



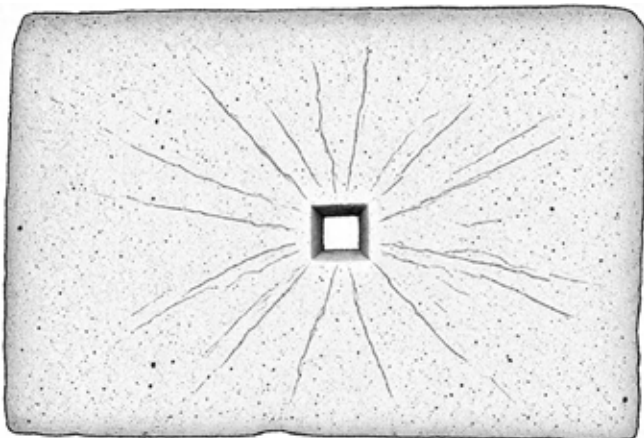
## THE FIRST FIVE DAYS OF HISTORY

Genesis 1:2-22

The first five days of creation reveal God’s power, creativity, glory, and design. They show us that God is very big and we are very little. And yet, His creation also reminds us of His loving care for each one of us.

President Teddy Roosevelt was a big man, both in stature and personality. He would often surprise guests who came to the White House by inviting them out onto the White House lawn after dark to gaze up at the stars. Sometimes, he would even lie down on the grass and invite them to do the same so they could take in the grandeur of the night sky. After a while, Roosevelt would stand up, brush himself off, and say to his guests, “Well, I believe we are small enough now. Let’s retire for the evening.”

Beloved, when you consider the vastness of creation, gaze up at that starry sky, or perhaps look at photographs taken from outer space, our creator God becomes very big, and we human beings become very



This ancient grinding stone is believed to be inscribed with the creation myth known as the Memphite Theology

small. That sense of awe and reverence is the best way to approach Genesis 1. As we set sail into this chapter, we are going to follow the first five days of Creation—the first five days of recorded history.

But before we dive into the details, I want to make a point about Hebrew grammar. I know that does not sound exciting, but it is critical to understanding what happened. When you look at the grammar and structure of this passage, what you find is a series of sequential events—one event following another.

Maybe you learned that little children’s poem about Jack and Jill:

*Jack and Jill went up the hill  
To fetch a pail of water;  
Jack fell down and broke his crown,  
And Jill came tumbling after.*

This poem describes consecutive events: Jack and Jill go up the hill, then Jack falls down, and Jill tumbles down after him. You would never imagine the poet intended us to believe that Jack fell down, and then a week later—or ten years later—Jill came tumbling down the hill. No, the poet is giving us a clear, sequential order to the events.



Likewise, the Hebrew language presents the creation account as a series of sequential events. We repeatedly see the phrase, “And God said”—in verses 3, 6, 9, and so on. That little word “and” is called a consecutive conjunction. It is understood to mean, “And then . . . and then.” So, this passage is clearly describing a sequence of events—one event followed immediately by the next event. In other words, the Poet—in this case, God—never intended us to believe that millions of years passed between these events.

Some people suggest the days of creation are metaphors for long periods of time—perhaps millions of years each. It is as if God knew somebody would come up with that idea, so He further described each day with a specific pattern. Here in verse 5, we read, “There was evening and there was morning, the first day.” Verse 8 says, “There was evening and there was morning, the second day.” This expression is clearly indicating a literal, twenty-four-hour cycle.

One more note here: when a numeral is attached to each day—“the *first* day,” “the *second* day,” and so on—that is even stronger language to emphasize that these were literal days. In fact, beloved, in the Hebrew Bible, whenever the word *day* is attached to a numerical adjective, it always refers to a twenty-four-hour period.

All that to say, God could not have made it any clearer.

When you read this account, and take what God says at face value, the conclusion you come to is that God created the universe in six literal days. That is one staggering miracle upon another. But maybe the greatest miracle is not that God created everything in six days but that He patiently took six days to do it. He could have done it all in an instant!

### Day One: Light and Darkness

Now beginning at verse 3, we read this:

*And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called*

*the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.* (verses 3-5)

This light was not from the sun; the sun will not be created until the fourth day. This light was the manifestation of God’s glory, illuminating the universe. This marked the beginning of His creative handiwork.

*This manifestation of God’s glory marks the beginning of His creative handiwork.*

### Day Two: The Sky and the Waters

On the second day, God created the sky by separating the waters above from the waters below (verses 6-8). The sky, or the “expanse,” served as a division between the waters, creating the atmosphere we now live in. This separation laid the groundwork for life that would soon inhabit the earth.

### Day Three: Land, Seas, and Vegetation

On the third day (verses 9-13), God created the dry land and gathered the waters into seas. He called the dry land “Earth,” and the gathered waters He called “Seas” (verses 9-10). But God did not stop there. He also caused vegetation to sprout from the earth—plants yielding seeds and trees already bearing fruit. Do not miss this perfect timing, beloved.

This was a crucial day in creation, as the land and vegetation would provide the necessary resources for the life-forms God would create in the coming days. The earth was now a place teeming with resources, ready to sustain life.

### Day Four: The Sun, Moon, and Stars

On the fourth day, God created the sun, moon, and stars to govern the day and night, to mark seasons, days, and years, and to give light to the earth (verses 14-19). The creation of these celestial bodies was vi-



tal for the rhythms of life that would follow. The sun would provide warmth and energy, the moon would influence the tides, and the stars would serve as markers in the night sky.

It is important to note that while the light created on the first day was a revelation of God's glory, the lights created on this fourth day were physical objects that will govern the day and night.

### Day Five: Birds and Sea Creatures

On the fifth day (verses 20-23), God filled the waters with living creatures and the sky with birds. The seas, which had been created on the third day, now teemed with life. I have read that we have discovered less than 10 percent of the animals that live in the ocean.

God blessed these creatures, commanding them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth" (verse 22). This is the very first blessing recorded in the Bible, and it sets the stage for the abundance of life that now fills the earth.

I am going to pause here at the end of day 5 because our entire lesson next time is devoted to the creation of Adam and Eve.

But let me just say this as we reach this point: Genesis 1 reveals an amazing Creator. This chapter makes God really big, and it makes you and me very small. But that is not a bad thing at all. In fact, a big creator God is exactly the kind of God we need. He is the source of our strength and purpose for our lives today.

A crew of astronauts paid tribute to God one evening. It was Christmas Eve, December 24, 1968, when the crew of Apollo 8 made history by becoming the first humans to orbit the moon. During their historic orbit, Bill Anders, Jim Lovell, and Frank Borman delivered a live television broadcast to Earth. In their address, they read Genesis 1:1-10. Their message was heard by roughly one billion people across sixty-four countries.

You and I will likely never experience a trip around the moon. At least not until the rapture takes place. But wherever you are today, give glory to God, your powerful and magnificent Creator.

And even though you might be feeling rather small, this great God created you, and He cares deeply for you.

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What does God's creation of the universe tell you about your worth in God's eyes?

What does the Genesis creation account tell you about God? Why is this important?

Why is it important to your daily walk with God for you to believe that God's account of creation is true?

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