

THE STORY — Week 2

Genesis 1:1

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

CRITICAL TRUST

I. A CRITICAL INTERPRETATION (A must-have for a correct Frame of Reference)

A CRITICAL SET OF INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES

1. The Bible was written for me but not to me.
2. The Bible is a library with different literary genres (**Narrative**, Poetry & Discourse)
3. The Bible must be read in Context (Biblical, Ancient, & Situational)
4. The Bible must be read with an understanding of language and words (Repeated words drive dominant themes)
5. The Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus

Implication: Narrative literature has characters, setting, plot, a climax and a resolution.

II. A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

An introduction can be a prelude to something that follows, the first meeting of something, or introducing one person to another person or persons.

1. Genesis 1:1 Introduces us to four important/critical words/terms:

- *God/Elohim*
- *Created/Bara* To create, fashion, shape & is used exclusively of God.
- *Heavens/Shameyim* is used to describe the sky above, the spiritual realm, what is high vs low/up vs down & the space that represents God's space.
- *Earth/Erets* In contrast is land, dirt, the physical world and what is man's space vs God's; what is down vs up/low vs high.

The combination of Heavens and Earth are often mentioned together and refer back to Genesis 1:1.

Implication: These two spaces make up the overall **setting** of the Biblical story/narrative, and it is God's agenda to bring heaven and earth together.

2. Genesis 1:1 Introduces us to **God/Elohim** (the main **Character**).

Elohim is a title given to God in Genesis 1

The word *elohim* is plural and occurs 2596 times, but when used of God is singular. English example: for “sheep,” the context determines if it is singular or plural.

Implication: The first readers (The original audience) would have immediately concluded that there is a supreme spiritual being over all others, and it is this being, God, who is being introduced.

Rule of Context: The ancient people groups (AC), the Egyptians (SC), and the scriptures (BC) all point to a reality (Belief) in spiritual beings.

Deuteronomy 4:35-39 “You were shown these things so that you might know that the **LORD** is **God**; besides him there is no other... Because he loved your ancestors and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt by his Presence and his great strength... the **LORD** is **God** in **heaven above and on the earth below**. There is no other.”

1 Corinthians 8:5-6 “‘There is no God but one.’ For even if there are so-called gods, whether in **heaven or on earth** (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), yet for us there is but **one God, the Father, from whom all things came** and for whom we live; and there is but **one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came** and through whom we live.”

Implication: Jesus is equal to and coexistent with the Father the creator of heaven and earth.

Colossians 1:16 (NIV1984) (About Jesus) “For in **him** all things were **created**: things in **heaven and on earth**, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created by him and for him.”

3. Introduce us to what this chapter/literary unit (Genesis1:1-2:3) is about.

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

III. A CRITICAL INVITATION

Those who **meditate** on the scriptures discover 5 invitations to trust the God who created the heavens and the earth.

To TRUST God's:

1. **Control**

1 Chronicles 29:11-12 (TLB) “**Everything** in the **heavens and earth** is yours, O Lord, and this is your kingdom. We adore you as being in **control of everything**. Riches and honor come from you alone, and you are the ruler of all mankind; your hand controls power and might, and it is at your discretion that men are made great and given strength. O God, we thank you and praise your glorious name...”

2. Power

Jeremiah 32:17 “Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.”

3. Wisdom

Proverbs 8:6, 27-29 (Lady Wisdom) “Listen, for I have trustworthy things to say... I was there when he set the heavens in place... and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.”

4. Goodness

James 1:16-18 “Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.”

& Spiritual Birth

5. With our Heart (LIFE)

Psalms 51:10 “Create (Bara) in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Implication: By learning to TRUST God (Jesus), the creator of heaven and earth, we can experience God’s control, power, wisdom, goodness, new birth and a purified heart.