

THE GODHEAD

We begin a new fall study for Sunday. We will study Genesis 1-11 under the following six headings.

- Gen.1 Creation
- Gen.2 Covenant
- Gen.3 Curse
- Gen.4-5 Crime
- Gen.6-9 Cataclysm
- Gen.10-11 Civilization

My task as a pastor-teacher is to interpret the Scriptures not science.

“In a beginning (bereshith) God (elohim) created (bara / kal pf) the heavens (eth-ha-shamayim) and the earth (eth-ha-arets).” **The Bible opens with this independent sentence.** The Gospel of John opens with a similar sentence (John 1:1-3).

Genesis 1:1 is an independent sentence. It is the only verse in chapter one that does not begin with the conjunction (waw).

The direct object (eth) and the definite article (ha) are used with both heavens and earth. This emphasizes the fact that they each had a beginning and their beginning was by means of the creative act of the Godhead.

This means that the writer intended to make a point about creation separate from Gen.1:3. We assume that the point is that Gen.1:1 refers to origin of creation and 1:3 refers to restoration of that creation. This will be discussed in our next lesson on Gen.1:2.

This lesson will study FOUR aspects of the Godhead’s role in the creation of the universe.

1. The prepositional phrase (be-reshith) without the definite article emphasizes the pre-existence of the Godhead.

“The most important use of reshith in the OT occurs in Gen.1:1 where it is combined with the proclitic preposition b. The use of this root leaves no doubt that Gen.1:1 opens with the very first and initial act of the creation of the cosmos.” (Theological Wordbook of the OT, by Harris, Archer, and Waltke, pg.826)

The beginning of the heavens and the earth was the beginning of finite things where before only infinite things existed – “Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God (El).” (Ps.90:2)

Genesis 1:1 has been referred to as the birth of time and matter because of the Hebrew word bereshith (in a beginning) (Isa.51: 13; Ps.104: 5; 1 Cor.10: 26).

“He stretches out the north over empty space, and hangs the earth on nothing.” (Job 26:7)

2. The Hebrew word for create is (bara / kal pf) and refers to creating something out of non-existing materials.

Bara teaches that there is nothing belonging to the composition of the heavens and the earth (universe) either in material or form which had an existence outside of the Godhead prior to Gen.1:1.

My task is to interpret the Scripture and to explain it to the best of my knowledge.

The bara of Gen.1:1 teaches that the creation of the universe was the act of the Godhead and not some mysterious process of nature (Ps.121:2).

Now that you understand bara read Ps.51: 10 – “Create (bara / kal impv) [command] in me a clean heart, O God, and renew (chadash / piel impv) [restore, repair] a steadfast (kun / niphal ptc) [establish, fix] spirit within me.”

Actually the Godhead created the universe out of the **wisdom of God’s word** (Prov.8:12, 22-31; Job 38:4-8). “It is I who made the earth, and created (bara / kal pf) man upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands, and I ordained all their hosts.” (Isa.45:12)

“But God made the earth by His power; He founded the world by His wisdom and stretched out the heavens by His understanding.” (Jer.12:10)

3. All members of the Godhead were involved in the act of creation - “God (elohim) [Godhead] created (bara / kal pf).”

- God the Father – Ps.104:5; 115:15-16; Acts 17:24-25
- God the Son – John 1:1-3, 14; Heb.1:3; Col.1:16
- God the Holy Spirit – Ps.104 is a praise hymn to the Creator (Ps.104:27-30); Gen.1:2; Job 33:4

The Godhead is also called Trinity (Latin).

- Hebrew word is elohim (plurality of God).
- Greek word is theiotes (essence or attributes of Godhead).
- Latin word is trinitas (one in essence and three in persons).

The doctrine of the Godhead states that there is only one true God but in the unity of the Godhead, there are three eternal and co-equal persons. They are the same in substance but distinct in subsistence.

The Christian view of Godhead is unique among all religions of the world. No other religion has ever presented this specific concept (Matt.28:19; 1 Cor.12:4-6; 2 Cor.13:14; Eph.4:4-6; 1 Pet.1:2).

Jesus Christ is the only visible member of the Godhead (John 14:9-11; Col.1:15-19; 2:9; Heb.1:3; 2 Cor.4:4-6).

4. Rejection of the existence of a personal God has resulted in human theories regarding the origin of the universe (Acts 17:16-34).

Heathenistic culture teaches that the universe is the chance occurrence of some mysterious impersonal force (Rom.1:18-32; Ps.10:4; 14:1; 94:8-11).

“By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.” (Heb.11:3)