

### Lesson: Genesis 1: Everything began “Good” Pt. 1

**Purpose:** The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible. But it is the content of Genesis that solidifies its name. Genesis means beginning or origin. This book discusses the beginnings of the world and the beginning of the nation through which God chooses to rescue it. The themes of **creation** and **covenant** stand out as two fundamental aspects of the Genesis story and the biblical story.

**Date and Authorship:** Many scholars argue that the book of Genesis was written during the Babylonian exile. They suggest that its purpose was to bring together the people of Israel, giving them a valid origin story, during a time of national crisis. But the traditional view is that Moses wrote it as he left Egypt. There are good reasons to accept this view given the corollaries this text has with Egyptian theological ideas. It is possible that after Moses wrote it scribes added things for understandability in their own time and enhanced the story in certain ways. Regardless, the text stands as divine revelation of the ways and will of God.

**Section Overview:** Genesis 1-11 gives us Primeval History. This section of Genesis tells the story of how the world was made and how the nations emerged. It sets the stage also for the origination of the family God would use to bless the entire world.

#### Biblical Takeaways (Genesis 1:1-25):

1. God (Genesis 1:1)
  - a. God is the beginning of the beginning. The Bible wants us to know that God is the source of all existence. If all that we call existence, “the heavens and the earth” came from God, then there is no existence without God.
  - b. The heavens and the earth were not self-generated. There is no scientific reasoning that ever suggests they are. God is the first cause of all things.
2. God vs. Chaos (Genesis 1:1-2)
  - a. Other creation narratives exist in the world of the Bible. Babylonians and Egyptians both argued that existence started with watery chaos and a darkness. In the myth, *Enuma Elish*, it is alleged that the god Marduk divided Tiamat, a watery dragon, to separate the waters beneath the heavens from the water above the heavens.
  - b. The Bible offers an implied critique of such myths saying the elements of the world have no inherent deity or personality. God made all of this and he maintains power over them. He created the world *ex nihilo*, from nothing, through the movement of the Spirit of God over the waters.
3. God’s Created Order is Good (Genesis 1:3-25)

Creation is described as being done through days. The evening is the beginning of the day in Israelite thinking. But these were not meant to be understood as literal 24hr days. These were periods of time. And the days are means to speak theologically about the completion of God’s work. What he has accomplished is finished and perfect, as 7 is the number of completion within biblical thinking. After each day, God declares, what he has made is good because it is what he desired for the functioning of his creation.

#### The Days of Creation:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Day 4	Day 5	Day 6