

International Conversation Cafe

Old Testament: The Creation of the World, Genesis 1

Have you ever read accounts about the creation of the world? While many ancient stories start with the earth being empty, they continue with accounts of conflict and competition between gods. Genesis 1 stands in contrast to these stories. Genesis 1 reveals an all knowing, powerful, and good God creating a paradise for people to live in.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was barren with no form of life; it was under a roaring ocean covered with darkness. But the Spirit of God was moving over the water.

God said, "I command light to shine!" And light started shining. God looked at the light and saw that it was good. He separated light from darkness and named the light "Day" and the darkness "Night." Evening came and then morning—that was the first day.

God Said, "I command a dome to separate the water above it from the water below it." And that's what happened. God made the dome and named it "Sky." Evening came and then morning—that was the second day.

God said. "I command the water under the sky to come together in one place, so there will be dry ground." And that's what happened. God named the dry ground "Land," and he named the water "Ocean." God looked at what he had done and saw that it was good.

God said, "I command the earth to produce all kinds of plants, including fruit trees and grain." And that's what happened. The earth produced all kinds of vegetation. God looked at what he had done, and it was good. Evening came and then morning—that was the third day.

God said, "I command lights to appear in the sky and to separate day from night and to show the time for seasons, special days and years.".....God made two powerful lights, the brighter one to rule the day and the other to rule the night. He also made the stars.....Evening came and then morning –that was the fourth day.

God said, "I command the ocean to be full of living creatures, and I command birds to fly above the earth.....Evening came and then morning—that was the fifth day.

God said, "I command the earth to give life to all kinds of tame animals, wild animals, and reptiles." And that's what happened. God made every one of them. Then he looked at what he had done, and it was good.

God said, "Now we will make humans, and they will be like us. We will let them rule the fish, the birds, and all other living creatures."

So God created humans to be like himself; he made men and women.....All of it was very good! Evening came and then morning –that was the sixth day.

So the heavens and the earth and everything else were created. By the seventh day God had finished his work, and so he rested.....That's how God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1, Contemporary English Version

The story of creation tells us about how the world began. It reads much like a poem.

What phrases are repeated?

What do you think the author wants us to understand?

Christians agree that God is the Creator, but often hold different views on how He created. Some believe He created in six twenty-four hour days. Other Christians believe that Genesis 1 is a simplified account, not a scientific record of what happened. They believe that the days were longer ages thus allowing for evolution in some degree. The most important point is that God designed and created, though we do not understand all the details.

The story of creation tells us a great deal about God, who He is and what He does. Here are a few observations. Can you add to the list?

1. He existed before the creation of the universe.
2. He has great power.
3. Everything God made was _____. Therefore, we can assume that He himself is_____.
- 4.
- 5.

The story of creation also tells us something about man. Did you notice that God made man like Himself? How is man like God? There are at least 4 ways. Can you add to the list?

1. People have intellect as God does.
2. People have the ability to decide things.
- 3.
- 4.

What have you been taught about how the world began?

Are there any stories from your countries that explain the beginning of the world?

What are some objections to creation by God?

"Science answers the questions of how it came to be and how it functions, but it cannot tell us why." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? How might this thought influence your spiritual journey?