

From God's Creation to God's Nation

Genesis 1:1 to Exodus 17:16



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Faithlife Small Group

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The screenshot displays the Faithlife interface for the "SLBC Genesis Class" group. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Faithlife, Blog, Logos, Vyrso, Bible, Proclaim, and Forums. A search bar is located on the right side of the top bar. Below the navigation bar, the group name "SLBC Genesis Class" is prominently displayed, along with a description: "From God's Creation to God's Nation Verse by verse lessons from Genesis 1:1 to Exodus 17:16". The group is identified as a "Small Group" that is "Open" and has "3 members". The user "Ed Allsteadt Sr." is shown as the "Admin" of the group. The main content area is divided into several sections: "Documents" (containing "Genesis Course Outline", "Genesis Handout 001", and "Genesis Lesson 001"), "Group settings" (showing storage usage of 1.73 MB of 1 GB), "Upload a document", "Manage your Logos documents", "Group Readings" (with an "Add" button), and "Contact Info" (providing a phone number, email address, and a link to view on Google Maps). A "Prayers" section at the bottom indicates that prayers are done for today.



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Opening the Creation Event

“All kinds of wondrous stories about the creation of the world were wide-spread throughout the lands of the East, and many of them assumed a literary form in epic poems or other compositions. In the course of our exposition we shall have repeated occasion to refer to a number of matters found in these sources and to translate several verses from their texts. Here it will suffice to indicate briefly their general character. They began, as a rule, with a theogony, that is, with the origin of the gods, the genealogy of the deities who preceded the birth of the world and mankind; and they told of the antagonism between this god and that god, of frictions that arose from these clashes of will, and of mighty wars that were waged by the gods. They connected the genesis of the world with the genesis of the gods and with the hostilities and wars between them; and they identified the different parts of the universe with given deities or with certain parts of their bodies.



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Opening the Creation Event

“Even the elect few among the nations, the thinkers who for a time attained to loftier concepts than those normally held in their environment, men like Amenhotep IV—the Egyptian king who attributed the entire creation to one of the gods, the sun-god Aten—and his predecessors (the discoveries of recent years prove that he was not the first to hold this doctrine), even they pictured this god to themselves as but one of the gods, be he the very greatest, as a deity linked to nature and identifiable with one of its component parts. Then came the Torah and soared aloft, as on eagles’ wings, above all these notions. Not many gods but One God; not theogony, for a god has no family tree; not wars nor strife nor the clash of wills, but only One Will, which rules over everything, without the slightest let or hindrance; not a deity associated with nature and identified with it wholly or in part, but a God who stands absolutely above nature, and outside of it, and nature and all its constituent elements, even the sun and all the other entities, be they never so exalted, are only His creatures, made according to His will.”



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

SECTION OUTLINE ONE (GENESIS 1–2)

I. GOD'S WORKING SCHEDULE (1:1–2:19)

- a. **First day: creation of light (1:3–5): “Then God said, ‘Let there be light.’ ”**
He then divides the light from the darkness.
- b. **Second day: creation of space and water (1:6–8):** He separates the atmospheric, upper water from the earthly, lower water.
- c. **Third day: creation of plant life (1:9–13):** First he separates the water from the land. The earth then brings forth green grass, plants, trees, and vegetation of every kind.
- d. **Fourth day: creation of sun, moon, and stars (1:14–19)**
- e. **Fifth day: creation of fish and fowl (1:20–23)**



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

SECTION OUTLINE ONE (GENESIS 1–2)

I. GOD'S WORKING SCHEDULE (1:1–2:19)

f. Sixth day: creation of land animals and people (1:24–31; 2:7–20)

i. The brute creatures: livestock and all wild beasts (1:24–25)

ii. The blessed creature, who is given two things:

1. The image of God (1:26–27)

2. The instructions from God (1:26–31; 2:15–19)

a. People are to rule over all nature (1:26, 28),

b. to fill the earth with their own kind (1:28),

c. to cultivate and care for their beautiful home, the Garden of Eden (2:15),

d. to eat from any tree except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16–17),

e. and to provide names for all the other creatures (2:19–20).



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

SECTION OUTLINE ONE (GENESIS 1–2)

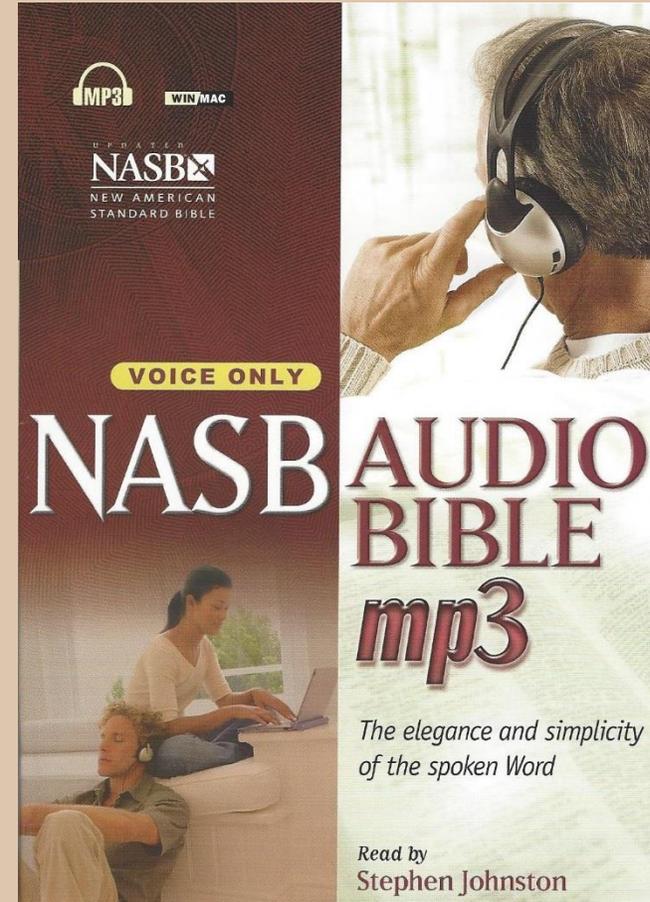
I. GOD'S WORKING SCHEDULE (1:1–2:19)

- g. **Seventh day: God rests (2:1–6): His creative work is complete and is pronounced good. God blesses and sets apart the seventh day.**

From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

GENESIS 1



A glass globe on a wooden surface next to a pocket watch.

From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

Genesis 1:1–3 (NASB95)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

“In the beginning God.” God is the subject of the first sentence of the book, and He dominates the entire chapter. Called by His name Elohim thirty-five times in the Creation narrative, He demonstrates infinite power and transcends all material existence, as indeed the majestic name Elohim signifies. “Beginning” refers to the commencement of time in our universe and demonstrates that the matter of the universe had a definite origin; it is not eternal and did not start itself. “Created” translates the Hebrew *bārä'*, which Hebrew scholars commonly have understood to signify to bring into being *ex nihilo*, from nothing, without the use of preexisting material.



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

“In the beginning God created.” No argument is entered into to prove the existence of God: instead, His existence is affirmed as a fact to be believed. And yet, sufficient is expressed in this one brief sentence to expose every fallacy which man has invented concerning the Deity. This opening sentence of the Bible repudiates atheism, for it postulates the existence of God. It refutes materialism, for it distinguishes between God and His material creation. It abolishes pantheism, for it predicates that which necessitates a personal God. “In the beginning God created,” tells us that He was Himself before the beginning, and hence, Eternal.



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“create The Hebrew stem b-r-’ is used in the Bible exclusively of divine creativity. It signifies that the product is absolutely novel and unexampled, depends solely on God for its coming into existence, and is beyond the human capacity to reproduce. The verb always refers to the completed product, never to the material of which it is made. As Ibn Ezra observed, bara’ does not of itself denote the creation of something out of nothing (creatio ex nihilo). This doctrine seems to have been first articulated in the late Second Temple work, 2 Maccabees: “Look up to heaven and earth and see all that is therein, and know that God made them out of things that did not exist” (7:28). However, the Genesis narrative does contain intimations of such a concept. Precisely because of the indispensable importance of preexisting matter in the pagan cosmologies, the very absence of such mention here is highly significant.”



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In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“This conclusion is reinforced by the idea of creation by divine fiat without reference to any inert matter being present. Also, the repeated biblical emphasis upon God as the exclusive Creator would seem to rule out the possibility of preexistent matter. Finally, if bara’ is used only of God’s creation, it must be essentially distinct from human creation. The ultimate distinction would be creatio ex nihilo, which has no human parallel and is thus utterly beyond all human comprehension.”



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“The Hebrew word bara is a word that is used only of God and only of the work that only God can do. It is never used with anything that man does. There are several words in the Hebrew Bible that are used only of God, and this is one of them...

The word bara is used a total of three times in this entire section of Genesis 1:1 through 2:3: in 1:1 of the creation of the heavens and the earth; in 1:21 of the creation of living creatures; and in 1:27 of the creation of man.”



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“It is used in five different ways throughout Scripture.

First: It is used of the creation of the universe and its contents.

Genesis 1:1, God created the heavens and the earth.

Isaiah 42:5, Jehovah ... created the heavens.

Isaiah 40:26, created the host of Heaven.

Isaiah 40:28, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

Psalms 89:12, created The north and the south.



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“It is used in five different ways throughout Scripture.

Second: The word bara is used of the creation of the cosmic forces of nature:

Isaiah 45:7, God creates the darkness and calamity;

Amos 4:13, God created the winds.



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“It is used in five different ways throughout Scripture.

Third: It is used of the creation of living creatures:

Genesis 1:21, of animal life;

Genesis 1:27, used three times of the creation of human life;

Genesis 5:1–2, used three times of the creation of human life;

Genesis 6:7, of man and animal life;

Deuteronomy 4:32, used of the creation of man;

Psalm 89:47, of man; and Isaiah 45:12, of man.



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In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“It is used in five different ways throughout Scripture.

Fourth: It is used is of Israel and the Remnant:

Ecclesiastes 12:1, of the Remnant;

Isaiah 43:1, of Israel;

Isaiah 43:7, of the Remnant;

Isaiah 43:15, of Israel;

Malachi 2:10, of Israel.



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In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“It is used in five different ways throughout Scripture.

Fifth: It is used of the transformation or the renewal of things:

Numbers 16:30, God creates a new thing in the earth;

Psalm 51:10, He creates a clean heart;

Isaiah 41:18–20, He creates waters in the desert;

Isaiah 45:8, He creates salvation;

Isaiah 57:19, He creates peace;

Isaiah 65:17, the heavens and earth;

Isaiah 65:18, Jerusalem; and

Jeremiah 31:22, a new thing—a woman shall encompass a man.



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.

“What happened in Genesis 1:1 is that God called the universe into existence, and He created the universe ex nihilo, Latin for “out of nothing.” This is verified by Romans 4:17, God, who ... calls the things that are not, as though they were; and by Hebrews 11:3, the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that what is seen has not been made out of things which appear. As the Creator, He is the Creator of both the material and the immaterial universe, and this is why there is something rather than nothing.”



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God created the **heavens** and the earth.

“This word is the Hebrew shamayim which, like Elohim, is a plural noun, and can be translated either “heaven” or “heavens,” depending on the context and on whether it is associated with a singular or plural verb. It does not mean the stars of heaven, which were made only on the fourth day of Creation Week (Genesis 1:16), and which constitute the “host” of heaven, not heaven itself (Genesis 2:1).

There is a bare possibility that the Hebrew word may originally represent a compound of sham (“there”) and mayim (“waters”), thus reflecting the primeval association of water with the upper reaches of the atmosphere (Genesis 1:7).”



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God created the **heavens** and the earth.

“It seems, however, that the essential meaning of the word corresponds to our modern term space, such as when we speak of the universe as a universe of space and time. Apparently there is no other Hebrew word used in this sense in the Bible, whereas the use of “heaven” is everywhere consistent with such a concept.

Understood in this way, it can also refer either to space in general or to a particular space, just as we may speak of “outer space,” “inner space,” “atmospheric space,” and so forth. In Genesis 1:1, the term refers to the component of space in the basic space-mass-time universe.”



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Part One: Section One

In the beginning God created the heavens and the **earth**.

“In like manner the term “earth” refers to the component of matter in the universe. At the time of the initial creation, there were no other planets, stars, or other material bodies in the universe; nor did any of them come into being until the fourth day. The earth itself originally had no form to it (Genesis 1:2); so this verse must speak essentially of the creation of the basic elements of matter, which thereafter were to be organized into the structured earth and later into other material bodies. The word is the Hebrew erets and is often also translated either “ground” or “land.” Somewhat similarly to the use of “heaven,” it can mean either a particular portion of earth (e.g., the “land of Canaan”—Genesis 12:5) or the earth material in general (e.g., “Let the earth bring forth grass”—Genesis 1:11).”



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In the beginning God created **the heavens and the earth**.

“What God created is here called “the heavens and the earth,” a poetic expression (merism) signifying the whole universe. Other examples of this poetic device are “day and night” (meaning all the time) and “man and beast” (meaning all created physical beings). “Heaven and earth” thus indicates not only the heaven and the earth but everything in them. Genesis 2:4 also uses this expression in a restatement of the work of creation throughout the six days.”



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

The earth was **formless** and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

The Condition of the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“Unformed. “The earth was without form.” This refers to the original material which was first created for the earth. It does not mean it had no shape whatsoever but rather it did not yet reflect design. There was substance but not styling. It was like a pile of lumber not yet built into a house, or a lump of clay not yet put on the potter's wheel to be designed into something useful. This lack of form will be taken care of in day two and three of the creation procedure (the forming of day three was vegetation to prevent erosion—erosion is destruction of the form).”



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The earth was **formless** and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

The Condition of the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“Some say this material was debris from a cataclysmic judgment, but that does not fit the process of the report of creation given here. Many want to use this verse to find room for evolution in order to get respect from science for the Scripture. But we do not have to interpret Scripture to fit evolution in order to get respect for the Scripture; rather evolution must interpret things to fit the Scripture, if evolution wants respect. Evolution is not the interpreter of Scripture. Rather Scripture is the interpreter of evolution—and it condemns evolution.”



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

The earth was formless and **void**, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

The Condition of the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“Unfilled. “The earth was ... void.” The earth was empty of any kind of inhabitant. God will fill the earth during the six days of the perfecting the creation. Days five and six will especially take care of the filling of the earth.”



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

The earth was formless and void, and **darkness** was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

The Condition of the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“Unilluminated. “And darkness was upon the face of the deep.” The creation began with material and not illumination. It was totally dark without one speck of light. It is hard for a human to think of something totally dark. Day one and Day four brought illumination to the earth.”



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Part One: Section One

The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was **moving** over the surface of the waters.

The Caring for the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“The proof of the caring. “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” The proof that this text speaks of a caring protection action for the original creation is in the language of the verse. The verb translated “moved” is found only three times in the Old Testament and is translated “fluttereth” in Deuteronomy 32:11 and “shake” in Jeremiah 23:9. The Hebrew verb form in Jeremiah is kal whereas the Hebrew verb form in our text and in Deuteronomy is piel. “The verb rachaph from which the piel participle is used ... signifies a vibrant moving, a protective hovering” (Leupold).



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The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was **moving** over the surface of the waters.

The Caring for the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“The picture of the eagle moving over its young in the Deuteronomy text is the picture of protection. Some translate the word “brooding” but “an eagle may brood over eggs but not over her young ... no single instance of the Biblical usage of the verb would suggest ‘brooding,’ a meaning which was foisted upon the word in an attempt to make it bear resemblance to the various old myths that speak of the hatching out of the world egg” (Ibid.). Therefore the “moving” is a patrolling action for the protection of the created material.”



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The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the **Spirit of God** was moving over the surface of the waters.

The Caring for the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“The person in the caring. “The Spirit.” The Holy Spirit was the One moving or hovering over the waters. This hovering or patrolling by the Spirit shows us that the Trinity was involved in the creation. God the Father mouthed (spoke) the creation into being, the Word (God the Son) made (John 1:3) the creation, and the Spirit (God the Holy Spirit) moved in the creation process.”



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Part One: Section One

The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of **the waters**.

The Caring for the Original Creation (Genesis 1:2)

“The place in the caring. “The waters.” The Spirit of God hovered above the surface (“the face of the deep”) of the waters which means He hovered above the material of creation. This mass of earth material was covered with water at the beginning. This is also reported in II Peter 3:5. It is not to be confused with the flood of Noah’s day of which II Peter 3:6 is speaking. Nor is it to be confused with the geological situation in the earth that exists as a result of Noah’s flood.”



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Part One: Section One

The earth was **formless and void**, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

“And the earth was (not became) waste and void.” The alliterative nouns *tohu vabohu*, the etymology of which is lost, signify waste and empty (barren), but not laying waste and desolating. Whenever they are used together in other places (Isa. 34:11; Jer. 4:23), they are taken from this passage; but *tohu* alone is frequently employed as synonymous with non-existence, and nothingness (Isa. 40:17, 23; 49:4). The coming earth was at first waste and desolate, a formless, lifeless mass”



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The earth was **formless and void**, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Jeremiah 4:23–27 (NASB95)

I looked on the earth, and behold, it was formless and void; And to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking, And all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and behold, there was no man, And all the birds of the heavens had fled. I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a wilderness, And all its cities were pulled down Before the LORD, before His fierce anger. For thus says the LORD, “The whole land shall be a desolation, Yet I will not execute a complete destruction.



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Part One: Section One

The earth was **formless and void**, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

4:23–28. Jeremiah pictured God's coming judgment as a cosmic catastrophe—an undoing of Creation. Using imagery from the Creation account (Gen. 1) Jeremiah indicated that no aspect of life would remain untouched. God would make Judah formless and empty (*tōhû wābōhû*), a phrase used to describe the chaos that preceded God's works in Creation (cf. Gen. 1:2). The light that had pierced into the darkness during Creation (cf. Gen. 1:3–5) was now gone. The mountains and hills, which had been separated from the waters (cf. Gen. 1:9–10), were now quaking and swaying at the judgment of God. The people along with every bird.... and the fruitful land were again removed. The land became as barren as it had been before the creation of life (Gen. 1:11–13, 20–26).



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Part One: Section One

The earth was **formless and void**, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

“unformed and void Hebrew *tohu va-vohu*. This compound phrase appears again in the Bible in Jeremiah's prophetic vision of the return of the primal chaos (Jer. 4:23–27), thus leaving no doubt that the phrase designates the initial chaotic state of the earth. That God should create disorganized matter, only to reduce it to order, presents no more of a problem than does His taking six days to complete creation instead of instantaneously producing a perfected universe. The quintessential point of the narrative is the idea of ordering that is the result of divine intent. It is a fundamental biblical teaching that the original, divinely ordained order in the physical world has its counterpart in the divinely ordained universal moral order to which the human race is subject.”



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

“this is the work of the Logos, the Word of God, as John 1:1–3 points out. As Psalm 33:6 states: *By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* What God said was: Let there be light, and the result was: and there was light. The light, which came into existence on the first day, is distinct from the light of the sun, because the sun would not be created until the fourth day.”



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

“God spoke light into existence. What was that creative word? It involved the action of His will’s determining what was to happen and the operation of omniscient intelligence’s shaping objects in the most magnificent possible way, down to the last atom. On each of the six days God’s creative word generated (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26). The writer to the Hebrews referred to that creative utterance when he said: “The worlds were framed by the word of God” (11:3). And the psalmist in alluding to the Creation said, “He spoke and it was done” (Ps. 33:9).



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

Then God said, “**Let there be light**”; and there was light.

The first function: to separate the day from the night. This expression enables us to comprehend the existence of the first three days, when there was as yet no sun in the world. To separate one thing from another means to mark the distinction between two things already in existence. It is manifest that the night exists even without the presence of moon and stars. Similarly, according to the view reflected here, the sun is not the cause of daytime, for the latter is to be found without the former. This is an empirical concept based on the observation that light pervades the atmosphere even before sunrise and also after sundown. Although we know that this light emanates from the sun only, nevertheless it is a fact that there is daylight even when the sun is not visible in the sky.



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Then God said, “**Let there be light**”; and there was light.

This then is the meaning of the verse: that just as at the beginning and at the end of every day there is light without sun, so throughout those first three days God caused light to shine upon the earth from some other source without recourse to the sun; but when He created the luminaries He handed over to them the task of separation, that is, He commanded that the one should serve by day and the others should serve at night, and thus they would all become signs for distinguishing the two periods of time. In addition, the sun's light would naturally augment the already-existing daylight, but this would form its third function, as we shall see later.



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Then God said, “Let there be light”; **and there was light.**

“The nature of that light is debated. Some call it a sort of cosmic light because the sun, moon, and stars are said to have been created on the fourth day. But others observe that the sun could have been in existence at that time but did not specifically begin to serve its visible functions in relation to the earth until the fourth day. Whatever the light, apparently the earth at that time first received light in order to be a fit place for the inhabitants for which it was intended.”



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Then God said, “Let there be light”; **and there was light.**

“This light was probably the *Shechinah* Glory light, the light mentioned in II Corinthians 4:6: *Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* The rabbis also recognized that this was a unique light, not the light of the sun. In rabbinic theology, this was a special light that functioned only during these seven days of creation, and then it did not function thereafter.”



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Then God said, “**Let there be light**”; and there was light.

“The phrase *Let there be* is one word in Hebrew: *yehi*. The phrase *and there was* is also in Hebrew one word: *vayehi*. Both words, *yehi* and *vayehi*, are related to God's Name, which is the four Hebrew letters of YHVH, which is the source of the Hebrew word “to be.” So God, Who is the I AM, said: *Let there be ... and there was*. This was God's first spoken word, *yehi, let there be*, and this word is also related to the very Name of God. According to rabbinic interpretation of this verse, when God said: *Let there be light*, it was to reveal that God will ultimately illuminate Israel with the light of the Messiah of Whom it is written [quoting Isaiah 60:1], the light being, of course, the Messiah. Therefore, both this phrase, as well as Isaiah 60:1, was given clear messianic overtones in rabbinic theology.”



From God's Creation to God's Nation

Part One: Section One

God saw that the **light was good**; and God separated the light from the darkness.

“That which God calls into existence at the outset is light, immediately changing a world enveloped in darkness. It is natural light, physical light; but it is much more. The Bible shows again and again that light and darkness signify mutually exclusive realms, especially in spiritual matters of good and evil. Throughout Scripture light is the realm of God and the righteous; darkness is the domain of the Evil One and death. Light represents that which is holy, pure, true, life-giving, and gladdening. For example, when God brought the judgment of darkness on Egypt, Israel enjoyed light in their dwellings (Exod. 10:21–23). When Israel followed the Lord's light through the wilderness by night, they were assured of his presence. When they were instructed to keep the lamps burning in the Holy Place, they knew that there was something symbolic about that light. In the act of creating light in the darkened arena of the world, God thus also manifested his nature and will.”