

THE GOSPEL PROJECT (Chronological)  
 THE STORY BEGINS  
 GOD THE CREATOR  
*In the Beginning, God...*

As you know, the beginning is the point in time and space in which something starts. In Genesis, that is where God the Creator's story begins – *in the beginning, God!* When some think of God as the Author of beginnings, the question that follows is often 'where did God come from?' or 'what is God's beginning?' When we contemplate God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, we should realize that God does not abide in the 'category' of beginnings. GotQuestions.org offers this example by asking: "What does blue smell like?" Since the color blue is not in the category of things that have a smell, the question itself is flawed. In the same way, God is not in the category of things that are created – things that have a beginning like us. God is uncreated—He simply exists. God is the everlasting one! We believe in His existence through faith. **Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)** <sup>6</sup> *And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

Let's take our thoughts back to when God created everything.

**Read Genesis 1:1-2 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.* <sup>2</sup> *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

El is the Hebrew name for God. It comes from a root word meaning might, strength, power. In this passage the Hebrew word used is *Elohim*. *Elohim* is the plural of El – the letters im added to a Hebrew word make it plural. In other places in scripture, El is used in conjunction with additional Hebrew words to describe God, such as El Shaddai meaning the All Sufficient God and El Olam meaning the God Everlasting.

God's Word teaches there is only one God. **Deuteronomy 6:4 (ESV)** <sup>4</sup> *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.* The use of the Hebrew plural for God – *Elohim* - is the first indication of God in three persons – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit that will be more fully revealed later in the biblical text.

There is not any argument in the Bible to prove Elohim's existence. He is God – Creator of the Universe and all things in it and He does not have to or need to prove Himself. **Psalm 14:1 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."...*

*In the beginning* – meaning the beginning of time. Time began with the production of the things that are measured by time. One day we will no longer be 'driven by time.' A favorite old hymn, When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder, speaks of that day: When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, and time shall be no more, And the morning breaks, eternal, bright and fair; When the saved of earth shall gather over on the other shore, And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

You might wonder who ‘penned’ the book of Genesis. After all, Genesis is a critical piece of information in our Christian ‘family history.’ If you check the authorship in your Bible, you will notice that Moses is listed as the earthly writer. Moses is also listed as the author of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. But, how do we know for sure that Moses recorded Genesis? After all, the events in Genesis occurred a long time before Moses was born. Moses was not an eyewitness. We know the authorship of the first five books of God’s Word from the words of Jesus! Jesus was walking on the Road to Emmaus with two confused disciples after His resurrection from the dead and Jesus enlightened them by explaining the scriptures. **Luke 24:27 (ESV)**<sup>27</sup> *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* Tradition probably already taught that Moses wrote the first five books but as a sidebar to Jesus’ conversation on the Emmaus Road, it is confirmed that Moses was literally the person who recorded the first five books of the Bible. And if Jesus said so, that makes it true!

Sometimes we make the mistake of concluding that ‘God is not with me.’ Our life may be so chaotic that we have the feeling that He has left us. But, that is just a feeling – not the truth. From the beginning God was there in the middle of chaos working with us in mind: *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.* And what are we told, right there in the middle of the darkness and chaos, *the Spirit of God was hovering* – the Spirit of God was hovering like an eagle over her eaglets. God hovered over His creation from the very beginning. He didn’t quit there. We read of God the Son in **Matthew 1:23 (ESV)**<sup>23</sup>

*“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel”* (which means, *God with us*). We read in **John 14:16 (ESV)**<sup>16</sup> *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.* This promised Helper is God the Holy Spirit. Elohim is always with us!

Elohim continually reveals Himself through a ‘wordless book’ made for everyone to read. This book is creation. The birds, the trees, the sun, the stars, the moon, the clouds, the sky – all of creation points us to our Creator God. This is known as **general revelation** – meaning the *general* or universal way God reveals Himself to all people everywhere.

Any time we make a road trip to an unknown destination, we must follow the road signs in order to arrive at the correct destination. On this road of life, there are two destinations – one is heaven and eternal life – one hell and eternal damnation. **Matthew 7:13 (ESV)**<sup>13</sup> *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.* Sometimes in our world people steal road signs or put graffiti on them. Satan loves to graffiti and destroy God’s road signs to us. Since Satan is unable to destroy “God’s road signs” through nature, he attempts to get out his graffiti in other ways. For example, if you look up on the Internet, Wikipedia’s definition for Genesis Creation Narrative, it states that the creation narrative is a creation **myth** of Judaism and Christianity. That, my friends, is Satan attempting to graffiti God’s original road signs. Do not allow Satan to fool you with his myths.

Jesus said of Satan in **John 8:44 (ESV)**<sup>44</sup> *... He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

Our beliefs about creation affect the rest of our theology. For years a creation/evolution debate has raged. We should never get so caught up in such a debate that we neglect sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. However, what we believe about creation is significant.

According to GotQuestions.org, there are several views within Christianity regarding creation.

1. Literal 24 / 6 creation view – God created all there is in six 24-hour days.
2. Day-Age view – The creation events occurred as depicted in Genesis 1, but instead of six 24-hour days, the “days” of creation represent indeterminate, finite periods of time. Sometimes biblical writers used "day" to describe a longer period of time in which God accomplishes some special purpose, such as ‘the day of the Lord. For example, **Joel 2:11 (ESV)** <sup>11</sup> *The LORD utters his voice before his army, for his camp is exceedingly great; he who executes his word is powerful. For the day of the LORD is great and very awesome; who can endure it?*
3. The Framework view – The days of Genesis 1 represent a theological framework within which to narrate the creation of all things.

I don't know exactly how God created everything. I have always tended to believe in a six-day creation event. However, I also know this: **2 Peter 3:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> *But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Despite what position you take, we can count on the truth that God created the heavens and the earth. Critics of the Bible and those who have made science an authority over the Bible want to treat the opening chapters of Genesis as an ancient Hebrew myth rather than history. Let me give you an example of what a myth sounds like. The Mayan creation myth says “Our Creation Story teaches us that the first Grandparents of our people were made from white and yellow corn. Maize is sacred to us because it connects us with our ancestors. It feeds our spirit as well as our bodies.” Now, that is a myth. But, we can count on the words of Jesus: **Revelation 22:13 (ESV)** <sup>13</sup> *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.*”

God created everything good.

**Read Genesis 1:10, 12, 16, 18, 25, 31 (ESV)** <sup>10</sup> *God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ...* <sup>12</sup> *The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ...* <sup>16</sup> *And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars...*  <sup>18</sup> *... And God saw that it was good. ...* <sup>25</sup> *And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ...* <sup>31</sup> *And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

One of the biggest questions that non-believers use to discount even the very existence of God is this, ‘why would a good God allow this or that bad thing to happen?’ Even followers of Christ struggle with the issues of bad things happening to good people and good things happening to bad people.

I just want to remind you from these passages in Genesis, that in the beginning God created everything good. And when God completed His creation, He pronounced it very good. The purpose of His creation was to tell the glory of God. However, God gave His human creations free will and we were the ones who messed up God's good creation in the beginning and are still doing so today. **Romans 3:10 (ESV)**<sup>10</sup> *as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one. Even in the worst of times, our hearts need to say: **Psalm 27:13 (ESV)**<sup>13</sup> *I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!* The choice is ours – let's look for God's goodness all around us.*

God created everything through His Son.

**Read 1 Corinthians 8:5-6 (ESV)**<sup>5</sup> *For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—<sup>6</sup> yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.*

General revelation reveals God to us through creation. We can see God in the light of a morning sunrise or in the twinkling lights of a starry night. But, God didn't stop with revealing Himself through creation. He chose **special revelation** to reveal Himself to us through Jesus Christ. During His earthly ministry, Jesus said in **John 8:12 (ESV)**<sup>12</sup> ... *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* Humans love personal touches! God personally touched us when He sent His Son, Jesus—who would not just be a baby in a manger, but a Savior who died on a cross and yet had the power to rise from the grave so that we can too. That is why our God is so very good. He gives us eternal life through Jesus.

To conclude today's lesson, I would like to share what M.R. DeHaan, founder of the Radio Bible Class, wrote in 1943 concerning creation in his book, *Chemistry of the Blood*:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. When the time came, He reached down the hand of His omnipotence into the great abyss of nothingness and threw it out into nowhere and “nothing became SOMETHING” and with His Almighty fingers there stretched forth the universe with its planets and suns, its systems and constellations, as He sent them forth calling each one by their names while He hung them in the chandeliers of heaven and made them dance to the “music of the spheres.” If I can believe this, then I can believe that God could walk on the water, that He could make the sun and the moon obey His command and could lengthen Joshua's day. Then I can believe that He could part the Red Sea and make the Jordan stand on its feet. Then I can believe that He could turn water into blood and rain fire from heaven. Then I can believe that he could make an ass to speak, and rain bread from heaven for the children of Israel. It all depends on whether you believe that **IN THE BEGINNING GOD.**