



MBS186

A MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY FROM ARIEL MINISTRIES



# THE SEVEN DAYS OF CREATION: GENESIS 1:1 - 2:3



By Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum



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Email: [Homeoffice@ariel.org](mailto:Homeoffice@ariel.org) • [www.ariel.org](http://www.ariel.org)



*In the  
beginning  
God created  
the heavens  
and the earth.  
Genesis 1:1*

NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

This study can be divided into five sections: first, the creation of the cosmos; secondly, the chaos; thirdly, the six days of Creation; fourthly, the seventh day; and fifth, the conclusion: New Testament applications.

Observations on the prominence of the number seven will be noted throughout the seven days of Creation.

### I. THE CREATION OF THE COSMOS - GENESIS 1:1

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

Verse 1 begins with the creation of the cosmos, the original creation, which was, in turn, the preliminary creation to the work of the six days. Basically, verse 1 is an independent clause providing an introduction to this section.

The number seven is rather prominent in this verse. First, there are seven words in the Hebrew text. And secondly, there is a total of twenty eight letters, which, of course, is four times seven.

One of the disagreements between the two schools of the Pharisees concerned the timing of the creation of the heavens and the earth. The school of Shammai said the heavens were created first, while the school of Hillel said the earth was created first. Rabbinic debate is always interesting to note, but it really holds no particular significance where this study is concerned.

#### A. The Specific Words of the Verse

The first area of study in this section discusses the specific words of verse 1 in three units.

### 1. The Hebrew Word Bereishit

The first three words, *In the beginning*, are an English translation of just one Hebrew word, *bereshit*. It simply means “in the beginning,” but tells us nothing as to when the beginning was. It refers to the first phase of a step, and it is the beginning of the universe as we now know it.

If we were to rearrange things chronologically, we would say that John 1:1 actually precedes Genesis 1:1. John 1:1 states: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*. We know this because we are told in John 1:3 that it was the *logos*, the Word, the Messiah, through whom the universe was created. Although John 1:1 begins the same way as Genesis 1:1 with the phrase *In the beginning*, chronologically speaking, John 1:1 precedes Genesis 1:1.

### 2. The Hebrew Word Bara

#### a. The Meaning of the Word

The second Hebrew word in Genesis 1:1 is *bara*, which means “created.” In the Hebrew language, there are certain words that are used only of God, never of man. The English language uses the word “create” in regard to both God and man, but in the Bible, this word for “create” is used only of God. It is a word used only of what God does, of a work that only God could do, and in this case, it is creation out of nothing. At other times, it refers to creation out of something. In other words, the word “create” may be used to designate creation out of nothing or creation out of something. Either way, it is still a work that only God could do. Therefore, this creation is new, it is fresh, and it is good. The word *bara* also contains within it the concepts of shaping and forming and transforming.

There is only one related word in Hebrew, *briyah*, which has the same root. This is a feminine noun that is used only in one place in the entire Hebrew Bible, Numbers 16:30, where it also refers to God's fashioning something new.

#### b. The Frequency of Usage

In the Hebrew Bible, *bara* is found in its active *kal* stem thirty-eight times. In the passive *niphal* stem it is used ten times. In the first chapter of Genesis alone, the word is used three times in terms of God's Creation: in verse 1, it is used of the universe; in verse 21, it is used of living creatures; and in verse 27, it is used of man.

This word is used a total of forty-eight times in five different ways, emphasizing something only God can do. The first way *bara* is used in Scripture is of God's creating the universe and its contents in Genesis 1:1. *Bara* is also found this way in Psalm 89:12: *the north and the south, You have created them*. In Isaiah 40:26, God created the host of heavens. In Isaiah 40:28, God is *the Creator of the ends of the earth*. And in Isaiah 42:5: *Jehovah, he that created the heavens*.

A second way the word *bara* is used is of the cosmos and the cosmic forces of nature. For example, Isaiah 45:7 states that God created darkness and calamity, and in Amos 4:13, that God created the winds. A third way *bara* is used is in regard to living creatures. For example, in Genesis 1:21, it is used of animal life. Six verses later, in verse 27, it appears three times in reference to human life. In Genesis 5:1-2, it is again used three times of human life. It is then used of both man and animal in Genesis 6:7. In Deuteronomy 4:32, it is used of man, as well as in Psalm 89:47 and Isaiah 45:12.

The fourth way *bara* is used is in regard to Israel and the Remnant. In Ecclesiastes 12:1, it is used of the Remnant. In Isaiah 43:1, it is in the context of Israel. Then in Isaiah 43:7, the word is used of the Remnant. It refers to Israel in Isaiah 43:15, and again in Malachi 2:10.

The fifth and last way the word *bara* is used concerns the transformation or renewal of things. This usage is found in Numbers 16:30, God creates *a new thing* in the earth; in Psalm 51:10, God creates *a clean heart*; in Isaiah 41:20, God creates the waters in the desert; in Isaiah 45:8, God creates *salvation*; in Isaiah 57:19, God creates *peace*; in Isaiah 65:17, God creates a renewal of *the heavens and the earth* for the Messianic Kingdom; in Isaiah 65:18, God creates a *new Jerusalem*; and in Jeremiah 31:22, God creates *a new thing A woman shall encompass a man*.

### c. Creation Ex Nihilo

One more point is that, in this context, *bara* means that God called the universe into existence. God created the world *ex nihilo*, meaning “out of nothing.” Again, the word *bara* can refer to creation out of something or creation out of nothing, but here, the context of Genesis 1 requires creation out of nothing.

Romans 4:17 states: *God, who...calls the things that are not, as though they were.*

Hebrews 11:3 states: *the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that what is seen has not been made of things which appear.*

Here, God is viewed as the Creator of both the material and the immaterial universe, and it is through His creative action that something does indeed exist.

### 3. The Hebrew Word Elohim

The next key word is *Elohim*, the Hebrew word for “God,” which shows that the Creator is the beginning of all things. God existed before all things. There is no attempt in Genesis to prove His existence because His existence is assumed to be true. From a biblical perspective, only a fool says that there is no God (Ps. 14:1).

The word *Elohim* is a plural Hebrew word. The standard Jewish view is that the plural emphasizes the plurality of majesty. According to the

*Siddur*, a Hebrew prayer book for the Sabbath, it denotes the plenitude of might. God comprehends and unifies all the ends of eternity and infinity.

Throughout this section, the word “God” or *Elohim* is used thirty-five times, again showing the prominence of the number seven.

It would be wrong to say that this word proves that God is a Triunity, but it does open the door for the concept of a plurality in the Godhead. The point of the word is that God is self-sufficient; there is no need of anyone or anything else. God is eternal and unchangeable.

## **B. The Theology of the Verse**

The second area of study in this unit is the theology of the verse. The phrase in Hebrew literally reads: *In the beginning God*, and this phrase is the foundation of all theology. God is self-existent. He is unknowable except when He reveals Himself. He is answerable to no one.

### **1. Creation of the Heavens and the Earth**

The *heavens and the earth* are, in fact, two separate entities. Literally, Psalm 115:16 reads: *The heavens, even the heavens are the Lord's; But the earth he has given to the children of men.*

In the Genesis passage, God's work of Creation consists, first of all, of the *heavens*: all that constitutes the parts of the universe. It is plural because it includes the first heaven, which is the atmosphere, and the second heaven, which is outer space. It shows that matter is not eternal, that matter had a definite beginning with God.

Secondly, God also created the *earth*, which becomes the center of God's program. Psalm 8 emphasizes that God's program concerns man, who is found only on this planet.

### **2. Repudiation of Non Biblical Worldviews**

Genesis 1:1 repudiates several views opposing biblical faith. First of all, it repudiates atheism, because Genesis postulates the existence of God. Furthermore, Genesis postulates a personal God, as well as a universe that was created by God.

Secondly, Genesis repudiates agnosticism, because, in reality, God does reveal Himself, as well as what He has done.

Thirdly, Genesis refutes pantheism, because God is absolutely transcendent to what He creates.

Fourthly, Genesis repudiates polytheism, as the Scriptures make clear that only one God created all things.

Fifth, Genesis repudiates materialism; there was a clear distinction



between God and His material creation. Matter had a beginning, it is not eternal.

Sixth, Genesis repudiates naturalism; nature itself had its own origins.

Seventh, Genesis repudiates dualism, because God was alone when He created.

Eighth, Genesis rejects humanism; it is God who is the ultimate reality, not man.

And ninth, Genesis repudiates evolutionism, because God did create all things.

## II. THE CHAOS - GENESIS 1:2

The second section of the study of the seven days of Creation discusses the chaos of verse 2 in four areas: first, the *vav* disjunctive; secondly, *tohu va vohu*; thirdly, the darkness and the deep; and fourthly, the Spirit of God.

In this verse, there is a clear description of a chaos, containing a total of fourteen words, again emphasizing the number seven.

### A. The Vav Disjunctive

In Hebrew, verse 2 begins with *ve ha aretz*, meaning “and the earth.” This shows that the earth is the focus, not the universe. When the subject comes before the predicate, the emphasis is on the subject, stating something new about the subject. It describes the circumstances of the world prior to Genesis 1:3, but not necessarily as a result of verse 1.

In the Masoretic Text, there is a disjunctive; the verse begins with a *vav* disjunctive, meaning “now,” rather than a *vav* conjunctive, meaning “and.” This shows that the verse is not sequential, but means “and then.” It shows that verse 2 is not the result of verse 1, nor is it a development of verse 1. The disjunctive argues against the chaos as being some kind of an intermediate state in God's work at the time of Creation. Isaiah 45:18 makes that same point; God did not create the world *waste and void*. Rather, what verse 2 is describing is the state of the world prior to the first day of Creation, which begins with verse 3. Scholars have generally chosen to resolve this “disjunctive predicament” here in two ways.

#### 1. The Initial Chaos View

The first resolution of the disjunctive predicament is called the Initial Chaos View. This view teaches that verse 1 gives the general account and summary of the whole chapter; verse 2 follows by giving a description of a chaos at the beginning of Creation; then verse 3

relates the beginning of God's work of Creation. In this view, the original Creation is not itself in the account, only a re creation of it.

NOTES

## 2. The Gap Theory

The second resolution of the disjunctive predicament is called the Gap Theory. I prefer this option, but I must make a clarification of the actual meaning of that term. The gap theory teaches that, in Genesis 1:1, there was an original creation in a perfect state. Between that point in verse 1 and verse 2, there was a gap of time during which there was one key event: the fall of Satan, described in Ezekiel 28:11-19. This resulted in the chaos of verse 2. The Gap Theory, then, views verse 1 as the original creation before the fall of Satan caused it to become a chaos, and views verse 2 as a chaos resulting from divine judgment.

I do believe there is a gap of time between verses 1 and 2, but we must be very careful not to ascribe a gap there for the wrong reasons as people have done so often. They have also used it as a convenient place to fit in such things as the geological ages, the fossil record, dinosaur space, and the like. I do not believe the gap allows for dinosaur space because the Bible teaches that there was not any kind of physical death until Adam's Fall. Rather, the gap is there for only one reason, the fall of Satan that will, in turn, account for the chaos described in verse 2. Hence, the gap need not be very long at all.

## B. Tohu va Vohu - Genesis 1:2a

*And the earth was waste and void.*

The Hebrew word for was is *haytah*. This is the feminine form of the Hebrew *hayah*, and the normal primary meaning is “was.” Here, though, it is better taken in its secondary meaning of “became.” Normally, it requires a different kind of construction to mean “became.” However, in other places, even within the Book of Genesis, we see that the word means “became” when used in the same kind of construction as here in verse 2a. For example, in Genesis 3:20: Eve became *the mother of all living*; in Genesis 3:22: *man is become as one of us*; in Genesis 21:20: Ishmael became, as he grew up, an archer; and in Genesis 37:20: “what will become of Joseph's dream?” Hence, the earth “became” desolate and waste. It was not always that way; something caused it to become that way. This harmonizes very well with Isaiah 45:18, which states that God did not create the earth *waste and void*. In other words, He did not create the earth in the form in which it is found in Genesis 1:2.

These two words, *waste* and *void*, are a translation of two Hebrew words, *tohu* and *vohu*, with *va* meaning “and.” The phrase *tohu va vohu* is used twice elsewhere. In the two other places where the words are used together, it obviously refers to divine judgment. For example, Isaiah 34:11 teaches that God caused *confusion* and *emptiness*; and in Jeremiah 4:23, *waste* and *void* is the antithesis to the Genesis Creation

account.

The word *vohu* is found only in these three passages, and always in connection with *tohu*. You will not find *vohu* by itself, even though *tohu* is used by itself seventeen times in the Old Testament. By itself, the word does not always carry a concept of divine judgment, but it is always something that is quite negative. *Vohu* is translated in the following ways: in Deuteronomy 32:10, as “wasteland”; twice in I Samuel 12:21, as *vain*; in Job 6:18, as *waste* or “nothing”; in Job 12:24, as wilderness; in Job 26:7, as empty space; in Psalm 107:40, as *wilderness*; in Isaiah 24:10, as the “city of confusion”; in Isaiah 29:21, as “empty words”; in Isaiah 40:17, as *nothing*; in Isaiah 40:23, as nothing; in Isaiah 41:29, as *confusion*; in Isaiah 44:9, as *uselessness*; in Isaiah 45:18, as *waste*; in Isaiah 45:19, as *vain*; in Isaiah 49:4, as *vain*; and in Isaiah 59:4, as “empty words.”

The whole sense of the passage is one of chaos and desolation. In Genesis 1:1-2, there are two examples of what are called “syntagmes,” which are words that occur together to denote one unique concept. One such example is “heaven and earth,” which is the totality of the ordered universe. The second example is *tohu va-vohu*, “waste and void,” which is the totality of judgment and chaos.

The conclusion is that verses 1-2 describe an orderly world and a disorderly chaos. Of course, these cannot apply to the same thing at the same time. In other words, verses 1 and 2 cannot be contemporary, but must be chronological in sequence. In Genesis 1:1, the earth and the heavens are created in a perfect order. Then, some time later this chaos—the chaos of unformed matter which caused it to become undifferentiated, unorganized, confused, and lifeless—came as a result of Satan's fall. Thus the earth “became” formless and empty.

### C. The Darkness and the Deep - Genesis 1:2b

*and darkness was upon the face of the deep.*

There are two key terms in this phrase.

#### 1. The Darkness

The first key term is *darkness*. Throughout Scripture, darkness represents evil and death; something that is not conducive to life. It is also a common symbol of divine judgment. For example, in Exodus 10:15, the plague of locusts “darkened” the land of Egypt; Exodus 10:21-23 describes the plague of *thick darkness*; in I Samuel 2:9, God will assign the wicked to the silence of darkness; in Job 3:4-5, there is the *darkness* of death; in Psalm 35:6, God will pursue the sinner into darkness; Psalm 105:28 speaks again of the plague of *darkness*; in Isaiah 8:22, the sinful kingdom will be driven into *thick darkness*; Isaiah 13:10 states that the sun will be “darkened” in the Tribulation; in Isaiah 45:7, God creates *darkness* and calamity; in Joel 2:2, the Day of Jehovah is a *day of darkness*. Furthermore, *darkness* is closely associated with Satan and demons. In Ephesians 6:12, Satan is considered the

prince and the spirit of the world of *this darkness*. Again, the *darkness* and the chaos was a result of Satan's fall.

## 2. The Deep

The second key term is *the deep* or *tehom* in Hebrew. The basic meanings include: “the salty deep,” “the primeval ocean,” and “the Abyss.” Psalm 104:6 states that God covered the earth with *the deep* as a garment; Proverbs 8:24 states God's wisdom existed before there were any *depths*; and Isaiah 51:10 refers to *the waters of the great deep*.

In Genesis, the primeval world ocean or *the deep* was without personality and without any autonomy of its own. This is in contrast to contemporary pagan literature, where the dragon of the deep is somehow active in Creation. This is the *Tiamat* of Babylonian mythology. There is no such concept in Genesis. The Bible does speak about the dragon or the serpent or the Leviathan or Rahab as being agents of Creation. These are merely motifs to serve as borrowed images in the following Scriptures: in Job 3:8, *leviathan*; in Job 26:12-13, the *serpent*; in Job 41:1-34, *leviathan*; in Psalm 74:13-17, the *sea-monsters* and *leviathan*; in Psalm 89:10, *Rahab*; in Psalm 104:25-26, *leviathan*; in Isaiah 27:1, *leviathan* and the *serpent*; in Isaiah 30:7, *Rahab*; in Isaiah 51:9-10, *Rahab* and the *monster*. The Biblical usage describes situations of past, present, and future. Concerning the past, these images describe God's creative work in the prehistoric past. In the present, such images describe God's victory over Pharaoh and Egypt, such as in Isaiah 30:7 and Isaiah 51:9-10. Regarding the future, they picture God's final victory over Satan, such as in Isaiah 27:1; Revelation 12:1-17; and 20:1-3.

Verse 2 describes the result of judgment, which was the fall of Satan as described in Ezekiel 28:11-19. This Ezekiel passage teaches that the earth as created by God in Genesis 1:1, served as one of the abodes of Satan, specifically, his second abode. When God judged Satan, He also judged everything under Satan's authority, including the earth. The original planet earth was a beautiful mineral Garden of Eden with no oceans, which exuded light from a variety of precious stones. As a result of Satan's fall, the earth became formless and empty. The earth was thus totally covered by salt water, with the precious stones and dry land no longer visible. The stones of fire no longer exuded light, instead, there was now darkness *upon the face of the deep*. This means that salt waters are part of the results of Satan's fall. This helps to explain why, when God creates the new heavens and the new earth in Revelation 21-22, the text clearly states that there will be no oceans and no seas. In other words, it is a return to the original state of the earth after the present system ends. The new earth will look the way it did before Satan's fall.

## D. The Spirit of God - Genesis 1:2c

*and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

This is the first introduction to the Third Person of the Triunity, *the Spirit of God*. Regarding this verse, the *Midrash*, an Aramaic paraphrase of the Hebrew Bible, refers to the Spirit of God as “the Spirit of King Messiah.” The Hertz *Siddur*, a Sabbath prayer book, refers to it as the mysterious, unseen irresistible of Divine Being. According to John 1:1-3, the Agent of Creation was the Son, and the means was the Spirit. While Agent of Creation was the Son, the Spirit introduced the work of the Son by hovering over *the face of the waters*.

The Hebrew word for *moved* is *merachephet*, which means, “to hover,” “to brood,” “to flutter,” “to shake,” or “to fly.” It is used two other times: first, in Deuteronomy 32:11, where it is used of an eagle hovering over her young. When the word carries the concept of caring and protecting, it deals with the developmental process of a mother hen whereby vital powers are developed in the young. The concept of fluttering shows that it provides sustenance and substance. Hovering means it is hovering in preparing for creation. The second time it is used is in the sense of shaking in Jeremiah 23:9: *all my bones shake*.

As for the Holy Spirit, like the Father and the Son, this Third Person of the Trinity was actively involved in the work of Creation: Job 26:13 states: *By his Spirit the heavens are garnished*; Psalm 104:30 states: *You send forth your Spirit, they are created; And you renew the face of the ground*. So the formless, foreboding darkness is being kept in check by the Spirit of God.

The *Midrash Rabbah*, an Aramaic commentary, states that this was the Spirit “like a dove.” This moving was *upon the face of the waters*, emphasizing a concept of life giving waters, not just the chaotic, abyss-like deep. The water itself is lifeless, but the Spirit of God quickens and transforms it. The unformed, lifeless mass of watery earth was under the care of the divine Spirit hovering over it, guaranteeing its future development. The Jerusalem *Targum* translates this verse as follows: “The earth was vacancy and desolation, solitary of the sons of men and void of every animal and darkness was on the face of the abyss and the Spirit of Messiah from before the Lord brooded upon the face of the waters.”

### III. THE SIX DAYS OF CREATION: - GENESIS 1:3-31

The third section of study of the seven days of Creation can be divided into six areas. With the Holy Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters, God actually introduces His creative work and the beginning of the six days.

There is a basic symmetry throughout this chapter, with every single day of the six days beginning the same way: *And God said*. This introductory, creative clause is also the first of seven specific steps. The second step is the fiat: *Let there be*. The third step is the fulfillment: *and*

*there was* or *and it was so*. The fourth step contains the description of the action: *And God made*. The fifth step is the act of naming or blessing something; either *And God called* or *And God blessed*. The sixth step is God's evaluation, an expression of divine satisfaction: *and God saw that it was good*. The seventh and final step is the terminus: *And there was evening and there was morning*, followed by the number of the day. These, then, are the seven specific steps in each of the first six days, a period of time that rectifies the problem of the formlessness and emptiness in verse 2.

Again, one Hebrew word, *tohu*, emphasized the concept “without form.” This formlessness is remedied by the first three days of Creation with three divisions: first, between light and darkness on the first day; secondly, between the air or sky and water or sea on the second day; and thirdly, between land and plants on the third day. The second Hebrew word was *vohu*, which emphasized the concept of “emptiness.” The second three days rectified the problem of emptiness by providing decoration: on the fourth day, the lights in the firmament for the day and night of the first day; on the fifth day, fowl for the air and fish for the sea of the second day; on the sixth day, animal and man for the dry land and plants of the third day. So, the problems of formlessness and emptiness of verse 2 are now solved.

The structures of parallelism and symmetry are apparent here in three ways. First, the form of the first day is filled by the work of the fourth day; light and darkness on the first day, and the luminaries of day and night on the fourth day. Secondly, the form of the second day is filled by the work of the fifth day; sky and sea on the second day, and birds for the sky and fish for the sea on the fifth day. Thirdly, the form of the third day is filled by the work of the sixth day; land and plants on the third day, and animals and man to live on the land and subsist on the plants on the sixth day.

Throughout the six days, we read that “God spoke, and so it was.” All things came into being at God's Word, something also emphasized by Psalm 33:6-9.

Another thing to mention concerns an aspect of the Hebrew word *yom*, meaning “day.” The word *yom* or “day” by itself can refer to a long period of time, in fact, more than twenty-four hours. For example, *the day of the Lord* or *the day of Jehovah* is seven years long. However, when the word *yom* is used with a numeral, it can mean only twenty-four hours. If Genesis 1 did not have a numeral following the word *day*, a case might understandably be made for a much longer period of time. However, the numeral following the word *yom* automatically limits the time period to twenty-four hours, a literal day. One would need to read evolutionary hypothesis into the text to interpret it as a longer period of time. The additional phrase *evening and morning* merely re-emphasizes the fact that this is limited to twenty

-four hours. Furthermore, the Sabbath Law was to be given to Israel centuries later, based upon the six days of Creation and the seventh day of rest. How could it possibly be applied if not for the twenty-four hour time periods? Finally, in regard to this issue, with the fourth day there is the mention of *days, years, signs, and seasons*, showing that this was the normal system of time as it operates to this very day.

## A. The First Day: Genesis 1:3-5

### 1. The Creative Work - Genesis 1:3

*And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

The first day of Creation begins as all six days begin, with the phrase *And God said* (vv. 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24). This is the reason that verse 3 marks the beginning of the first day, not verse 1. The phrase *And God said* was the Word of God, the *logos* of the first chapter of John. By means of the *logos*, all things were created. This is also emphasized in Psalm 33:6, which states: *By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.*

The verse goes on to say: *Let there be light: and there was light.* This *light* is distinct from the sun because the sun will not be created until the fourth day; it is not the sunlight, but a unique *light* that provided light for the first three days. This was a necessary first step because of the darkness that was part of the chaos of verse 2. This is the first appearance of the Shechinah Glory light, the visible manifestation of God's presence. Indeed, II Corinthians 4:6 states: *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.*

Rabbinic theology teaches that this was a special light, which functioned only during the first seven days. I would agree with that except to limit it to the first three days; we know that the sun came on the fourth day.

Next, is the phrase *Let there be...and there was.* The Hebrew word for *let there be...and there was* is related to the same root that forms God's name, *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*. The Creator is the God who is the *I AM*, and so the word for *I AM* has the same root as *Let there be...and there was*. God's first spoken word recorded by man: Let there be are three English words, but only one Hebrew word, *yehi*.

In rabbinic theology, it is believed that 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: *Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon you.* (Is. 60:1).

### 2. The Result - Genesis 1:4

*And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.*

This work of dividing the light from the darkness disperses the darkness of verse 2, leaving them to function simultaneously, but in

opposite spheres: one side of the globe has light while the other side has darkness. The division of light from darkness is the first of five separations in this chapter; the other divisions are in verses 6, 7, 14, and 18.

In rabbinic theology, this separation is interpreted to mean that God saw that the wicked were not worthy to enjoy the light, whereupon He set it apart for the righteous in the Messianic Kingdom.

### 3. The Naming - Genesis 1:5a

*And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.*

The process of naming is an act of sovereign dominion. In II Kings 23:34, *Pharaoh-necoh* changed the name of *Eliakim* to *Jehoiakim* to show his authority. In II Kings 24:17, Nebuchadnezzar changed the name of *Mattaniah* to *Zedekiah*, again to show his authority. Naming emphasizes the nature, essence, and quality of what is being named. The *light* and *darkness* found their fixed place in the order of Creation.

### 4. The Completion - Genesis 1:5b

*And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*

In Jewish reckoning, evening comes first because the day begins with the evening. This “evening and morning” phraseology does not allow for anything except a twenty-four-hour period.

This verse ends with the words *one day*. In Hebrew, the number is represented by the cardinal form, *one*, rather than the ordinal form, “first.” Interestingly, he does use the ordinal form for the other days: *second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh*. But for the first day, he simply says one day. This, by the way, shows that the term *one* is a compound unity, as well as an absolute one. Evening and morning together constitute the two parts of the one day.

One rabbinic view holds that this was so because this is the day of the One; in other words, no one existed but He who could benefit from the day, as angels were created on the second day according to rabbinic thinking. Rabbi Nahmanides said the term “first” implies precedence over another when both are in existence; in this case, the second had not yet come, so the term *one* applies.

### 5. An Observation on the Figure Seven

In verses 3-5, the word *light* appeared five times, while the word *darkness* appeared twice. Taken together, the figure seven becomes prominent once again.

In rabbinic thinking, the word “light” is used five times to represent the five books of the Law. It also represents the five kinds of light: the light of Creation; the light of redemption; the light reserved for one who repents; the light of the Temple; and the light of the *Torah* or the Law and its commandments.



## B. The Second Day - Genesis 1:6-8

### 1. The Creative Work - Genesis 1:6

*And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.*

With the words *And God said*, there is the beginning of the second day. The text continues: *Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters*. The Hebrew word for *firmament* is *rakia*, from a root meaning “to spread” or “to stretch out.” The root, *raka*, is something that is created by being spread out either by stretching like a tent or by hammering like metal. This describes the creation of the atmospheric heavens, the air, the expanse, or the vault of heaven. The purpose is *to divide the waters from the waters*. This is a kind of horizontal area extending through the heart of the waters, cleaving it into layers, the upper and lower layers of water.

The same root meaning is also used in Isaiah 42:5 and 44:24. The same root is found in Exodus 39:3, where it is translated “to hammer out.” Isaiah 40:19 uses the word to mean “to overlay” or “to plate with gold.”

### 2. The Result - Genesis 1:7

*And God made the firmament [the vault of heaven], and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.*

This is the second division in this chapter. God separated the atmospheric waters from the terrestrial waters by an arching expanse that we now call “sky.” The expanse divided the cloud masses above from the waters below. It separated the waters into upper waters and lower waters, which dispersed the dense fog or dense moisture, composed of gas and water that was enshrouding the earth in verse 2. This resulted in the creation of the atmosphere. This may indicate that there was a canopy around the earth, but the text itself does not demand such. Rather, it most likely refers primarily to the clouds in the sky. The verse concludes with *and it was so*. The Hebrew word emphasizes that it was like an established thing, happening immediately after God's command.

There are several poetic descriptions of this event. In Exodus 24:10: *a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness*. In Job 37:18: *spread out the sky, Which is strong as a molten mirror?* In Psalm 104:2: *stretches out the heavens like a curtain*. In Psalm 136:6: *To him that spread forth the earth above the waters*. In Psalm 148:4: *Praise him...ye waters that are above the heavens*. In Proverbs 8:27b 28a: *When he set a circle upon the face of the deep, When he made firm the skies above*. In Isaiah 40:22: *the circle of the earth, and...He that stretches out the heavens as a curtain, and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in*.

**3. The Naming - Genesis 1:8a**

*And God called the firmament Heaven.*

This is the atmosphere, the first of three heavens. It is a separation between surface water and water vapor; the expanse brought about this separation.

**4. The Completion - Genesis 1:8b**

*And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.*

Notice that the text does not say, as it does elsewhere in this chapter, it was good. The reason it does not do so just yet is because the work of the second day was not really completed until the third day in verse 10.

One common rabbinic view on this point is that God did not say, “It was good” in the usual sequence because He would proceed to say, “It was good” twice on the third day. Furthermore, the rabbinic perspective is that *gehenna* was created on the second day and, of course, this act would not be “good.”

**C. The Third Day - Genesis 1:9-13****1. The Creative Work - Genesis 1:9-12****a. The Creation of the Earth and the Seas - Genesis 1:9-10****(1) The First Work - Genesis 1:9**

*And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.*

This is the third separation: land and water. Dry land appears for the first time, partially alleviating the problem of verse 2 and the satanic curse. The text reads: *in one place*, meaning that there was land on one side and seas on the other. This was before *the earth was divided* (Gen. 10:25). The verse continues: *and it was so*.

Other Scriptures contain some poetic descriptions of this work.

In Job 7:12: *Am I a sea,... That you set a watch over me?*

In Job 9:13b: *The helpers of Rahab do stoop under him.*

In Job 26:10-12: *He has described a boundary upon the face of the waters,... He stirs up the sea with his power, And by his understanding he smites through Rahab.*

In Job 38:8-11: *Or who shut up the sea with doors, When it broke forth, as if it had issued out of the womb; And marked out for it my bound, And set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shall you come, but no further; And here shall your proud waves be stayed?*

In Psalm 74:13: *You did divide the sea by your strength: You broke the heads of the sea monsters in the waters.*

In Psalm 104:6-9: *You covered it with the deep as with a vesture; You have set a bound that they may not pass over; That they turn not again to cover the earth.*

In Proverbs 8:29: *When he gave to the sea its bound, That the waters should not transgress his commandment.*

In Jeremiah 5:22: *who placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it? and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.*

**(2) The Naming - Genesis 1:10a**

*And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas.*

The waters were gathered into reservoirs. This is the last thing God names in the Creation account.

**(3) The Result - Genesis 1:10b**

*and God saw that it was good. This marks the first time He says it was good on the third day.*

Only now is the work that was begun on the second day complete.

**b. The Creation of Plant Life - Genesis 1:11-12****(1) The Second Work - Genesis 1:11**

*And God said, Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit-trees bearing fruit after their kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: and it was so.*

The second work of the third day begins with the words *And God said*. This is the beginning of a new work: the creation of plant life. The expression *Let the earth bring forth* means that this was mediate creation and the provision of fertility for the earth; God now clothes the dry land with plants, trees, and grass.

There are three categories of the vegetable kingdom. First, *grass*, a general term that includes grain; the Hebrew literally reads, “to vegetate vegetation.” Secondly, the seeding *seed*, involving herbs and vegetables. And thirdly, *fruit-trees*. When the text states *after their kind*, it literally means “in accordance with its specie in all its variations.” There are differences between groups so that one specie cannot become another specie, but there is allowance for variations within a specie. The phrase *wherein is the seed thereof* refers to that process whereby the planting of the seed makes the specie self-perpetuating. Each specie is to bear its own seed, not that of another specie. The result is: *and it was so*.

**(2) The Fulfillment - Genesis 1:12a**

*And the earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind.*

The fulfillment involves three things: first, grass, which includes bushes and shrubs; secondly: herbs; and thirdly, trees.

**(3) The Result - Genesis 1:12b**

*and God saw that it was good.*

The conclusion is the second time He says this on the third day.

**2. The Completion - Genesis 1:13**

*And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.*

One observation here is that, in the accounts of the second and third days together, the term “water” is used seven times, again showing the prominence of that number.

**D. The Fourth Day - Genesis 1:14-19**

## 1. The Creative Work - Genesis 1:14-15

### a. The Introduction - Genesis 1:14a

*And God said.*

Just as the other days began, so there is the introduction of the fourth day with the words *And God said*. The purpose of the fourth day will be to fill the work of the first day.

### b. The Creation of the Lights - Genesis 1:14b-15

*Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.*

God mentions six purposes for these *lights*. The first purpose is *to divide the day from the night*. This newly-created light will replace the Shechinah Glory light of verse 3. This is the fourth division or separation in Genesis 1.

The second purpose is *to let them be for signs*. In this context, they are navigational signs. Job 38:31-33 refers to them as the constellations. Furthermore, they signal a Creator, for Psalm 19:1 says that they *declare the glory of God*. According to Jeremiah 31:35-36, they are the signs of Israel's perpetuity, because Israel cannot be destroyed as long as the sun and the stars exist.

The third purpose is *for seasons*: summer, fall, winter, and spring. This includes temperature control, but the word is also used primarily for the religious festivals occurring at various times of the year.

The fourth purpose is *for days*; the earth will rotate on its axis to provide a twenty-four-hour cycle with interchange of light and darkness, day and night.

The fifth purpose is for *years*; the earth's rotation around the sun will provide the yearly cycle.

Finally, the sixth purpose is to provide light in verse 15: *to give light upon the earth*.

As light is shed upon the earth, it will begin to mark the passage of time in an orderly fashion. Verse 15 concludes: *and it was so*.

## 2. The Result - Genesis 1:16-18

*And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.*

The result begins in verse 16 with the *two great lights*, the heavenly bodies, the sun *to rule the day* and the moon *to rule the night*. The verse goes on to state: *he made the stars also*, whose light that will be less bright than either the sun or the moon.

Next, the provision of light is in verse 17: *to give light upon the earth.*

Verse 18 describes the purpose of these things, then, is: *to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.* This division of light and darkness is the fifth division of the chapter. The verse concludes: *and God saw that it was good.*

### 3. The Completion - Genesis 1:19

*And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.*

By the time this day ends, the daylight no longer comes from the Shechinah Glory light, but rather, from the newly-created sun.

## E. The Fifth Day - Genesis 1:20-23

### 1. The Creative Work - Genesis 1:20

*And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*

The description of the work itself begins again with *And God said*, which marks the beginning of this fifth day. The purpose of the fifth day is to fill the work of the second day with the creation of sea life and bird life. The statement: *Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures* is a cognate accusative in Hebrew with the two words coming from the same root and sounding similar. The text continues: *and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*

### 2. The Results - Genesis 1:21

*And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that moves, wherewith the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind: and God saw that it was good.*

The results of this creative act are *the great sea-monsters*, which uses the Hebrew word *taninim*. This word is found ten times in the Old Testament including: Exodus 7:9 10, 12; Deuteronomy 32:33; Psalm 74:13-14; 91:13; 148:7; Ezekiel 19:3; and 32:2. In all these usages, there is a clear rejection of the pagan mythology of a battle between the gods and the sea dragons.

Instead, the Scriptures picture God in total control, involved in no battles whatsoever.

Job 7:12 states: *Am I a sea, or a sea-monster, That you set a watch over me?*

In Psalm 74:13-14a: *You broke the heads of the sea monsters in the waters. You broke the heads of leviathan in pieces.*

In Psalm 148:7: *Praise Jehovah from the earth, Ye sea-monsters, and all deeps.*

In Isaiah 27:1: *he will slay the monster that is in the sea.*

Clearly, these Scriptures affirm the providence of God and reject the pagan idea of a constant battle between the gods and sea-monsters. God is in total control.

The rabbis interpreted this particular verse as referring to Leviathan and its mate, male and female. According to tradition, the Leviathan lived in the deepest part of the ocean and supported the earth on its

back; its mouth was always open, swallowing all the fish; and every seventy years, it would lift up its tail, causing earthquakes. Because of this destructive element, it could not be allowed to remain with its mate, as it would have had many children and eventually overrun the world. So God killed the female, salted it, and set it aside for the great feast of the righteous in the age to come: the Messianic Kingdom. This is one of the many rabbinic legends concerning this particular creature.

In addition to the large sea-creatures, verse 21 continues: *and every living creature that moves, wherewith the water swarmed, after their kind*. This phrase, once again, allows for variation within species, but does not allow for the changing of one specie to another. After the words: *and every winged bird after its kind*, there is the conclusion: *and God saw that it was good*.

### 3. The Blessing - Genesis 1:22

*And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.*

This blessing is the first time God actually speaks to a creature. Rabbinic tradition holds that a special blessing was needed, because so many creatures are caught and destroyed.

### 4. The Completion - Genesis 1:23

*And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.*

An observation of the completion of the fifth day concerns the figure seven; by combining the fifth and sixth days of Creation, the term “living creature” is found exactly seven times.

## F. The Sixth Day: Genesis 1:24-31

On the crucial sixth day, God accomplishes two major works: the creation of animal life and the creation of the human race.

### 1. The Creation of Animal Life - Genesis 1:24-25

#### a. The Creative Work - Genesis 1:24

*And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind: and it was so.*

As all the other days began, so the sixth day begins with the phrase *And God said*. With the statement *Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind* the purpose of the sixth day fulfills the work of the third day. According to Genesis 2:19, animals were created out of the ground. God created three categories of land animals. The first category is *cattle*; this is a general Hebrew term for domesticated animals, not just cows. The second category is *creeping things*, both large and small; these are creatures that have either no legs or very short legs, so that they appear to walk on their bellies. This applies to both reptiles and amphibians. The third category is the *beasts of the earth*; these are the wild animals that simply cannot be domesticated. The verse concludes: *and it was so*.

### b. The Results - Genesis 1:25

*And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground after its kind: and God saw that it was good.*

Four results begin with the phrase *And God made*. The first result is: *the beasts of the earth after their kind*, the wild animals. Secondly: *the cattle after their kind*, the domesticated animals. Thirdly: *every thing that creeps upon the ground after its kind*, the creatures such as reptiles and amphibians. The phrase *God saw that it was good* concludes the passage.

An important observation is that both higher animals and man were created on the same day. This truth helps to explain the fact that man is similar to higher animals in his physical makeup. In other words, we need not use the theory of evolution to try to explain why the makeup of the human body is similar to the makeup of other animal bodies, such as the ape. Rather, both were created on the same day to live on the same part of the earth, the dry land, so there are these similarities. The differences between man and animals of this category lie in the spiritual nature of God-likeness. Only man has the conscious ability to truly know God.

## 2. The Creation of the Human Race - Genesis 1:26-31

### a. The Creative Work - Genesis 1:26-27

#### (1) The Introduction - Genesis 1:26a

*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*

The second work begins with the customary *And God said*. But in this case, these words do not introduce a new day, rather, they introduce a new work, which is a continuation of the work of the sixth day. And because what was about to be created was unique—the creation of man, the high point and final point of Creation—its introduction is the same.

There is now a change of the fiat: *Let us make*. Up to this point, God had been using the jussive form, meaning, “let there be.” He now switches from the jussive to the cohortative form of *Let us make*, which shows this to be a unique, momentous event, a different kind of creation.

Also, God refers to Himself using the plural pronouns *us, our, our*, saying: *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*. This does not prove the Trinity as such, but it does open the door to the concept of plurality in the Godhead and is the first of several such instances. It could not, as some people teach, refer to angels because, insofar as the work of Creation is concerned, God alone did the work of Creation; there are no angels mentioned anywhere in this context. The expression *Let us make* is not a consultation. If God were consulting with an assembly of angels, the text would have told us that, just as it does in I Kings 22:19-23, when He consulted with the angelic court.

In the phrase *Let us make man*, the Hebrew word for *man* is *adam*. This is a general term meaning “mankind,” including both male and female.

The next phrase *in our image* uses the Hebrew word *tzelem*. This phrase can refer either to an original image or to an imitation and can be used both in a good sense and in a bad one. In a good sense, it appears as it does here, where man is created in the image of God. In a bad sense, it is used to refer to idols or imitations in such passages as Numbers 33:52; I Samuel 6:5,11; II Kings 11:18; II Chronicles 23:17; Ezekiel 7:20; 16:17; 23:14; and Amos 5:26. It is also used for less concrete elements than the word *image*. For example, in Psalm 39:6, the word is used of a phantom in parallel with vanity, and in Psalm 73:20, it parallels with a dream, also a sense of unreality. Once more, the plural pronoun *our* is used here, the second indication of a plurality in the Godhead. Specifically, however, the text teaches that man is created in the image of God. This includes certain facets of the outward image, as well as the inward image. Outwardly, it emphasizes man's ability to continuously direct his gaze upward; man has the capacity for facial expressions; man has the capacity for shame, he blushes. But you will not see an animal blush; neither do animals have the kind of capacity that man does in terms of facial expressions. Man has the ability of speech, and he can exercise dominion. All of these are the external facets of the *image*. The internal or inward facets of the *image* would include immorality and intellect. Intellect includes self-consciousness, reason, emotion, will, morality, and spirituality. On the other hand, animals are not moral creatures. They are not responsible for moral or immoral decisions; only man is.

The Scripture continues: *after our likeness*. The word *likeness* in Hebrew is *dmut*, meaning “model” or “copy.” This is used exclusively as the preferred word in describing a theophany, a visible manifestation of God's presence. The word is used this way a number of times in the first ten chapters of Ezekiel. With the phrase *after our likeness*, there is again a plural pronoun; this is the third indication of plurality in the Godhead. All of this emphasizes that man indeed has a uniqueness not true of the animal kingdom, a quality also emphasized by Psalm 8:3-5.

Rabbis have had a great amount of difficulty with this plural pronoun in reference to God because they do not hold to the triune nature of God. One rabbi, Rashi, said, “Man was created in the image of angels. Although angels did not help God create, He said “us” to teach good manners and humility in that the greater person should ask permission of the smaller.” Another rabbinic passage reads: “Rabbi Samuel ben Nahman said in the name of Rabbi Jonathan: When Moses was engaged in the writing of the Law, he had to write the work of each day, and when he came to the verse: *And God said, Let us make man*, he said, ‘Master of the universe! Why do you furnish an excuse to heretics?’ God said, ‘Write! Whoever wishes to err, let him err.’” The word “heretics” in this context is applied to Jewish believers, who, of course, held to a plurality in the Godhead. And another rabbinic writing reads: “This must be explained since the wording is very surprising. Non-believers argue that there is a multiple godhead



attempting to use this verse as a proof-text for their contentions since it states: *Let us make man*, using the plural. Why then did the Law use the plural expression *Let us make man*? Some say that man resembles the angels so they wished to see him created right away. God announced to them and said, ‘Let us make man, come and rejoice, for I am about to create man.’” This is another explanation, and, obviously, the rabbi is trying to find a way around the plural pronoun. However, the clear implication here is that there is a plurality in the Godhead.

### (2) The Purpose - Genesis 1:26b

*and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.*

The purpose of man’s creation is to let them have dominion. Having dominion is a consequence of the image, not the content of the image. God has dominion and, since man was created in God’s image, man is now given dominion over the earth. Man replaces Satan as the authority over the earth (Ps. 8:6-8; Heb. 2:5-9). It was noted previously that, in the original Creation of Genesis 1:1, Satan was given authority over the earth (Ezek. 28:11-19). When Satan fell, God judged him and the earth, resulting in the chaos of Genesis 1:2 and Satan's loss of his dominion.

The passage then specifies the particular areas over which man is to exercise dominion: first, *the fish of the sea*, sea life; secondly, *the birds of the heavens*, bird life; thirdly, *the cattle*, domesticated animals; fourthly, *all the earth*, the physical earth; and fifth, *every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth*, amphibians and reptiles.

### (3) The Fulfillment - Genesis 1:27

*And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

The fulfillment of all these things is declared in three statements in verse 27: first, *God created man*; secondly, *in the image of God created he him*; and thirdly, *male and female created he them*. The phrase image of God is found four times in Genesis: in verse 26, twice in verse 27, and in 9:6. Here the verb *bara* is used three times to make clear that a high point is reached. First, it is used of man's creation. Secondly, it is also used of the creation of the divine image. Thirdly, the word *bara* is used to emphasize the creation of the two sexes, both on the sixth day. They were not divided into species, not *after their kind*, because both male and female have the image of God. Man was the final act of Creation and, according to rabbinic tradition, man was created last so that he would not be proud.

What was the status of man before the Fall? Before the Fall, the status of man was two things: first, he was *posse non peccare*, which is the Latin expression meaning “able not to sin”; secondly, he was also *posse*

*peccare*, meaning “able to sin.” After the Fall, the status of man was that he became *non posse non peccare*, “not able not to sin.” In other words, he cannot help but sin.

NOTES

### **b. The Edenic Covenant - Genesis 1:28-30**

The Edenic Covenant is found in two parts. The first part is contained in these verses, and the second part is found in Genesis 2:4-25. This is a study of the seven days of Creation, so it is concerned with only the first part.

#### **(1) The Blessing: Genesis 1:28a**

*And God blessed them.*

The covenant is made between God and Adam, therefore, Adam stands as the representative head of the human race. Basically, Adam was given “power of attorney,” so his actions are our actions. While the word “covenant” is not used here, a look at Hosea 6:7 attests clearly to the fact that God viewed this arrangement as a covenant.

#### **(2) The Provisions - Genesis 1:28b-30**

There are a number of provisions in the Edenic Covenant, including the four that appear here in these verses. The first provision is to populate the earth in verse 28b: *and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.*

The earth is now to be filled with humanity. Contrary to common thinking among some believers and non-believers alike, this clearly shows that sexual intercourse was not the first sin. And, furthermore, the fruit was not symbolic of sexual intercourse, because the command to multiply humanity is given before the Fall, and the multiplication of the human race comes by means of sexual intercourse. This affirms, indeed, that sexual intercourse was not the first sin. It is, in fact, blessed by God in its appropriate place: marriage.

The second provision is to have authority over the material world in verse 28c: *and subdue it.*

Again, this authority over the material world was previously given to Satan, but it is now replaced by God's switching the authority to man.

The third provision is in verse 28d: *and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.*

Adam is given authority over the animal kingdom and told to have dominion over three things: first, *the fish of the sea*; secondly, *the birds of the heavens*; and thirdly, *every living thing that moves upon the earth*. The first exercise of Adam's special authority over the animal kingdom is when he names the animals in chapter 2.

The fourth provision involves the diet of man and animals in verses 29-30. The instructions to man are in verse 29: *And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every*

*tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food.*

Man had to be vegetarian because eating animals required their physical death, and physical death did not exist before Adam's fall.

This was also true for all categories of the animal kingdom in verse 30: *and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so.*

The first category is: *every beast of the earth*; secondly: *every bird of the heavens*; and thirdly: *everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food*. So again, man and animals were all to be vegetarian. The verse concludes: *and it was so*.

### c. The Result - Genesis 1:31a

*And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.*

The result of the sixth day comes with the words: *And God saw everything that he had made*. Although the focus is on the work of the sixth day, the term *everything* includes the work of all six days. God states: *and, behold, it was very good*. He does not merely say, “It was good,” as it has been heretofore; now the word *very* is added, the first emphasis of the uniqueness of the sixth day.

The rabbis said the adverb *very* is added to denote that the perfection of the total Creation exceeds that of its separate parts. Again, the phrase also applies to the work of all six days.

### d. The Conclusion - Genesis 1:31b

*And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

Finally, there is the conclusion of the sixth day. For the first time, there is the definite article *the* before the number. Up to this verse, it has simply been *one day*, then, *a second day*, *a third day*, *a fourth day*, and so on. Here, it is not “a sixth day,” but *the sixth day*. This is the only time the definite article is used in this format, and it marks the second emphasis of the uniqueness of the sixth day. The third emphasis of the day's uniqueness is that it receives the most detailed description.

Rabbinic theology offers its own view as to the definite article and the unique aspect. One famous rabbi, Rashi, said, “The definite article signifies that the whole of Creation was dependent upon the sixth day, that is, the sixth of the Jewish month of Sivan, when Israel accepted the Law. For if Israel had rejected the Law, the whole earth would have reverted back to a state of chaos and nothingness.”

### e. The Significance of the Sixth Day for Men and Women

One final note about this sixth day concerns men and women. First, both were created on the same day as the crowning elements of Creation. Genesis 1 does not deal with the order of the creation of male and female, but the emphasis is that He created mankind, both male and female, on the same day. Secondly, both men and women

have the image of God, given not only to the man, but also to the woman. Thirdly, both men and women were given the mandate of authority over the planet in the Edenic Covenant. To be sure, there was headship, nevertheless, both Adam and Eve were given the mandate of authority over the planet earth under the Edenic Covenant.

#### **f. Rabbinic Views of the Six Days of Creation**

The rabbinic view is that these six days represent six millennia. The first day represents the first millennium, emphasizing the creation of light. It is the period of Adam's years; he lived nine hundred thirty years, nearly a millennium. It was a time when light was separated for the world, and it was the first millennium composed of much good and very little evil.

The second day, when the sea and land were created, represents the second millennium. This was the time of Noah, the period of the Flood and the Patriarchs. We have a separation from evil men.

In rabbinic thinking, the third day represents the third millennium, with the creation of trees and food. This third millennium also includes the Exodus; the time when Abraham's children accepted the Law.

The fourth day or fourth millennium is the day of the two lights. The first light represented the First Temple, which had the greater light because it had the Shechinah Glory. And the second light represented the Second Temple. It was a time when Israel had its own king and enjoyed unparalleled peace.

The fifth day was the day of the creation of fish and birds, representing the fifth millennium. At this time, there was the destruction of the Second Temple, and nations began to dominate one another.

In regard to the sixth day and the creation of man, the rabbis teach that within six thousand years the Messiah will come. The creation of Adam is an allusion to the Messiah; it is hoped that He will come during this sixth millennium. Just as Adam was created in God's image, so the Messiah was appointed by God and God's Spirit will rest upon Him. We rest on the Sabbath to symbolize the peace that will come in the days of the Messiah.

#### **g. The Theological Implications**

There are four theological implications of the six days of Creation in the overall context of Book of Genesis. First, the God who created Israel is the same as the God who created the universe.

The second theological implication is an emphasis on the sovereignty of the God of Creation; everything that exists must be under God's control. Sometimes things happen because of His directive will; events occur because God decreed them to occur, such as Noah's Flood, and Sodom and Gomorrah. But sometimes things happen because of God's permissive will; for example, He did not direct Adam and Eve to sin, but He did permit them or allow them to sin. Either way, everything is under the sovereignty of the God of Creation.

A third theological implication is the foundation of law, because the earth was created by means of the Word of God. God was before all things and He caused all things to come into being. So there was and is simply no other god to obey. This God laid down specific provisions, such as the Edenic Covenant. As Genesis and subsequent history continues, there will be more provisions made, such as the Law of Moses. The point is that God is the Creator, and the Creation is the foundation of law. The same way that God creates—by means of His Word—is also the way by which God communicates His will, as well as the same way by which He spells out human obligations to Him.

A fourth theological implication is God's redemptive work. At the time described in Genesis 1, there is no sin. Hence, there are no clear statements about redemption, but there are some implications of the work of redemption, which will be determined and developed later. This is seen in two ways. First, there is the concept of going from darkness to light. While these terms are used in their physical senses, they also have spiritual implications: Jesus is called the *light of the world*; we are transferred to the kingdom of the light of the Son of God, and positive elements of that nature. On the other hand, Satan is the prince of this darkness; sin is compared to darkness, blackness, and negative elements of that nature. Just as the physical creation moved from darkness to light, even so in the redemptive work of God, we have moved from the darkness of sin to the light of salvation. A second way this redemptive work is seen is through the movement from chaos to order: chaos is the result of sin, of Satan's fall; darkness was upon the face of the deep, and Satan is the angel of this darkness. He likes to fashion himself as a counterfeit angel of light, but in reality he is the angel of this darkness. Sin brings chaos into the lives of unbelievers and believers as well. God has provided movement from chaos to order. For the unbeliever, he moves from chaos to order when he accepts Jesus as his Savior. The believer moves from chaos to order when he confesses his sin before the Lord, repents from his sin, and re-establishes fellowship.

#### **IV. THE SEVENTH DAY - GENESIS 2:1-3**

There are four areas in this section of the study of the seven days of Creation: first, the completion of the creative work; secondly, the cessation of creation; thirdly, the blessing; and fourthly, an observation

on the figure seven.

NOTES

### A. The Completion of the Creative Work - Genesis 2:1

*And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.*

This verse begins with the completion of all work on the sixth day, giving us the basic facts. The second phrase refers to all the host, both the heavens and the earth.

The structure used to deal with the seventh day is totally different than that used for the first six days. It breaks with that of the six days, emphasizing five basic things: finishing, completion, cessation, blessing, and sanctification.

### B. The Cessation of Creation - Genesis 2:2

*And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*

This verse emphasizes the cessation of creation. God has now *finished* His creative work, and from this time on, the function is no longer creation, but procreation.

As God was in the position of having already finished His work, He therefore abstained from work on this seventh day. The Hebrew word *shavat* means “to complete,” “to cease,” or “to rest.” God *rested*—not in the sense of being tired or needing recuperation—but in the sense of cessation, of having completed or finished His work. The word *shavat* is used here as a verb, not a noun, and so it is not a proper name for the seventh day. The noun form, *Shabbat*, will not be used until the Book of Exodus, becoming a proper name for the seventh day only in Exodus 16. In this passage, the word is used as a verb, meaning its use here denotes only a concept of cessation and rest. For now, it is only called *the seventh day*, not “the Sabbath day.” Notice also that no command is given here to observe this day. On this day, God ceased from His creative work.

### C. The Blessing - Genesis 2:3

*And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made.*

The blessing of the seventh day begins with its sanctification. The Hebrew word for *hallowed* means “to be set apart.” It emphasized elevation and exultation and the idea of being lifted above the level of all other days. The reason that God sanctified the seventh day is that God ceased His creative work on that day. It actually reads, “because that from the day which he created from that which he made.” The first phrase, “from the day which he created,” uses the word *bara*, emphasizing something only God can do; and the second phrase, “from that which he made,” uses the word *asa*, a word that can be used of both God and man. Exodus 31:17 states: *on the seventh day God rested, and was refreshed.*

### D. An Observation on the Figure Seven

Once again, we see the prominence of the figure seven. In this case, it is coupled with the number three in five ways. First, the Hebrew text in these three verses has exactly thirty-five words, which is five times seven. The second way is that verses 2 3a contain three sentences, each with exactly seven words in the Hebrew text. Thirdly, the middle expression of the whole passage is *the seventh day*. Fourthly, the three middle clauses, verses 2a, 2b, and 3a, have seven words each, and the word *seventh* is within each of those phrases. And the fifth way is the phrase *his work*, found three times.

The rabbinic interpretation of the seventh day is that the Sabbath parallels the age to come, a time of complete good and tranquillity for those who are worthy of it. The seventh day in rabbinic theology symbolizes the Messianic Kingdom.

## V. CONCLUSION: NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS

In the fifth section of the study of the seven days of Creation, there are six specific passages that are referenced or quoted by the New Testament. The first application is Genesis 1:1-5, which is paralleled by John 1:1-5 with such phrases as *In the beginning*. There is also the concept of light coming out of darkness.

In the second application, the entire Creation account of Genesis 1 is summarized in Colossians 1:15-20.

The third application focuses specifically on Genesis 1:26-27, where it mentions the image of God, a concept that is picked up by the New Testament and discussed in three categories. The first category concerns the Messiah as being Himself the image of God; this is seen four times: in II Corinthians 4:4, *the glory of Christ, who is the image of God*; in Philippians 2:6, the Messiah being *in the form of God*; in Colossians 1:15, the Messiah is *the image of the invisible God*; and in Hebrews 1:3, the Messiah is *the very image of God*. The second category picked up by the New Testament is that twice man is seen as *the image of God*: in I Corinthians 11:7, man is *the image and glory of God*; and in James 3:9, man is *made after the likeness of God*. The third category involving the image of God is that man is also made in the image of the Messiah. While the Messiah is the image of God, man is the image of the Messiah. This truth is seen four times in the Scriptures: in Romans 8:29, believers are being *conformed to the image* of the Messiah; in I Corinthians 15:49, we shall *bear the image* of the Man of Heaven; in II Corinthians 3:18, we are being changed into the Messiah's likeness; and in Colossians 3:10, the new nature is *being renewed ... after the image of the Creator*.

The fourth Genesis passage, Genesis 1:27, is applied by Matthew 19:4 and Mark 10:6. This passage emphasizes that God's original purpose

was the permanency of marriage.

In the fifth application, Genesis 1:27 is used in Galatians 3:28 to teach that the way of salvation is the same for both male and female.

Finally, the sixth application, Genesis 2:2, is applied by Hebrews 4:4, and speaks of the rest of faith and the heavenly rest. Indeed, a symbol of divine rest is the kind of rest that believers have in Jesus the Messiah.☆

**NOTES**

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