

The Creation

(Genesis 1:1-2:3)

Genesis 1:1 is the single most important sentence in the Bible and the greatest demonstration of God’s Sovereign, omnipotent power. If God can speak the Heavens and Earth into existence from nothing, then nothing is impossible for God. In the Hebrew, the first sentence is seven words in length (the number of perfection). In the English, it is ten words. The first verse is either a summary of the six days of creation or God’s first act of creating prior to day one.

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)

Genesis 1:2 describes the earth prior to the first day of creation and makes special reference to the presence of the Spirit of God, which could be a reference to God who exists as a Spirit (John 4:24) or a special reference to the third Person of the Triune God—the Holy Spirit.

There are six days of creation, and each day begins with, “And God said” and ends with, “and there was evening and there was morning.” This very particular language is why conservative Bible scholars insist upon six 24-hour days of creation. Special attention must be given to the reality that God is speaking matter into existence out of nothing (*ex nihilo*, Latin) (Rom 4:17). Everything God makes is described as good (6x) and ultimately very good (a 7th time) (1:31).

Genesis 1:3-1:26 are devoted to describing the six days of creation, beginning with the first act of separating light from darkness and culminating with God creating man in His image.

God creates by separating (used 5x)		God fills the earth by creating	
Day 1	Creates light “day” and separates it from darkness “night.” Thus, God creates time.	Day 4	Fills the expanse of the sky from day 2 with the sun, moon and stars.
Day 2	Creates an expanse “the sky” which separates water from water.	Day 5	Fills the water with all that lives in the water and the sky above with birds and instructs them both to be fruitful and multiply.
Day 3	Creates dry land, separates the land from the water, and creates vegetation on the dry land.	Day 6	Fills the land from day 3 with livestock, creeping things and beasts (wildlife), and creates Adam (the Hebrew word for man).
At the end of day six, God declares that everything He has made is “very good.” Thus, the heavens and the earth and everything in them were finished. (1:31-2:1)			
Day 7	God rested and set the 7 th day apart as holy. Thus, He ends by separating the 7 th day from the other six.		

Gen 1:26-27 God makes man in the image and likeness of God (*us & our*, plural pronouns used) both male and female.

Gen 1:28 Man is blessed by God and commanded to procreate and fill the earth with image-bearers of God. Man is to subdue the earth and have dominion over the fish, birds, and every living thing on the earth. (Read the articles titled “Made in the Image of God to Worship Him” and “The Creation/Cultural Mandate.”)

Gen 1:29-30 At this time, the human diet is limited to plants yielding seed, fruit with seeds, and green plants. This will change after the flood.

The chapter 2 break is quite unfortunate. The narration continues with the statement that God is finished (2:1) at which point He can rest from His work of creating. God was not weary or tired from the work of creation (Isa 40:28). Instead, God is providing an example for man. Man is to do his work in six days and then rest for a day like God did (Exo 20:9-11). Genesis 2:4 introduces the first of ten *toledoths* (Hb) in the book. (This is where the chapter break should have been.) The English word is ‘generations’ in the ESV. The first *toledoth* is the human generation that comes from the union of the heavens (the breath of life) and the earth (dust from the ground) (2:7). (See the “Ten Toledoths” of Genesis chart.)