Genesis – 2013-2014

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 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.