



Study # 1

Genesis Chapter 1

Purpose of the passage:

To declare God's creation of the world out of nothing, and its organization into a perfect world in six literal 24 hour days. It also declares man's creation in God's image and how man was given dominion over the creatures. This is vital information to know about God, about the world He has created and about man's origin and purpose of life. The knowledge of God as the Creator and man as creature is imperative to our fellowship with the true and living God. It was the apostle Paul's starting point when teaching the Athenians about the "unknown God." Acts 17:22-31.

Key verse: Verse 1 "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

This text is fundamental to the whole book of Genesis as the book of beginnings and to the whole Bible as God's revelation to man. It gives a true foundation to the history of the world and of mankind.

This is the battle ground between God's revelation and man's reason, or between faith in God's word and so-called science. God has spoken of His own work of creation. We are not left to speculate how the earth originated, nor how we originated.

Observations – Lessons from this chapter.

1. **God's direct creation of the world and all things in the world is the starting point of our knowledge of God and our worship of Him.** To reject God as Creator is to deny everything He is. To attribute creation to God expounds many of His attributes – His supernatural power, infinite wisdom and His sovereign reign over all His creatures. All theology comes back to the nature of God as distinct from His creation and His rule over creature. Every reader of Genesis should bow to the fact that God is wholly other from His creative work. He is the self-existent God who existed before the world was created. Creation did not change the nature of God; it only reveals Him as the infinite being, who is eternal, self existent and unchangeable.
2. **God created the world in six days and that is the basis for a seven-day week and the principle of Sabbath rest.** Genesis chapter one sets out each day of God's creative work in profoundly clear terms. It lists: "first day", "second day" through to "sixth day". This is deliberate and should sober deniers of God's literal six days of creation. The Hebrew word for day is "YOM". It is used consistently in the Old Testament for literal 24 hour days. See the account of God feeding His people in the wilderness with manna (Exodus 16:16-26). Note the statement of "morning and evening" and the word "day", which is the Hebrew word "YOM". Literally it means, "hot", as in the heat of each day's cycle with the sun shining by day. Genesis 1 also carefully records that "*the evening and the morning were the first day*", and "second day" through to "sixth day." God wants the reader of this creation-account to have no doubt that He created the world in six literal 24 hour days.
3. **God created a perfect world.** Look for the statement after each day's creation, "and it was good," (v4,10, 12,18,21,25 or "it was very good" in v. 31. Truly, God's work is perfect. He did not create a broken world, but a universe that functioned perfectly. We now live in a fallen world that is under the curse, but Adam was created and placed in a perfect environment, which reflected God's glory in every detail. Even inanimate

objects were declared good. Man was made morally good, but the earth, and the whole universe were made to function exactly as God designed. There was no loss of perfection in the production of the world.

4. **God created His creatures after their kind (v 12, 21,24, 25).** God put boundaries for procreation. Plants, animals, birds and fish can only produce offspring according to the special design of their own order. By this deliberate plan, God ruled out evolution among the species. Horses and donkeys can produce mules, but mules do not produce offspring!
 5. **God created man in His own image to glorify Himself.** To be made in God's image meant dominion over every creature on sea, land and air. Man was directly created as a higher order, and was given to rule over the earth and other creatures. To be made in God's "image" or "likeness" (v 26) does not mean physical likeness, as God is a pure spirit. Rather it means moral and spiritual likeness. Man was given a conscience, that moral arbiter built into our nature, which determines right from wrong. From the first week of creation man had the faculties to experience fellowship with God's approval or shame and guilt through God's disapproval. (Ecc. 7:9, Eph. 4:24.) God's nature, or law, was written in his heart.
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Application: – How does this apply to me? You are a creature; God is your Creator. You must never forget this fact in your walk with God and in your worship of Him. To take the place of a creature honours God and this becomes the starting point for a life with true purpose. To deny God as Creator is pride that must be renounced. The Bible gives various examples of true worship where man is humbled to the dust. The first Q. & A. of the Shorter Catechism is the true starting point of Christian doctrine. *"Man's chief end [true purpose] is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever."* To deny that is to be a lost soul.

Things to do in light of this study:

1. Memorize the Q. & A. number one of the Shorter Catechism and meditate upon it with the scripture proofs.
2. Address God in prayer and worship as your Creator, acknowledging your own dependence upon Him for life, breath and future blessing. You are totally in the hands of God, as your Creator.
3. Renounce the world's view of evolution, and theistic evolution with its attempts to assign vast periods of time to each of God's six days of creation. All of these views are rebellious to God's work as Creator and His rule over His creatures.
4. Learn to live in the enjoyment of God's power, and His sovereign rule over this world. Christ is not only the head of the church, He is also Lord of Creation (Colossians 1:15-18).
5. Note in the book of Psalms, the song book of the church, how God is worshipped as Creator. Psalm 19 will stand out in this regard.

Further questions and points to study:

Study the words "created" "heaven" and "earth" with a concordance.

Look for instances of Christ's references to the week of creation.

Could there have been a civilization before Adam was created? Think of the principle that death came into the world through sin?

Does a straightforward reading of Genesis ch. 1 give even a token foundation to the notion of a pre-existing civilization, as suggested by advocates of the gap theory?