

IN THE BEGINNING

Genesis 1:1-25

Lesson 1

Key Verse: 1:1

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. This one verse is the foundation of the whole Bible. This one verse is the foundation of all Christian faith. This verse tells us that our God is Almighty Creator God. This verse tells us that God is the Maker of our precious lives. There was a report about a young boy shot three very beautiful girls to death. The policemen asked him, "Why did you do this?" "I don't see any meaning in life", answered he. When we hear, "God created the heavens and the earth", we might think, "So what?" But if God did not create man, man's existence is a joke. If God did not create man, our hard work has no meaning and our lives have no meaning. Man's origin is an unsolvable mystery. So it is good for us to study about the Creator God. May God richly bless you with the word of Genesis.

First, Our God is the Almighty Creator God. The Hebrew word of "God" in chapter 1 is "Elohim." Elohim means all-powerful, Almighty One. It was by his almighty power that God created the heavens and the earth. Read verse 3. God said, "Let there be light." And light blazed out to fill the darkness. He said, "Sun, come into being." (14) And the great, burning sun

rose in the heavens. He said, "Sea, come into being." And the seas became so full of fish that there were enough to be caught and eaten through eternity---with some left over (20). Men are so weak that they cannot begin to understand the greatness of God's power. If the sun is a little too warm, we say, "It's too hot." If the weather gets cold, we shiver. If even small waves roll, we get sea-sick. We cannot even count the stars in the sky, so how can we comprehend the greatness of God?

Once God rebuked Abraham for his complacency saying, "I am God Almighty." (Ge 17:1) God introduced himself to Moses as the "I Am Who I Am." (Ex 3:14) God made the heavens and the earth by his almighty power and matchless wisdom. When we look at the beauty and harmony of the universe, and see how everything works according to unseen natural laws, we cannot deny God's divine nature and eternal power. So Paul wrote, "for since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made..." (Ro 1:20) The Hebrews believed in this Almighty God. This God is the God who created all things. This is the God who made water come out of the rock to quench the thirst of the thirsty people of Israel as they grumbled in the desert (Ex 17:6). God is almighty. He gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. (Ro 4:17) The almighty God who created the heavens and the earth is God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead. He holds the whole world in his hand. He holds the tiny baby in his hands. This Almighty God created the heavens and the earth.

Second, The Creator God is the center of the universe and we are his children. In Genesis chapter 1 the word "God" is repeated 30 times. God created the universe according to his own will, for his own purpose and by his own power. Man is a created being. He did not create himself---as many crazy people assume. The universe belongs to God. He remains the central figure in the universe. We are his creatures. We cannot make ourselves the center of the universe. But when we read the Bible, we find that God is our heavenly Father and we are his precious children (Ps 8:4,5)

When we believe that God is our Creator, then we realize that we are his creatures. When we believe that God is the Owner of our lives, we can become godly people. We must also become humble, for we accept the sovereignty of God. Because God made us our existence is not accidental. It was planned by God according to his good purpose. When we realize that God is our Creator and the Sovereign Lord of creation, we can know the truth about where we came from and where we are going. We came from God and we are going back to God. When we believe that God is the Creator, we become possessors of eternal life in this Eternal God. When we believe that God is our Creator, we can have absolute values, and absolute meaning. Otherwise, our meaning and purpose, our morals and values are relativistic. If we do not have creation faith, it doesn't matter whether we are men or monkeys.

Third, Our God is the Holy God. When we study the whole Bible we come to know that our God is love. That is right. When man fell and was cursed, in

his great mercy God made a plan to save the whole world through his Son Jesus Christ (Ge 3:15). Our God's love for sinners is so great that he did not spare his only Son (Ro 8:32; Jn 3:16). But God does not accept unholy people. Unholy people are ungodly people who deliberately reject the love of God to live lives of sin.

Our God is holy. Because of his holiness, our God is different from all other gods. When one girl wanted to be happy, she cooked all the boys until they were well done. But she was not happy. The other day she said, "Man's happiness does not come from sinful man. True happiness comes from heaven." She meant that true happiness comes from the holiness of God. These days she studies the Bible diligently and fishes sheep diligently. She also receives persecution from worldly people. But she is happy. Here we can understand the deep meaning of God's shedding his Son's blood to cleanse our sinsick blood.

Fourth, Our God is the God of love. Beginning with Ge 2:4, God is referred to as "the LORD God." "LORD" is the English translation of "Yahweh." This name means that God is Savior: he is the God of love. We read in Genesis 3 that man in his pride took God's word lightly. He was tempted by Satan and fell. Because of his sin and fall, man has come under curse. God is the one who wants to save man from this curse. God's saving love is the theme that flows through the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. God is all powerful. But his great power does not express itself in power. His great power expresses itself as saving love. God reveals himself as God who is love

(1Jn 4:8)

Fifth, If God had not created man... From the ancient naturalistic philosophers to the modern atheistic existentialists, how have atheists views the world? And what are the problems of their world view? They have seen water or fire or air as the first cause or the origin of everything. Evolutionists theorize that man came from an amoeba. There are several problems that arise from this materialistic viewpoint.

In the first place, there is the problem of origin. If we say that the world originated with fire or water or "something" or with an amoeba, we cannot find any answer to the basic question of the first cause. If men come from an amoeba, then where did the amoeba come from? Or where did the fire come from? They are totally unable to answer the question of the first cause, the origin. So those who take the atheistic position avoid the question of the problem of the first cause, the origin, and talk only about hypothetical process. They only succeed in confusing people.

In the second place, there is the problem of the meaning of human existence. As Pascal said, "Man is a thinking reed." Even though man is very weak, he is the being who probes the meaning of his own existence. Man's existence has meaning. A person's character is formed as he finds the meaning of his life. A man's character is formed as that meaning finds expression in his life. The meaning of a person's existence must be absolute. Absoluteness comes only from God

But if the origin of all things is water or fire or air, where does life come from? How does life come from inanimate things? And how can beings with intellect and feeling and will come from an amoeba? And how can water, fire and air come together of themselves to form the great burning sun? And who planned the amazing mystery of the seasons? Or the way the sun marks time? There are these and many other unanswerable questions. But the greatest problem of all is the problem of the meaning of man's existence. Let's say that man evolved from the natural world. What, then, is man? Did we accidentally come from our father's loins to struggle to live until we go to join the kingdom of the worms? (Isa 14:11) So men become fatalistic. They think that they are born and live in order to die after working hard to survive in this hard world. Fatalistic thinking leads to Nihilism. "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (Isa 22:13). The result of such fatalism is indeed great. It takes away the meaning of life. It makes man immoral to the point of committing incest (Ge 19:36). The source of all evil seems to be the atheistic view of life. The thing that makes people most unhappy seems to be the thought, "My life just came into being by chance." An atheistic world view produces just this consequence.

The author of Genesis says in 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Here we find the answer to the question of what was in the beginning. God was in the beginning. And God created the heavens and the earth. When we say that God created the world, we are also saying that God has a relationship to his world--the relationship of the Creator to his

creation. It is in the context of this relationship that man can know that his existence is not an accident, that his life has meaning.

God made man according to his absolute purpose. For example, look at a watch. The watch was made by someone for a purpose. As long as the is used for the purpose for which it was made, it has meaning. Likewise, God made mankind with a clear purpose of life. God made mankind with a clear meaning of life. The words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," tell us that because God created the world, all the people and things in the world have a necessary existence. Nothing is here by accident or chance. Every person's life has meaning in God. Without creation faith a person falls into deep chaos.

When we know that God created the heavens and the earth, we realize that our own existence in the world is not an accident, but a sovereign act of God. So my existence is necessary and my life has meaning and value in God.