Genesis chapter two contains the following passage:

“A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah...The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush...The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.” (vv. 10 - 14)

These are all actual geographic locations and they give us landmarks of the general region in which the Bible takes place. The rivers are a combination of world rivers such as the Tigris and Euphrates, which are located in Mesopotamia (modern day Middle East – specifically Iraq). The region of Cush has been generally assumed to be either Ethiopia or Arabia. Pishon is unknown. Havilah is believed to be Arabia by most scholars.

In Genesis 10:1-32, we get a table of nations that surround future Israel after God destroys the world through the flood. In these passages the geography expands to include Asia Minor, known to us today as present day Turkey. This region also known as Canaan (10:6) would also become the seat of Babylonia and Assyria as we read later on in the Bible.



GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

II. THEME & AUTHORSHIP

Themes

There are a few predominate themes found in Genesis. First, this is a book of beginnings, the great introduction to the drama of redemption.¹

Second, we see God preparing a people. We have God choosing and then testing. Whether it be Abraham, Isaac, Jacob or Noah, God chooses and then begins to winnow and purge. Remember, God's goal is to create a people who would fulfill Genesis 3:15. The initial step will be taken for man's redemption by a divine covenant made with a chosen race whose early history is portrayed here.

Author: Moses / **Date:** 1450 – 1410 BC

III. ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

1. God is the Creator (v. 1)
2. God is all powerful (the entire chapter)
3. God turned nothingness into everything that is (v. 2-24)
4. God used words to create the Universe (v. 3)
5. God is plural in nature (v.26)
6. God is giving; He gave dominion to man (v. 26-28)
7. God is a spirit (v. 2)
8. God has the authority to decide what is "good" (v. 10,12,19,21,25,31)
9. God blesses (v.22)
10. God gave everything to man (v. 15,16, 29)

¹Wood, D. R. W., & Marshall, I. H. 1996. *New Bible dictionary* (3rd ed. /) . InterVarsity Press: Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill.



GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

IV. WORD STUDIES

ברא

Hebrew: “Bara” (pronounced baw-raw) Strongs #0125
English: Create

The Hebrew word *bara* may imply creation out of nothing, “ex-nihilo.” The word can mean bringing into existence or initiating something new. In Scripture, the word is only used with God as the subject (in the simple tense in Hebrew). Therefore, the idea of creation out of nothing may be implied in Genesis 1:1.

God is the creator of all things, the object of creation, and the sustainer of creation.

What did God create the world out of? The Hebrew word *bara* is specific: He created the world out of nothing; not out of Himself. God is separate from His creation. Unlike Eastern and pantheistic perceptions of God, the Bible teaches that the universe could perish; yet He would remain.

Men cannot "create" in the sense the term is used in Genesis 1:1. We can only "fashion" or "form" things out of existing material. The closest we come to creating is in reproducing ourselves sexually. This is perhaps one reason why Satan wants to pervert and destroy God's plan and standard for sexuality; it is deeply connected to our being made in the image of God

God created the heavens and the earth. Men who do not accept God as the creator must find other explanations for our existence.

Possible suggestions to the problem of creation: once, there was absolutely nothing, and now there is something; or, before there was anything created, there was a Personal Being

If you believe Genesis 1:1, you should have no problem believing the rest of the Bible.



GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

V. PROPHECIES OF CHRIST – GOSPEL COMPONENT

John 1:1 predates Genesis 1:1: God created by speaking the Word of God

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. John 1:1-5

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. Colossians 1:15-18

VI. BIBLE DIFFICULTIES / PROBLEM PASSAGES

How could there be light before the sun was made?

(Genesis 1:3,14)

The sun was not created until day four, yet there was light on day one.

The sun is not the only source of light in the universe. The sun may have existed from the first day, but only appeared as the “mist cleared” on the fourth day. We see light on a cloudy day, even when we can’t see the sun. Many have been puzzled by the fact that light is referred to here at this particular place, and yet today we know that it fits within what science has discovered, that with the splitting of the atom; light is closely related to energy, and it is not surprising that light (in contrast to the sun) is distinguished in this passage.

We must also remember that God is light, and where God is, there is light. “Let there be light” are words that express a principle theme of the Bible: God bringing light into darkness. *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.*” Isaiah 9:2

Jesus spoke of Himself as the “*light of the world*” John 8:12.

In the New Jerusalem there will be no need for the sun “*The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The lamb is it’s light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in it’s light...*” Revelation. 21: 23, 24

The bottom line is that God said it, and it was done: *there was light*. His command caused reality.



GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

Were Adam and Eve real people or just myths?

(Genesis 1:27)

Many interpreters today consider the first chapters of Genesis to be narrative myth, not history. Yet the Bible presents Adam and Eve as literal people, who had real children from whom the rest of the human race was born.

Genesis 1-2 presents Adam and Eve as actual persons and narrates the important events in their lives. They gave birth to literal children who did the same (Gen. 4:1, 25; 5:1). Later on in Genesis we see the same phrase *“this is the history of”* or *“descendants after you”* to record later history in Genesis (6:9; 9:2; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 17:7,9). Later O.T. chronologies place Adam at the top of the list (1 Chron. 1:1). The N.T. chronicles Adam at the beginning of Jesus’ literal ancestors (Luke 3:38). Paul makes reference to Adam as a historic person in Romans 5:12, *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world...”* here we see the first man, one man, Adam. Paul continues in verse 14, *“Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam...”* Adam is viewed here, as being just as historic as is Moses. Verse 15 goes on to strengthen this: *“But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.”* Here we see a parallel of the history of Adam (the first man) and Jesus Christ (the God-Man) as well as us (redeemed man).

The point that Paul makes in Romans is strengthened even more so in 1 Corinthians 15:21-22. *“For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.”* Here again we see the parallel of the history of Adam and that of Jesus. Verse 45 continues, *“So also it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, Became a living soul.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”* The *“so it is written”* is in reference to Genesis 2:7. Paul also makes reference to Adam in 1 Timothy 2:13-14, Eve, in 2 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Corinthians 11:8-9. In answering the Pharisee’s question concerning divorce in Matthew 19:4-5, Jesus answer’s by quoting Genesis 1 and 2 *“Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female...”* Jesus is referring to Genesis 1:27. But He continues: *“...for this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”* Throughout Scripture we have strong testimony to the history of Adam and Eve, by the authority of Paul, Luke, and Jesus.



GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

What is the image of God?

(Genesis 1:27)

People are God's image-bearers on earth. This does not mean that the invisible God, who is spirit, has a body from which He made copies. It does mean God designed the whole person (body and soul) to reflect what He is like in many ways: intelligence, capacity to rule and live in relationship to Him and fellow human beings. Being made in the image of God means every person has inherent value and worth. God's image is neither to be murdered (Genesis 9:6) nor cursed (James 3:9-10). The Bible later speaks of others aspects of one's image that originate with God such as righteousness, holiness (Ephesians 4:24) and knowledge (Colossians 3:10).

Twice there is mention of the "firmament" or "expanse" that divides the waters from the waters. It says this twice. What does this mean?

(Genesis 1:6,7)

It is believed that, before the flood, a layer of water protected the entire earth's atmosphere. The protection from the sun's rays provided by this layer is believed to be one of the reasons people lived hundreds of years. There is a lot that remains unknown to us pertaining to what the world was like before the flood.

VII. SOUL-WINNERS, SO WHAT?

Why did God create the universe, the earth, and mankind?

The Bible tells us that we are the focus of His creation.

Why man?

For fellowship – a relationship

How committed is God to this?

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

