

"IN THE BEGINNING: A Study of Creation"

THE FIRST DAY

We begin our study of the narration of creation, from the very beginning, Genesis 1:1.

(NKJV, Gen 1:1), "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

The existence of God is assumed to be a fact. By examining the original Hebrew of the verse, we see that there is an element of plurality in God (*Elohim* – plural of more than 2) and that all three persons were involved in creation. (Jesus: Heb 1:10, Col 1:15-17, Holy Spirit: Gen 1:2)

(NKJV, Heb 1:10), "And: 'You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.'"

"Heavens" in this verse isn't specifically referring to Heaven (dwelling place of God), or sky (earth's atmosphere), or outer space. It is used in a broader sense. "Earth" is simply the spherical celestial body called earth. (it does NOT imply the present-day form of water, mountains, vegetation, etc.)

"In the beginning" (*reshiyth, H7555*) refers to the specific order or rank of a series of events. Since God already existed "in the beginning", this beginning refers to the beginning of the time when God is no longer alone.

(NKJV, Gen 1:2), "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."

There were no distinguishable characteristics of the earth. The surface of the earth was completely covered by water and had not distinguishing characteristics.

The ancient Inca myth of creation states that *"In the most ancient of times the earth was covered in darkness. Then, out of a lake called Collasuyu, the god Con Tiqui (Kon Tiki) Viracocha emerged"*. Although written 1000's years after Genesis (and on a different continent), there are startling similarities... the initial state of darkness, and earth covered by water.

(NKJV, Gen 1:3), "Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light."

On the command of God, light appears instantaneously. It is important to note that the wording of this verse indicates that there was a state of darkness followed instantly by a state of light. There is no indication that there is any source for this light. The Hebrew word for light in this verse is, "ore". In context this word (*or, H216*) means "illumination in every sense".

(NKJV, Gen 1:4), "And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness"

God saw that the light was good. This explains the expanded use of the word "light". The light was more than just physical illumination, but of clarity and joy as well. The division of light from darkness is a distinct one. The "state of light" was distinguished from the "state of darkness".

Gen 1:5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.."

Here's where things get interesting. It is a commonly held belief that the Hebrew word for day, "yom" always refers to a 24 hour period. But in this verse we see the word used in two different ways. First, God uses the word "day" as a label/name for the "state of light". He also uses the same word to describe a sequence of light followed by darkness.

GROUP DISCUSSION

- What was the first thing that God called "good"? Why is that significant?
- Did the events described in verses 1:1-5 occur within a 24 hour period?
- Do you know of any discoveries made by secular science that contradict the Biblical narrative so far?