

Genesis 1

Genesis – Birth, beginning,

1. Read through Genesis 1:1-2:3 1) When a word or phrase is repeated in the bible it points to its significance. Which words are repeated through this passage? Discuss among the group why you think these words are important.
2. The earth was originally ‘without form and void’ but God forms the earth on days 1-3 and then fills it on days 4-6. Use the table below to identify God’s activity under these categories.

Day	What was Created? (God Forms)	Day	What was Created? (God Fills)
1		4	
2		5	
3		6	
7	God Rest		

3. Through the passage there are repeated phrases that give a sense of order and rhythm to the events of creation. What are the repeated phrases? What does writing the passage with this sort of order communicate about how God created? What approach does this encourage us to take when trying to understand God’s creation?
4. What phrase strengthens the sense that God creates by his word? How does the creative power of God’s word strengthen our resolve to meditate on the written Word of God in our own lives?
5. What is the refrain that defines what the creation was originally? How should we view creation now?

6. Chapter 1 climaxes with the creation of humanity (Gen. 1:26–31). Note the ways in which this final creative act of God is different from the previous creative acts of God. How is the distinctiveness of humanity emphasized in Genesis 1:26–31?
7. What is the distinctive purpose for humanity in God’s creation? How should this shape our relationship to creation?

“The climax of the week of creation is God’s Sabbath rest on the seventh day (Gen. 2:3). Similarly, the seventh speech for the building of the tabernacle climaxes with instructions on the Sabbath (Ex. 31:12–17). God’s Sabbath rest hints at the purpose of creation, since divine rest is associated with temple building in other ancient Near Eastern accounts, as well as elsewhere in the Old Testament.

Similarly, just as “And God said” frames his seven days of creation, so “And Yahweh said” frames the seven speeches for the creation of the tabernacle (Ex. 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12). “The Lord Said” The psalmist explicitly compares the building of the sanctuary to the creation of the heavens and earth (Ps. 78:69).” these passages seem to point to the idea that the heavens and the earth are a divine sanctuary.

8. How should this affect our understanding of the purpose of the cosmos?

In Genesis 1:1-2:3 we see the creative power of God’s word on full display. Elsewhere the bible speaks of how God creates by the power of His Word, Jesus. (cf. John 1:1–3) This is the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14), and it is the same person who is the firstborn of the new creation (Col 1:18).

9. What is the connection between God creating by his Word ‘in the beginning’ and his bringing forth the new creation through Jesus’ resurrection? What does this make you think about who Jesus is?

When God finished his work, “he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done” (Gen. 2:2). God did not rest because he was tired, rather, he was pointing towards the good goal of creation. Rest in God. Despite the disruption that sin brought to this rest, in Christ, this rest is fulfilled as “there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God” (Heb. 4:9). Jesus offers the key to enter that rest, since he invites us, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

10. How should this idea of being given rest by Jesus shape how we live now, and shape how we see the future?