

Genesis - Creation

- Creation [1:1]
 - “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”
 - The phrase “In the beginning” is the Hebrew word בְּרֵאשִׁית (bə-re’shiyth) [Jer 26:1; 27:1; 28:1].
 - This word clearly points to a beginning, but does not require that nothing precedes it.
 - For example, we know that God is eternal and has no beginning, so He existed prior to this.
 - John 1:1 speaks of a beginning which clearly precedes this beginning in Gen 1:1.
 - As we have learned in our Colossians study, the begetting of the Son’s human soul and spirit also precedes the creation events [Ps 2:7; Col 1:15].
 - This verse marks the beginning of creation.
 - The word “God” is אֱלֹהִים (‘e-lo-hiym).
 - This is a plural noun.
 - Whenever this word is used of the one true God, the associated verb/context is always singular.
 - This is a clear reference to the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – the three persons of the Godhead, one in essence.
 - This word is sometimes used of false gods, but in those cases the verb/context is always plural.
 - The word “created” is בָּרָא (ba-ra’) and throughout the O.T. is only used with God as the subject.
 - This word is used here to describe ex-nihilo (out of nothing) creation.
 - This word is not used again in this chapter until verse 27 in reference to Adam and Eve.
 - The word עָשָׂה (‘a-sah) is found in a number of verses in this chapter and means to form something out of existing materials.
 - The important thing to note is that the creation of the heavens and the earth takes place in its entirety here in verse one.
 - The word “heavens” is שָׁמַיִם (sha-ma- yim).
 - This word is used to describe the entirety of the universe with the exception of the earth itself.
 - The heavens form the dwelling place for the angels [Matt 24:36; Mark 12:25; Luke 2:15; John 1:51].
 - In the Bible the word heaven is used for...
 - The sky (earth’s atmosphere) [Gen 1:26, 28, 30].
 - The universe sans the earth [1 Chr 16:26].
 - The place where God resides outside of the created universe [Gen 24:7; Ezra 5:12; Neh 1:4-5].

- The word “and” is the Hebrew prefix וְ (wə).
- This prefix is a connective, coupling the heavens and the earth together as what was created.
- This prefix does not require that the heavens and the earth were created simultaneously.
- The word “earth” is אֶרֶץ (‘e-rets).
- This word is used of the whole planet, the soil, the land or the people of the land.
- This word occurs 20 times in this chapter and in each case is describing the whole planet.
- Principles of Genesis 1:1
 - God is eternal and has no beginning or end [Deut 33:27].
 - The universe we live in was created by God and has not always existed.
 - The universe was created by God out of nothing, not from material that already existed through a big bang or any other theory science proposes.
 - Gen 1:1 does not stand alone as testifying that God created the universe [Gen 2:4; Ex 20:11; 31:17; Psalm 121:2; 124:8; Isa 42:5; Col 1:16; Rev 10:6].
 - God created the heavens... and the earth.
 - The pattern of God’s creative work is to first establish a habitat and then place His creatures in that habitat [Gen 2:7-8].
 - We know that the angels were present when the earth was created [Job 38:4-7].
 - It is possible that the angels were created prior to the creation of the heavens, but following God’s pattern He would have created the heavens, then the angels and then placed the angels in their habitat – the heavens.
 - This means that the rest of the universe was created and then sometime later the earth was created in a separate creative event.
 - The earth is, therefore, a unique part of the universe, created as a focus of God’s plan and program, and is not simply a random planet that happens to be able to support carbon-based life.
 - That God alone is eternal and that He created the universe out of nothing is one of the fundamental truths of our faith.
 - Rejecting this vital truth by taking Gen 1:1 as allegorical is as nonsensical as taking the many passages that describe Christ’s death on cross as being allegorical.
 - It is noteworthy that the very first reference to God in the Bible is אֱלֹהִים (‘e-lo-hiym).
 - The significance of this is not lost on Hebrews who, soon after placing their faith in Jesus Christ, come to recognize the Trinity in the very first verse in the Bible.