

Lesson 2 – **Beginnings**

Genesis 1 and 2

*Jan. 7, 2014*

**Material and Student Objective:**

To know that Moses taught the Hebrews in Genesis chapter one that the Lord God, who was the God of the Hebrews ---- created all that exists ---- the world, everything in it and every kind of life ---- from nothing.

**Elementary Approach:**

You may not remember way back when you were very small --- but there was probably a day when you went to your Mom or Dad and asked them a question.

A long **time** ago ---- in the olden days ---- when kids **asked** this question ---- they got some **strange** answers. A parent might have said:

Oh ---- uh --- we found you out in the **garden** under a big old **cabbage** leaf! Or ---

Oh ---- uh --- the **stork** brought you and just dropped you right off at our house! Or ---

Uh ---- we went to the **hospital** and picked you out from all the other babies there.

Well now that I've given you the **answers** ---- I **bet** you know what the **question** is!

Right! "Where did I **come** from?"

Now that's a very good question – and one that **you** may have even asked **your** parents in the past. And they may have given **you** some of those funny answers too --- but if **so**, they were just **joking** with you ---- because **then** they probably went on to answer your question **seriously**.

When you were very little, your parents may have said, "Oh, you came from **us**. You grew inside your Mommy's tummy ---- and then we went to the hospital and you were born." And that answer satisfied you for a while.

But then you got a little older, and you wanted to know, "Well ---- where did the **first** people come from? How did **they** get here?"

And maybe what you **really** wanted to know was, "Where did the whole **world** — where did **everything** come from?"

Well apparently there were some people back in Bible times that had these same questions, and back **then** ---- even as today ---- there were **many** ideas about how the world and everything got here.

**Middle School Approach:**

*There is a question that has puzzled people ever since the first time it was asked. I have written this question on the other side of this poster board.*

The people who first asked this question were ancient philosophers ---- and they were **serious** about it. They sincerely wanted to know the answer. It was neither a joke nor a riddle to them. To **them** ---- it was a real mystery.

Here's the question: "Which came first ---- the chicken ---- or the egg?" Put up board work "Which came first ---- the chicken or the egg?"

Now it's a **good** question ---- and it's a question that can really make you **think**.

We know that in order to have a **chicken** ---- you have to start with an **egg**. Even if you go to the feed store or Tractor Supply ---- and you **buy** baby chickens ---- those baby chickens were hatched from **eggs**.

But we **also** know that in order to have an **egg** ---- you **must** have a **chicken**. If you go to the **grocery** store and you **buy** a dozen eggs ---- those eggs were laid by **chickens**.

So ---- which came **first** ---- the **chicken** ---- which **lays** the egg ---- or the **egg** ---- which the chicken **came** from? Those ancient philosophers wanted to know the answer.

And this question led those philosophers to eventually ask another question ---- what about **life**? How did **life** begin? How did the **universe** begin?

And those are questions that are **still** being asked even today.

And apparently there were some people back in Bible times that had these same kinds of questions ---- maybe not about chickens or eggs ---- but about where everything came from ---- and back then, even as today ---- there were many, many ideas about how the world got here.

### **Grades 1 – 8:**

Hold up a **classroom Bible**. But since we're studying the Bible in this class, we're going to look at what the **Bible** says about the answers to those questions.

About three thousand five hundred years ago ---- **long** before anyone living **today** was born ---- a large group of people, called the Hebrews, were living in the land of Egypt. One day the king of Egypt decided to make the Hebrews his slaves.

All they did was **work** ---- from **sunrise** to **sundown** ---- and if they didn't get enough **work done** --- they were beaten **severely**. Their lives were totally **miserable**.

(**Flip to show Pharaoh**) This was because the king of Egypt ---- who was called Pharaoh ---- thought he could do **anything** he **wanted** --- even make people his **slaves** ---- and **force** them to do all his work.

He thought he could take anything they **had** if he **wanted** it ---- and he could even **kill** them if he felt like it ---- and **many** times ---- he **did**. And **no one** could stop him. He could do anything he

wanted --- because **he** and the Egyptian people **believed** he was a **god** ---- or that at least he was a descendant or child of a great god.

But what did the Hebrew **slaves** think of **Pharaoh**? Did some of **them** **believe** he really was a **god**?

The Bible doesn't say whether they believed this or not ---- but we **do** know **one** Hebrew who did **not** think Pharaoh was a god. You may have heard of him before. His name was Moses.

Moses believed that the Lord ---- the God of the Hebrews ---- was the God of heaven and earth --- and he believed that the Lord was the **only** god that the Hebrews should worship..

To force Pharaoh to set the Hebrew slaves free ---- Exodus ---- the second book of the Bible ---- says that the Lord God performed one miracle after another **against** Pharaoh. These miracles hurt Pharaoh, and his land and his people.

---- so **finally** Pharaoh gave **in** ---- and told the Hebrew slaves to get **out** of **Egypt**.

Don't you **know** those Hebrews **celebrated** the day they left Egypt and left slavery ---- they were **finally free!!**

According to the Bible ---- after the Hebrews were safely away from Egypt ---- Moses began teaching them the things he wanted them to know.

He especially wanted them to **know** ---- **who** they **were** ---- **where** they **came** from ---- and what the purpose **was** for their **lives**.

And he wrote all these things down in a book called **Genesis** ---- the first book in the Bible.

The name *Genesis* in the Hebrew language means "**beginnings**." The book was **called** that because, **in** it, Moses described what he said was ---- not **only** the beginning of the **Hebrew** people ---- but the **beginning** of **everything**. *Put up board work: Genesis, then "beginnings".*

Now I can imagine that the things Moses wrote in Genesis may have **surprised** some of the freed Hebrew slaves, because what **he** told them was so **different** from what the **Egyptians** believed.

The Egyptians had a number of different ideas about how the world and everything got started ---- but most of their ideas started with **water**. Most Egyptians believed that **water** ---- **always** existed.

*(Flip to show hill)* Then, at some point in time ---- a hill rose up out of the water ---- *(flip to show egg)* ---- an **egg** appeared on the hill ---- and after **that** ---- the **sun** god **hatched** out of the egg. Many Egyptians believed that their Pharaoh **himself** ---- was the sun god in a human body. That's why they let him do whatever he wanted.

*Put up board work: Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.”*

But what Moses wrote down for the Hebrews in Genesis chapter one is **very different** from that. It begins with the words, “In the beginning, **God** created the heaven and the earth”.

Moses told them that **their** God — the God of Heaven and earth — was there in the very beginning ---- and always existed. He said that **their** God **created** the universe and everything in it in six days.

*NOTE TO TEACHERS: If a student questions how long the days were, say: “Normally when we use the word day we usually mean 24 hours, but often the word day is also used to mean a period of time, such as, ‘Back in the day of my great grandparents...’ Since there are different ideas about what this word ‘day’ means in the Bible, this is one of the things we cannot discuss in Bible class.”*

*Put up board work create = make something out of nothing:* Now in the Hebrew language that Moses spoke **and** wrote in — the word, “created” ---- meant to make **something** out of **nothing**.

So Moses told his people that God created the heaven and the earth out of **nothing**.

Let’s say I go home after school today, and I am really hungry so I decide to make some brownies. Sounds good, huh?

If I were to use the Hebrew meaning of the word “create” — to make **something** out of **nothing** — would I be right in saying I “**created**” these brownies? **No!**

*(Flip to show ingredients on table)* I would have to use **ingredients** like flour, sugar, and eggs. So the word “**create**” that the **Bible** used wouldn’t be correct to describe what **I** did because I had to use some **things** to make the brownies ---- I couldn’t just make them out of nothing.

But Moses said in that verse that **his** God ---- the God of the **Hebrews** ---- **created** ---- made out of **nothing** ---- the heaven and the earth. The only thing that was on the earth was water ---- and **darkness**. Evidently at first it would have looked something like this. *(Show visual of water-covered planet.)* Moses was saying there were no mountains, no hills and no ground showing at **all** above the water.

Then according to Moses, God **spoke** ---- saying, “Let there be **light**” ---- and there **was light**.”

And God saw that the light was **good** and He separated it from the darkness. He called the light “**day**,” and the darkness He called “**night**” ---- and the **evening** and the **morning** ---- were the **first day**.

*(Put up board work Day 1)* But even though according to Moses they had the heaven and the earth and the light ---- the earth **still** would have looked like just an enormous ball of water.

So Moses told them that on the second day ---- God **split** the waters. He explained that God **divided** them ---- and moved **some** of the water up into the space above the earth ---- and left some of the water down on the earth to fill the seas.

And God called the space above the earth the **firmament** ---- which includes the atmosphere, the sky and the air we breathe.

*Point to board work Day 1* So in the Bible it says God created light on the first day —

*Put up board work Day 2* ---- and it says He created the **firmament** on the second day.

So now the earth has **light** and **air** ---- but there is still nothing **on** the earth **itself** but **water**. There's something **else** that's needed in order for people to live on the earth.

So Moses said God spoke **again**, “Let the waters on the earth be gathered **together** ---- and let dry **land** appear.” He said that the dry land that **appeared** – God called **earth** ---- and the **waters** that God gathered together – He called **seas**.

But if Moses' account had stopped at this point on the third day, the earth or dry land would have looked mighty funny, because it would have been **bald**. It would have no “**hair**” — **nothing** was on it!

So Moses said God spoke again and the earth brought forth grass and trees ---- and all **kinds** of living plants.

*Put up board work Day 3:* So now on the third day there was **land** ---- and there were **seas** ---- and there were **plants** and **trees**. And Moses said that God saw that it was good. The world Moses described was **beautiful**. *Point to board work Good!*

But if Moses said God stopped creating after the third day ---- before very long ---- the **vegetation** ---- the **grass**, the **plants** and the **trees** ---- would have been in **big trouble** ----because they had **water** ----which they **needed** to live ---- they had earth or **soil** to **grow** in ---- but what **else** would they need in order to live? **Sunlight!**

So Moses told that on the fourth day, God said, “Let there be **lights** in the heaven.” These lights were the **sun** which would shine to give light in the **daytime** ---- and the moon and **stars** which would shine to give light at **night**.

These lights in the **sky** would be for **signs** --- to tell seasons, and to tell **days** and years.

They would help the Hebrews in many things ---- including making their **calendars** and telling time, getting **directions** when traveling, and help in knowing when to plant and harvest the crops they grew. And ---- for something **you** might consider very **important** ---- they would help in remembering **birthdays** ---- **and** special holidays!

### **Grades 3-8**

Our world is amazing. The sun and all the planets and moons are located in exactly the right place. The earth is located at **just** the right **distance** from the sun to keep it warm enough and cool enough. If the earth was **closer** to the sun, it would burn **up** ---- and if the earth was **farther** from the sun ---- our planet would **freeze**.

The extremely **large** planet **Jupiter** is in just the **right** location for its **gravity** to attract **meteors** so that they fall on **its** surface. If those meteors fell on **our** planet **Earth** ---- they would hit the ground like giant **bombs**. Isn't it an amazing world we live in!

### **Grades 1-8**

*Put up board work* **Day 4:** Again Moses said God looked at the lights He had created on the fourth day ---- and He saw that it was **good** — He was pleased with it. (*Point to board work* **Good!**)

But according to Genesis, if you could have looked into the **waters** and the **skies** that Moses wrote about ---- they still would have been empty. The seas **might** have had some **seaweed** ---- since it is a **plant** and Moses said plants were created on the third day ---- and the sky would have had clouds that he said were created on the **second** day, and you could see the sun, moon and stars from the fourth day ---- but what would have been **missing** in the waters or seas, and the skies?

Right! There would have been no **fish** in the **seas** and no **birds** in the **sky**.

So Moses said that on day five, God spoke again ---- saying, “Let the waters bring forth **moving** creatures after their **own kind**, and let there be birds in the **air** after **their** own kind.”

Moses was saying that God created sea creatures ---- everything from tiny little **guppies** to huge **whales** ---- and then every kind of **bird** ---- from little **hummingbirds** to **ostriches**!

And Moses said something interesting in that first chapter of Genesis. He said that when God created each of these creatures, He created them **after their own kind** — which means when they had babies ---- they would have **babies** like themselves.

Moses was saying that when a **dolphin** had a little **baby** ---- it didn't have a baby **octopus**. It had a baby dolphin that was like **itself**. When a shark had a baby ---- it didn't have a baby **eagle** or a baby **sea** turtle — the shark had a baby shark that was like **itself**.

*Put up board work* **Day 5:** So on the fifth day after God created water creatures of all kinds and birds of all kinds ---- Moses said God looked at all that He had made ---- and I guess you know what's coming next. He saw that it was **what?** Right ---- good!!

But — I wonder if you noticed what Moses said about **how** ---- these things were created on each day. He said it was done ---- **simply** by **speaking**.

*Point to board work.* He said God simply **spoke** the **words** and these things came into existence --- or appeared.

*Show visual:* I think that would be **cool**. If I don't feel like cooking dinner tonight ---- wouldn't it be neat if I could just speak and say, “Let there be hamburgers and fries.” (*Flip to show meal.*) I'd **love** that!

But you know ---- by the sixth day ---- the land **still** would have looked kind of empty. Even though Moses said it had grass and plants and trees ---- what would have been **missing** on the land? Right, **animals!**

So Moses said that on the sixth day God spoke **again** to the earth ---- this time creating **animals** of **all** kinds ---- everything from tiny **mice** ---- to huge **elephants!**

He also created **creeping** things of all kinds ---- for example, **insects** ---- like **ants** ---- and **reptiles** like lizards.

And again on this sixth day, Moses states that God said, “Let the **earth** bring forth these creatures **after** their **own kind**” — meaning they would have babies that were like themselves.

So when a bear had a baby, it would not have a baby deer. It would have a baby bear ---- and a deer would have a baby **deer**.

Now the Bible says that after God was finished creating the animals and creeping things, He looked at all that He had made ---- and again ---- I’m sure you know by now what Moses said next. **Right!** “God saw that it was **good!**”

But according to Moses, God was not **finished** creating ---- because he wrote that on the **sixth day**, God created **one more** thing. Later one of the Bible writers said that this was God’s **greatest** and **best** creation.

Now maybe some of you are thinking, “Oh!! ---- **dinosaurs!!!**”

Well ---- from what Moses described in Genesis, he seemed to be saying that **dinosaurs** would **also** have been created on the sixth day. But the one more thing that Moses was talking about ---- was **not** ---- **dinosaurs**.

He said in Genesis chapter one ---- that the one more thing that God created ----was **man**.

Now sometimes when the Bible writers speak of **man** ---- they mean **people** ---- the human **race** — men **and** women. And **here** Moses wrote that on the sixth day ---- God made the very first two **people** ---- man and woman. And what did he say their names were? Right — Adam and Eve. *(Put up board work Adam and Eve.)*

And according to Moses ---- when God got through making people on this sixth day and He looked at Adam and Eve ---- and at **all** that He had created ---- what do you think God **saw**? He saw that it was ---- what? *(Students will probably say, “That it was good!”)*

Well actually ---- **this** time Moses **didn’t** say that God saw it was **good** ---- it was **way better** than that. He said that God saw that it was **very** good! *Put up board work very good!*

Moses was saying that God was **very pleased** with what He had created. According to Genesis, everything had been perfectly made — a perfect world, perfect animals, perfect people and everything they needed to have a perfect life.

After this Moses said that on the seventh day God rested because everything He wanted to create was finished.

Now let's just picture what life according to Moses' record could have been like back then. This is so cool! In Genesis Moses wrote that when God first made animals and man, animals were not **afraid** of man. So he was saying they would not have run from man or hurt man. Animals and man would have been **friends** — they would have all gotten along together.

So picture **Adam** being able to crawl up on the back of a **dinosaur**! He and **Eve** could have their own personal **water slide**! Wouldn't **that** be **wild**!

Now after the Hebrews heard Moses read Genesis chapter **one** to them ---- the Hebrews all **knew** how they would answer any Egyptian who might ask them that **question** that we were talking about earlier ---- "Where did everything **come** from?"

*(Flip to show question and answer)* The Hebrews would answer, "The Lord our **God** made everything."

They would go on to say, "Our God made the heaven and earth ---- water, light and darkness ---- day and night ---- the sky, air, land, oceans and plants ---- the sun, moon and stars ---- all fish, birds and sea creatures ---- all animals and bugs ---- **and** humans." They would have said, "Our God created **everything**."

And if the Egyptians asked the Hebrews a question many people ask even today, "But where did your god **come** from?" ----

---- the Hebrews would have told them, "Our God **always** existed. He has always **been** here. He doesn't **have** a **beginning**

But if the Egyptians said that Moses and the Hebrews were **wrong** — that their God **had** to come from **somewhere**, Moses and the Hebrews would have said, "Well ---- if we asked you **Egyptians** where **your** gods came from, you would say that **your** gods came from some **stuff** that was already **here** — something that already existed — something such as water, or dirt ---- or what might seem even **stranger** ---- **an egg**!

"And then you Egyptians would say that your gods took whatever that stuff **was** ---- that was already **here** — and made all of **us** and everything **else**."

So the Hebrews would then go on to say, "Now we have a question for you **Egyptians** ---- '**Tell** us --- that **stuff** ---- the water, dirt, or the **egg** ---- that made **your** gods — where did **those** things come from?'"

And the Egyptians would have answered, “Well ---- they were **always here**.” So the **Egyptians** would have said that the **water** or **dirt** or **egg** ---- was **always here** ---- and started everything, but the **Hebrews** would have said, “No—the Lord **God** was always here and **He** was the one who started everything.

And people debate those same things **today** ---- some believe matter, or other **stuff** was always here, some believe what the Hebrews believed ---- that the Lord **God** was always here ---- and some people even have **other** ideas.

In America, people have the **right** to have their **own** ideas about different **things** ---- and they are allowed to **talk** about their ideas with each other. Just remember that if you talk to others about your ideas ---- do it without making **fun** of them, or cutting them **down**---- and without giving them a hard time if their ideas are **different** from yours.

### ***Middle School:***

*Now you remember at the beginning of our lesson we asked a question ----- “Which came first ---- the chicken or the egg?” If someone asked **Moses** that question ---- what would he **tell** the person who was asking **him** that question?*

*Right ---- from all the things that Moses wrote down for the **Hebrews** ---- he would say the **chicken** came **first**. He said that on the fifth **day** God created **birds** ---- not **eggs**. **Eggs** would have to be **hatched**!*

*Moses would probably explain that if the **egg** came first ---- there would be no chicken to sit on it to incubate it so that it could **hatch**. Then the egg would **die** and **rot** ---- and that would mean there would be **no chicken**!*

*And then, if someone asked Moses the question that is so often asked today, “Where did **everything** come from” ---- his answer would have been what we looked at today in the Bible.*

### ***Grades 1 – 8:***

Today we have seen that in the first book of the Bible ---- Genesis ---- Moses told the Hebrew people where **they** and everything **else** ---- **came** from – that their **God** created it all.

And in our next lesson, Moses will tell his people the reason **why** ---- their God created it all.