

Day 2, Genesis 1:2-8

² The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

After God created the heavens and the earth, the Spirit of God began to move over the waters of the earth to bring shape to that which was “formless” and to fill that which was “void” (empty).

³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light day, and the darkness He called night.

We shouldn't think this verse speaks of the time when light first came into existence. According to 1 John 1:5, God Himself *is* light, and He has existed from eternity past (Ps. 90:2). It's significant to note that no reference is made to the sun until the fourth day (Gen. 1:16). Therefore, this must have been light that issued forth from God's manifest presence. Rev. 21:23 speaks of a time when the heavenly city will require no sun because the glory of God will illumine it. This is how we should understand the light spoken of here. It came from God's glory as He moved, by His Spirit, over the surface of the waters.

In v. 3, God's light issues forth from His spoken word: “Then God said...,” and we see this same language on each of the succeeding days of creation. This makes the words of the apostle John all the more significant in John 1:1-3:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made, and without Him nothing was made that has been made.

The Word John speaks of here is Jesus. He is the Word who became flesh and lived among us (John 1:14). Because all things were made through Christ, we can see Him as the very Word by which God spoke to create and fashion all things. And this calls our attention to the next thing we read in John's gospel:

In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. (John 1:4)

The first light that flooded our earth issued forth from God's own life, and this light would sustain our lives. In a similar way, the light of Christ entered our world out of the life of the Father, and His light is what gives us true life as well. We see this relationship between the light of creation and the light of Christ in Paul's words in 2 Cor. 4:6:

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Based on the language of this verse (and similar language in the verses that follow), each day begins at sundown in the Jewish tradition.

⁶ Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." ⁷ God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. ⁸ God called the expanse heaven.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

The term "heaven" in this verse is *shamayim*, which is literally "heavens" (plural). In Scripture, this word is not limited to the expanse between the earth and the clouds; it can include the distant space beyond the clouds (e.g., Gen. 1:1), and it can also refer to

the various bodies (stars, planets, moons) the heavens contain (e.g., Ps. 8:3).

In these early verses of the book of Genesis, there is a significant contrast we would do well to see. In Gen. 1:1, the word “created” is *bara* in the original Hebrew. This word speaks of the bringing forth of that which did not exist before. In Gen. 1:7, the word “made” is *asah*. This word is used for any kind of fashioning of what already exists. The word *bara* (create) is used sparingly in the Old Testament (only fifty plus times) and almost exclusively for God’s creative activity. The word *asah* (make) is a very common term (used over 2500 times in the Old Testament). To give an example of the difference between the two, a carpenter might use an existing design to *make* a table. However, if he conceives the design himself, we might say the table is his *creation*. That is, it was produced from a design that didn’t exist before. When God created the heavens and the earth, He brought forth that which did not exist before, and what He did is far more significant than anything a carpenter could do, because He created all things *ex nihilo*—out of nothing.

This helps us understand what is being communicated in this first chapter of Genesis. First, God created the raw materials of the heavens and the earth out of nothing. Then, He began the process of fashioning the raw materials He created.

On the second day, God began the process of bringing order out of chaos, and He is the God who brings order to the chaos in our lives. This begins when we receive His light, which brings us life. His life became the light of men when He walked among us (John 1:4), and His light is what gives us life today. When we receive His light, all of our chaos is turned into order, and all of our darkness is turned into glorious day.

*How we praise You, O God, for the glory of Your creation,
and we praise You for the gift of Your Son, who revealed Your*

*glory to us. Just as you filled the earth with the light You
spoke through Him, fill our lives with His light and all of
His life, we pray.*