

It hardly needs to be said that the place to begin is at the beginning. Still, many people have the habit of reading the last chapter first. If we study the Bible that way we will be very confused. The best place to begin with it is at the beginning. There are, however, many who find it difficult to begin with Genesis. Some are put off by the language; they find it to be a bit stiff and somewhat antiquated. Others are discouraged because they bring to the study of this book certain concepts about God and the Bible, which have been retained from their childhood. I call this “security blanket” theology. Most of us slept with a Teddy Bear, or a security blanket when we were little, but discarded it when we grew up. Unfortunately many have not discarded the “security blanket” ideas they had as boys and girls about God and the Bible. Instead they have carried them over into adult life. These are the preconceived ideas that we impose on the Scriptures that make it difficult to understand even plain truth.

Still others come to Genesis prejudiced by the widespread rejection of this book as unscientific in its concepts. So they read the book, especially the first chapters, with a sense of distrust. They read it simply to be informed about a book that is widely known, but they are prejudiced against it, and consequently they never really see what is there. They never really hear the words of this book.

If we read this book carefully, we will discover that God in Genesis is undoubtedly the same as God in the rest of the Bible. In the New Testament He is the Father of Jesus Christ and the Father of all those who believe in him; He has a father’s heart. Our first glimpse of God is as the Creator. That is the way we are introduced to him in this beginning chapter of this beginning book of the Bible.

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

This is one of the most profound statements ever made in the hearing of men. If you think about it a bit, you will see that it is true. Surely this statement is exactly where the Bible ought to begin. It sums up in ten English words, seven in Hebrew, the answers to four fundamental questions every person faces when he really begins to think seriously about his life and the universe in which he lives.

WE BELIEVE IN THE GENESIS ACCOUNT OF CREATION

Genesis 1:2

The first verse of Genesis begins with the greatest observable _____ known to man: the existence of the universe, “the heaven and the earth,” (Genesis 1:1b); and it links to that the greatest fact made known by revelation: the existence of a _____ who creates.

The word Genesis means “_____,” so it is a very apt title for this book. It begins simply, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*”

WHAT IS ALL THIS?

One of the marvels of the Bible is that it uses language that speaks to people of limited understanding, while at the same time it has _____ meaning, to the most learned of men. It addresses itself with equal ease to all classes of mankind. No other book does that.

The Bible completely avoids the ridiculous _____ about creation and origin, found in other religions. In this creation account there is nothing that needs to be _____ as man’s knowledge increases.

But the Bible flatly states that the number of the stars can be compared, literally, to the number of the _____ upon the seashore. Modern science has now established this to be true. Man cannot possibly begin to know the number of the stars.

The earth literally hangs upon _____. It was the Bible that said that “things which are seen are made of things which do not appear,” thus predating by centuries the discoveries of modern science which finally recognized that all matter is made up of invisible energy, and that matter and energy are interrelated.

At this point we must make crystal clear a truth of supreme importance, and which is repeated again and again in Genesis. We must recognize at the outset that it is not the intent of the Bible to be a _____ textbook. Rather, the Bible is a book about redemption:

Its purpose is not to tell us how the heavens go, but how to go to heaven. It declares the way out for a troubled, bewildered, and bedeviled race, and it is the _____ that speaks with authority on this subject. It constantly uses the physical and material to illustrate and to _____ spiritual truth.

Isaiah 55:8, 9; (1 Corinthians 2:11)

The first question, the one most obvious to us concerns the wonder of the universe itself. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," (Genesis 1:1). There we have the heaven and the earth. Someone has said that this phrase is the beginning of true science because the fundamental task of science is to observe and classify all that can be observed. Here is a basic classification. What do you see around you? You see two great classes of things: the heavens and the earth.

The material world is designed to produce parallels, or parables, of the spiritual world. There is spiritual law operating in the natural world, and God put us on a planet where light is separated from darkness for our spiritual education as well as to supply our physical needs. There is a spiritual, as well as a physical reason, for the pattern of creation and if we divorce what we know of our physical world from Biblical truth we will never be able to come to a real understanding of our world. Now look at the second great question about life answered in this verse. We have not only the wonder of the universe, but also the mystery of its origin is disclosed. "God created the heavens and the earth," (Genesis 1:1b).

The third fundamental question, relating to the great mystery of time, is closely tied to the second. "When did it all begin?" The Bible says, "In the beginning," (Genesis 1:1a). What a wonderful answer!

We come to the last big question. "Who is behind all this?" The Bible answers with a single word, "God." There you have what is essentially the boundary of life and thought, as far as man is concerned: God. Man can never escape the thought of God.

We can plan it all out, categorize everything, and come up with a philosophical system that accounts for everything. We can do that, and then we take a walk in the country and see a sunset that moves us to the depths of our being in a way we cannot rationalize. Human philosophy does not account for beauty. Or, someone we love dies and that death strikes us with shattering force and we are left with nothing but the crumbs of our philosophy. That is God, breaking through constantly into human life.

Isn't it strange that we constantly attempt to live as though He does not exist, even though we cannot feel beyond God, we cannot think beyond God, we cannot move beyond God, and there is no way to eliminate him from our lives?

HOW DID IT BEGIN?

_____, even at the beginning, faces this question of the mystery of origin and proposes a solution that no accurate science can contradict: God created the heaven and the earth.

WHEN DID IT BEGIN?

The Bible suggests in many places that _____ is an elusive mystery to man, and modern science is beginning to confirm that. *Psalms 90:4a; 2 Peter 3:8b*

The Bible puts this whole matter of time and of the age of the earth _____ man's knowledge. Jesus said to his disciples. *Acts 1:7b*

WHO IS BEHIND IT ALL?

Only through the power of rationalization, the evil power of _____, can man ever rid himself of the idea of God.

Man left to himself, observing the universe as it is, comes to an inescapable conviction that God _____: that behind all the design, the marvel and wonder of the universe, lies a great mind and personality and heart. If we can observe an effect, there must be a cause.

As beings given the definite gift of _____, we can decide to put aside all the things we have been taught about God and reason only from the standpoint of human knowledge, education, and observation.

It is all a mystery. We are surrounded with mystery on every side! We do not know even a _____ of what there is to be known. We hardly can put the relative amount of our knowledge in terms small enough to express it.

Acts 17:23; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Philippians 2:10-11.

He is the greatest _____ of all, yet we do not want to mention His name, we do not want to talk about His work, we do not want to recognize His thinking, and His wisdom.

This reveals the ignorance, and the shallow limit of _____. We must begin where the Bible begins, at the only place to begin, in order to understand the world where we live and the life we live in it.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1:1

LIFE APPLICATION

In the beginning . . .

Genesis 1: 1

Throughout our childhood years we always heard the question, “*Which came first, the chicken or the egg?*” I was in second grade when I first took this question to heart. “Which one did come first? This question dominated my thinking until the bell rung and it was time for first period recess. Today we know the answer lies in the first chapter of Genesis. Like many questions, God sets in motion the foundation of truth from the very beginning.

Let’s take an egg that a chicken has laid, add it in with your favorite cake mix, bake a cake, and take it to your neighbor. This is the neighbor (person) that God has laid on your heart to pray for. It could be the beginning of a Jesus relationship that God wants you and this person to experience.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a steadfast spirit within me” Psalm 51:10