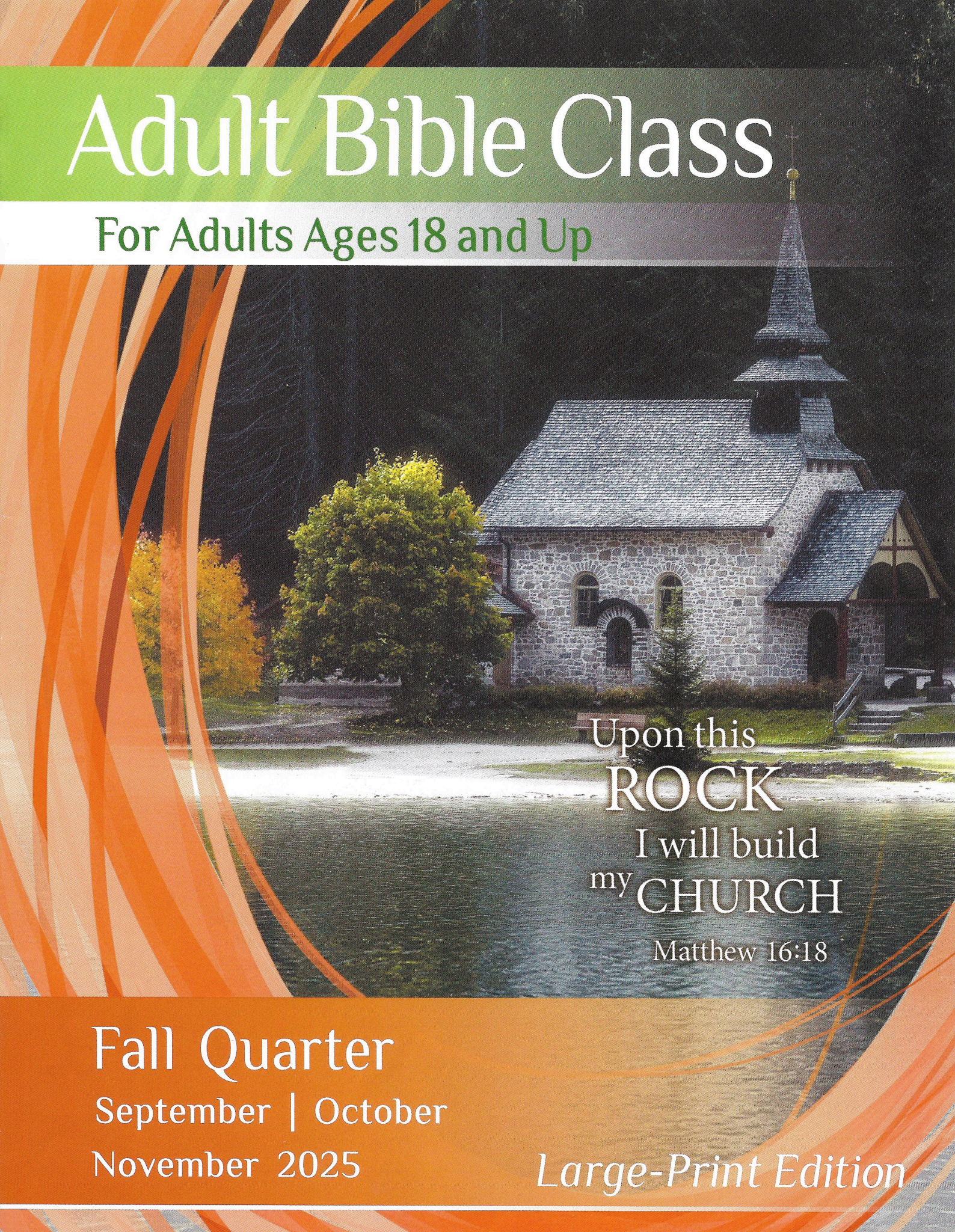


Adult Bible Class

For Adults Ages 18 and Up



Upon this
ROCK
I will build
my **CHURCH**

Matthew 16:18

Fall Quarter

September | October

November 2025

Large-Print Edition

Adult Bible Class

Large-Print Edition

FALL QUARTER

September, October, November 2025

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God Is "All" That

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SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

GEN. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

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

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

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

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

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

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

10 And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was* good.

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

NOTES

In the Beginning

Lesson Text: Genesis 1:1-13

Related Scriptures: Psalms 8:1-9; 104:24-30; Job 38:1-41;
Isaiah 42:5-9; 2 Corinthians 4:6-7

TIME: unknown

PLACE: heaven and earth

GOLDEN TEXT—"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2).

Lesson Exposition

GOD CREATES—Gen. 1:1-2

Creating was the first action God performed in Genesis 1. That set the stage for what followed. God completely controlled the situation in this chapter, with every action verb attributed either to His direct act or to His command for His created entities to act.

That is significant because it declares God as the Creator of all things. Adding to the effect, the text almost always explicitly lists God as the subject of a verb rather than using a pronoun. For example, instead of the text saying, "He created," it explicitly says, "God created" (or performed some other action) in almost every instance.

After its initial creation, the earth was "without form, and void" (Gen. 1:2). That phrase occurs only one other time in the Old Testament, referring to an inhospitable desert that is unproductive and therefore uninhabitable (Jer. 4:23; cf. vss. 24-26). A similar phrase occurs in Isaiah 34:11, referring to a wasteland uninhabited by humans and fit only for wild animals. In its beginning stage, the earth was empty, unproductive, and not a fit environment for life as we know it. God addressed that problem by forming

the earth and filling it with vegetation and living creatures.

Before those creative acts, however, the Spirit was already moving over the waters, preparing the earth for life. That may not seem significant, but the Spirit's initial work over the waters sends a strong monotheistic message. God alone, from beginning to end, brought about the created world. No other gods contributed.

GOD SPEAKS—Gen. 1:3-13

God makes light (Gen. 1:3-5). It was in this initial, premature environment of creation that God spoke for the first time in recorded Scripture. That is the second action verb that God performed. He uttered a simple command, and there was light. From the very beginning, creation listened to His voice.

Verse 4 records the third and fourth verbs that God performed. He both saw and separated. After creating the light, God saw that it was good. In Genesis 1, God's seeing is always followed immediately by calling something He made "good." The work of His good creation was truly glorious to behold.

God then divided, or separated, the light from the darkness. Dividing splits

two things that were initially connected. God would again separate two entities on day 2, splitting the waters above and below to create the sky.

After separating light from darkness, God called the light “Day” and the darkness “Night” (vs. 5). *Calling* is the fifth different verb God performed in Genesis 1. This verb is slightly different from the verb “said.” When the text uses “God said,” it immediately follows with direct speech. Here no direct speech is recorded. The text simply reports that God called the light “Day” and the darkness “Night”; it does not record Him saying the words “Day” or “Night.”

Now that light and darkness had been separated, there could be an evening and a morning. Day 1 of Creation concluded here. But day 1 hinted at a pattern. If the passage of evening to morning marked one day, or the first day, then there would likely be further days. Indeed, as one continues to read Genesis 1, one quickly notices the pattern of different days of Creation. That pattern continues into the sixth day at the end of the chapter. The seventh day breaks the pattern, as the text never records the statement “And the evening and the morning were the seventh day.”

God makes the firmament (Gen. 1:6-8). The second day of Creation began like the rest of the days in chapter 1, with a command by God recorded in direct speech. If you were to look ahead at the beginning of each of the remaining Creation days in chapter 1, you would notice that they all begin with “and God said.” That is another pattern. But notice something else. That phrase is followed by direct speech, so every day begins with a command by God. Every day has at least one speech, except the seventh day. Yet again the seventh day breaks a pattern, indicating that it is the climax of the Creation week.

But there is something different about the speech on day 2 when compared with that of day 1. The speech on day 2 is much longer than the two-word speech on day 1. That demonstrates a further pattern. As the Creation week progresses, the speeches become longer, more numerous, or more complex.

One might wonder, What is the point of the patterns and progressions? They point toward the seventh day, which breaks the pattern. On the seventh day, God rested from the work He accomplished on the previous days. The patterns and progressions also indicate that God was saving the best for last. His last act of Creation was human beings. Humans are the crown of God’s creation.

Returning to day 2, we notice that after God’s command to create the firmament or expanse by separating the waters, there is a narrative that records that this happened (vss. 6-7). The immediate recording of what God commanded is similar to day 1. God commanded the light to appear, and the narrative records that light appeared (vs. 3).

On day 2 comes the sixth verb that God performed in Genesis 1. After commanding the waters to separate so that the expanse could appear, the narrative records that “God made the firmament” (vs. 7). He also separated the waters—using the same verb as in verse 4. When the waters separated, part went above the firmament, and the rest went below the firmament. God then called the firmament “Heaven,” or sky, using the same verb as in verse 5.

God makes the dry land (Gen. 1:9-13). On day 3, God commanded the waters below the heaven to gather together and the dry land to appear. God called the dry land “Earth” and the waters “Seas.” In His second speech on day 3, God commanded that the earth sprout vegetation and fruit trees

and that they produce according to their kind.

In the one speech on day 4, God commanded lights to appear and to separate the day from the night. Since God created the day and night on the first day, days 1 and 4 are connected. On day 4, God created the lights to rule over what He created on day 1. Similarly, days 2 and 3 relate to days 5 and 6, respectively. On day 2, God created the firmament and the waters above and below. On day 5, God made water creatures and birds that filled the waters below and the sky. On day 3, God made the dry land and vegetation. On day 6, God created land animals and humans. They were to fill the earth, and humans were to rule over the rest of creation. The days of Creation recount how God both formed the earth and filled it so that the earth would be a proper habitation where life could exist.

On the first day, God made day and night. On the second day, He made the sky, which separated the waters above and beneath. On the third day, God created the earth. He gave the earth the ability to sprout vegetation, including plants and trees that could reproduce after their kind. On the fourth day, God created lights that marked the seasons and years. He also made the great lights to rule the day and night, to shed light on the earth, and to separate the light and darkness. On the fifth day, God created water animals and birds and gave them the ability to reproduce and fill the earth. On the sixth day, God created land animals that could reproduce after their kind. As the last act of Creation, God made humans.

Unlike the previously created beings, God made humans in His image, and He commanded them to subdue the earth. As the pinnacle of Creation, humans could perform nearly all of the basic functions of the previously created beings and could rule over all the created world, including all of its inhabitants.

The creation of humans as the pinnacle of Creation differs greatly from other ancient creation accounts. In some of the Egyptian myths, humans were created by accident, and in the major Mesopotamian creation myth, the gods made humans to serve them and meet their needs. The Bible's account is much different; it gives dignity to humanity.

—James Frohlich

QUESTIONS

1. What was the first action God performed in Genesis 1?
2. Why is it significant that God either performed or commanded every action verb in Genesis 1?
3. In its only other occurrence in the Old Testament, what does the phrase “without form, and void” refer to?
4. What did God do to the earth so that it was no longer without form and void?
5. What is significant about the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters?
6. In Genesis 1, what always immediately followed God seeing something?
7. What is significant about the seventh day breaking many of the patterns of the other days of the Creation week?
8. How did days 1, 2, and 3 of Creation relate to days 4, 5, and 6?
9. What benefits are given to humanity as the pinnacle of Creation?
10. How does the Bible's portrayal of the creation of humanity differ from that of other ancient stories of creation?

—James Frohlich

PRACTICAL POINTS

1. When tempted to doubt God's goodness or power, we can remember that He is the Creator of all things (Gen. 1:1).
2. The Holy Spirit prepared the earth for God's creative acts by moving over the face of the waters (vs. 2). The Holy Spirit also prepares our hearts to accept God's Word (cf. 1 Cor. 2:12-13).
3. Just as the creation immediately obeyed God when He spoke things into existence (Gen. 1:3), so should we when He guides us to do something.
4. We can take comfort in the fact that we are part of God's good creation (vss. 4-5; cf. vss. 26-31).
5. God limits His creation. He kept the waters in place and limited agricultural production to that which was "after his kind" (vss. 6-13).

—James Frohlich

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. According to the Bible, did anything exist before God began to create the world (cf. Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3)?
2. Which Persons of the Trinity were involved in creating the world (cf. Gen. 1:1-2; John 1:1-3)?
3. Why do you think the earth was initially created "without form, and void" (Gen. 1:2)?
4. Why does Genesis 1 record God commanding something to be created and then contain a narrative stating that it happened (cf. vss. 3, 6-7, 9, 11-12)?
5. Is there any part of God's creation that you do not fully appreciate?

—James Frohlich

Golden Text Illuminated

"The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2).

Moses tells us that after the initial making of the universe and planet Earth, the earth was "without form, and void." Theories abound as to the meaning of this phrase, but in the end, it means the earth had no definition, no order, no life.

We are next told that "darkness was upon the face of the deep." One need not speculate about any sinister presence here, for darkness in this context does not suggest sin or evil but instead the absence of light and life.

At the end of verse 2, God's Spirit was hovering over the waters. What a glorious mystery! Who is this Spirit, and what action was being performed?

The "who" is the Holy Spirit Himself—the Third Person of the Trinity, who is fully, equally, and eternally God. Equal to the Father and Son, the Spirit is distinguished by His strategic role in the plan of salvation.

This brings us to the "what." The Spirit moving upon the waters suggests an abiding and sustaining presence that upholds, preserves, and protects. That is precisely what the Scriptures reveal about the Spirit. He abides in, sustains, upholds, preserves, protects, and empowers those who belong to Christ.

What does Genesis 1:2 do for us today then? It reminds us to worship the Spirit and to cling to the Spirit's sustaining, sanctifying power through His Word.

—Jerod A. Gilcher