

God Creates Heaven and Earth

Key Verses: *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”*
—Genesis 1:1,2

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 1:1-13
the statement that “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

THE BIBLE IS THE ONLY

book in existence which sets forth the order of creation in a concise and logical manner. The narrative begins with the reasonable assumption that a Creator already existed. Scientists long ago disproved the theory of spontaneous generation, which postulated that a living form of life can arise from nonliving matter. It is similarly irrational to believe the heavens and the earth could be made from nothing or a void without a master architect. Thus, our Key Verse begins with the

statement that “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

It is worth noting that the fundamentalist view that the heaven and the earth were created in six literal 24 hour days cannot be reconciled by either Scripture or science. In the Bible the term “day” often relates to a period of time longer than twenty-four hours. For example, Peter says “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years.” (II Pet. 3:8) Genesis 2:4 describes the entire creative period as one day. The same is true in secular language. We speak, for example, of Napoleon’s day, or Washington’s day. Clearly the

creative days of Genesis were not short periods of time, but epochs of time sufficiently long to permit the accomplishment of the work assigned to each.

The verses of our Selected Scripture describe the first three creative days. In the beginning the earth was shapeless and empty, covered in darkness and by a massive depth of water. Verse 3 states God's command, "Let there be light: and there was light." The creation of light was accomplished by the Spirit of God—his invisible power—moving upon the face of the waters. The effect of light was the removal of the total darkness that had engulfed the earth. Light is essential throughout nature. Therefore it was first in the divine order when the time came for the Creator to prepare the void and dark earth for human habitation. Thus, briefly, is summed up the result of the first creative day.

The work of the second creative day, recorded in verses 6-8, was the formation of an atmosphere, or firmament, between the waters upon the earth's surface and the water canopy above. This atmosphere became the source of oxygen which plant and animal life would require when brought forth in subsequent creative days. When the divine intention respecting formation of the earth's atmosphere was complete, the second day ended.

During the third creative day, recorded in verses 9-13, the waters on the earth were gathered together to form the seas. As the waters drained off into the seas and the land dried, vegetation sprang forth, each after its own kind, with seed in itself to reproduce its own species. This matter is so fixed by the laws of the Creator that although horticulture can and does do much to give variety, yet it cannot change the actual nature of species. Geology agrees that vegetation preceded the higher forms of animal life, even as the Scriptures show. Vegetation needed to spread before the creation of the animals that feed on it. God's creation of earth as man's home was now fully underway. ■