

GENESIS

Author: Moses, the author of the five books of the Law (Deut. 31:9, 24; Luke 24:27, 44; John 1:45; 5:46; Acts 28:23; 2 Cor. 3:15).

Time of Writing: Probably about 1490 B.C., when Exodus was written (see introductory material in Exodus).

Place of Writing: In the wilderness east of Egypt.

Time Period Covered: From the beginning of creation (1:1) until approximately 1635 B.C., the death of Joseph (50:26).

Subject:
God Created, Satan Corrupted, Man Fell,
and Jehovah Promised to Save

CHAPTER 1

I. God's Creation 1:1—2:25

A. God's Desire and Purpose 1:1—2:3

1. God's Original Creation 1:1

1 ^{1a}In the ²beginning ³God ^{4b}created the ⁵heavens and the earth.

¹ The Bible, composed of two testaments, the Old Testament and the New Testament, is the complete written divine revelation of God to man. The major revelation in the entire Bible is the unique divine economy of the unique Triune God (Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4b). The centrality and universality of this divine economy is the all-inclusive and unsearchably rich Christ as the embodiment and expression of the Triune God (Col. 2:9; 1:15-19; John 1:18). The goal of the divine economy is the church as the Body, the fullness, the expression, of Christ (Eph. 1:22b-23; 3:8-11), which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the union, mingling, and incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God and His redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified tripartite people. The accomplishing of the divine economy is revealed in the Bible progressively in many steps, beginning with God's creation in Gen. 1—2 and consummating with the New Jerusalem in Rev. 21—22. In the Old Testament the contents of God's economy are revealed mainly in types, figures, and shadows, whereas in the New Testament all the types, figures, and shadows are fulfilled and realized. Thus, the Old Testament is a figurative portrait of God's eternal

economy, and the New Testament is the practical fulfillment.

Genesis, adopted by the Septuagint as the title of this book, is a Latin word meaning *giving of birth, origin*. As the first book in the Bible, *Genesis* gives birth to and is the origin of the divine truths in the holy Word. Thus, the seeds of the divine truths are sown in this book. These seeds grow and develop in the succeeding books, especially in the New Testament, and are finally harvested in the last book, the book of Revelation.

The book of *Genesis* is a miniature of the complete revelation of the entire Bible. It begins with a man created in God's image (1:26) and ends with a man called Israel (32:28; 48:2), a transformed person, a man not only outwardly in the image of God but a man in whom God has wrought Himself, making him His expression. The transformed Israel is a seed, a miniature, of the New Jerusalem.

Apparently, chs. 1—2 of *Genesis* are merely a record of creation; actually, nearly every item in the record of these two chapters is a revelation of Christ, who is life to God's people (John 1:1, 4; 11:25; 14:6) for the producing and building up of the church. Chapters 3—50 present biographies

^{1a} cf. John
1:1-2
^{1b} Zech.
12:1;
Psa.
33:6;
42:5;
45:18;
Jer.
10:12;
51:15;
John
1:3

2. Judgment and Corruption
1:2a

2^a Jer.
4:23;
Isa.
24:1

2 ¹But the earth became ^{2a}waste and emptiness, and ²darkness was on the surface of the ³deep,

3. God's Restoration and Further Creation
1:2b—2:3

a. The Spirit, the Word, and the Light Coming, the First Day
1:2b-5

2^b Psa.
104:30

⁴and the ^{5b}Spirit of God was brooding upon the surface of the waters.

of eight great persons in two groups of four, representing two races of men: Adam, Abel, Enoch, and Noah, representing the created race, and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, representing the called race. What is recorded is not primarily the works of these men but mainly their life, their living, and their way with God. In Genesis God uses both the record of creation and the biographies of eight persons to reveal the life that fulfills His purpose.

¹² Referring to the beginning of time (cf. John 1:1). Time began at the creation of the universe and continues until the final judgment at the great white throne (Rev. 20:11-15). Time is for the accomplishing of God's eternal purpose, which God made in eternity past (Eph. 3:11) for eternity future.

¹³ Heb. *Elohim*, meaning *the Mighty One*. The Hebrew name here is plural, but the verb *created* is singular. Furthermore, in v. 26 the plural pronouns *Us* and *Our* are used in reference to God, whereas in v. 27 the pronouns *He* and *His* are used. These are seeds of the Trinity. God is one (Isa. 45:5; 1 Cor. 8:4; 1 Tim. 2:5), but He is also three—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (Matt. 28:19). He is the Triune God. It was the Triune God who created. See note 14¹, par. 3, in 2 Cor. 13.

Genesis is divided into three sections, each beginning with a name. The first section (1:1—2:25), beginning with the name *God*, concerns God's creation; the second (3:1—11:32), beginning with *the serpent*, covers the serpent's corrupting of mankind; and the third (12:1—50:26), beginning with the name *Jehovah*, concerns Jehovah's calling of fallen man.

¹⁴ *Created* here, denoting to bring something into existence out of nothing, differs from *made* in 2:4 and *formed* in 2:7, the latter two denoting to take something that already exists and use it to produce something else.

The motive of God's creation was to fulfill God's desire and to satisfy His good pleasure (Eph. 1:5, 9). The purpose of God's creation is to glorify the Son of God (Col. 1:15-19) and to manifest God

Himself (Psa. 19:1-2; Rom. 1:20 and notes 1 and 2), especially in man (1 Tim. 3:16) through His Son, Christ, who is the embodiment of God and the image, the expression, of God (Col. 2:9; 1:15). The basis of God's creation is God's will and plan (Eph. 1:10 and note 1; Rev. 4:11 and note 2). The means of God's creation were the Son of God (Col. 1:15-16; Heb. 1:2b) and the Word of God (Heb. 11:3; John 1:1-3), both of whom are Christ (John 1:1, 18; Rev. 19:13).

¹⁵ In the process of God's creation, the heavens and the angels therein were created first, and the earth, probably with some living creatures, was created second (Job 38:4-7 and note 7¹).

²¹ God created the earth in a good order (Job 38:4-7; Isa. 45:18). *But* here and *became* later in this verse indicate that something happened to cause God's creation to become "waste and emptiness." This cataclysmic event was God's judgment on the preadamic universe following Satan's rebellion. This judgment was executed on Satan, on the angels and the preadamic creatures living on the earth who joined Satan in his rebellion, and on the heavens and the earth themselves. See Isa. 14:12-15 and notes; Ezek. 28:12-19 and notes.

²² Whenever the words *waste* and *emptiness* are used together in the Old Testament, they denote a result of God's judgment (cf. Jer. 4:23; Isa. 24:1; 34:11). The darkness on the surface of the deep also is a sign of God's judgment (cf. Exo. 10:21-22; Rev. 16:10).

²³ I.e., the deep water. In the Bible water symbolizes either life (John 4:10, 14; 7:38; Rev. 22:1) or death (7:17-24; Exo. 14:21-30; John 3:5; Rom. 6:3). The water here signifies death. As a result of God's judgment on the preadamic universe, the entire earth was covered with deep water, signifying that the earth was filled with death and was under death. See notes 23¹ in Mark 1, 1⁶ in 1 Tim. 4, and 1³ in Rev. 21.

²⁴ Verse 1 is a record of God's original creation. Verse 2a refers to God's judgment on the preadamic universe. The entire section from 1:2b—

3 And God ^{1a}said, Let there be ^{1b}light; and there was light.

4 And God saw that the light was ^agood, and God ^{1b}separated the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light ^aDay, and the darkness He called Night. And ^bthere was evening and there was morning, one day.

b. The Waters under the Expanse Separated from the Waters above the Expanse, the Second Day
1:6-8

6 And God ^asaid, Let there be an ¹expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it ^{2b}separate the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the expanse and separated the waters which were under the expanse from the ^awaters which were above the expanse, and it was so.

8 And God called the expanse Heaven. And ^athere was evening and there was morning, a second day.¹

c. The Earth Separated from the Seas and the Plant Life Generated, the Third Day
1:9-13

9 And God ^asaid, Let the waters under the heavens be ^bgathered together into one place, and let the ^{1c}dry land appear; and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land ¹Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called ¹Seas; and God saw that it was ^agood.

2:3 refers not to God's original creation but to God's restoration of the damaged universe, plus His further creation, in six days.

2⁵ Heb. *ruach*, variously translated *spirit*, *wind*, *breath*. This is the first mentioning of the Spirit in the Bible. The Spirit of God, as the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2), came to brood over the waters of death in order to generate life, especially man (v. 26), for God's purpose. In spiritual experience, the Spirit's coming is the first requirement for generating life (John 6:63a).

3¹ After the Spirit's brooding (v. 2b), the word of God came to bring in the light (cf. Psa. 119:105, 130). In spiritual experience, the coming of the word is the second requirement for generating life (John 5:24; 6:63b), and the coming of the light is the third requirement (Matt. 4:13-16; John 1:1-13).

The Spirit, the word, and the light were the instruments used by God to generate life for the fulfillment of His purpose. The Spirit, the word, and the light are all of life (Rom. 8:2; Phil. 2:16; John 8:12b). Christ as the Spirit is the reality of God (Rom. 8:9-10; 2 Cor. 3:17; John 16:13-15); Christ as the Word is the speaking of God (John 1:1; Heb. 1:2); and Christ as the light is the shining of God (John 8:12a; 9:5).

4¹ The separation of the light from the darkness for the purpose of discerning day from night (v. 5; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14b) is the fourth requirement for generating life.

6¹ The atmosphere, the air surrounding the earth.

6² The separating of the waters by producing an expanse between them, signifying, spiritually, the dividing of the heavenly things from the earthly things through the work of the cross (Col. 3:1-3; Heb. 4:12), was the fifth requirement for generating life.

8¹ At the end of the second day there is no record that God said that the expanse (the air) and the waters were good (cf. vv. 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). This is because in the air there are fallen angels (Eph. 2:2; 6:12), and the water is the dwelling place of the demons (Matt. 12:43 and note).

9¹ The appearing of the dry land is the sixth requirement for generating life. This took place on the third day, corresponding to the day of resurrection (1 Cor. 15:4). In the Bible the sea represents death and the land represents Christ (see note 7¹ in Deut. 8) as the generating source of life. After the land appeared, every kind of life—the plant life, the animal life, and even the human life—was produced out of the land (vv. 11-12, 24-27; 2:7). This typifies that the divine life with all its riches comes out of Christ. On the third day Christ came out of death in resurrection to generate life (John 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:3) for the constituting of the church.

10¹ Dividing the land from the waters signifies separating life from death. From the second day (vv. 6-7) God began to work to confine and limit

3^a Gen. 1:6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26; Psa. 33:6, 9; Heb. 11:3
3^b Isa. 45:7; 2 Cor. 4:6; cf. John 1:4-5
4^a Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31
4^b cf. 2 Cor. 6:14
5^a Psa. 74:16; Jer. 33:20
5^b Gen. 1:8, 13, 19, 23, 31
6^a Gen. 1:3
6^b Psa. 104:6-7
7^a Psa. 148:4
8^a Gen. 1:5
9^a Gen. 1:3
9^b Psa. 33:7; 104:7-9; Job 38:8-11
9^c 2 Pet. 3:5; Job 38:4-6
10^a Gen. 1:4