

## *Beginnings Study and Discussion Questions*

### *Lesson One: Creation: The Beginning of Time – Genesis 1:1-1:25*

*Unless otherwise noted, all questions in this lesson and subsequent lessons refer to the underlined Scripture references listed at the beginning of each of the five sections within the lesson (often given as readings).*

Introduction: Read Genesis 1, together with Job 26:7-14 and Psalm 104.

- 1) Briefly describe each of the six days of creation (Example: Day 1 = light). **Day 1 = light; Day 2 = expanse (sky); Day 3 = land, seas and vegetation; Day 4 = sun, moon & stars; Day 5 = birds, water creatures; Day 6 = livestock, wild animals, creatures that move along the ground, and man**
- 2) How many times did God say that His creation/work is “good” in Genesis 1? What does this commentary reveal about His nature? **God says this seven times (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). His comment reveals that He is a moral being and that He takes delight in His creation.**
- 3) **a)** According to Psalm 33:6 and 9, Hebrews 11:3, and 2 Peter 3:5, how did God bring creation into existence? **Creation came into existence at God’s spoken word of command.**  
**b)** Which repeated phrase in Genesis 1 confirms this? **Genesis 1 says, “And God said, ‘Let there be’ ...” on each “day” of creation.**  
**c)** The Bible claims to be God’s written word (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21). Considering what God’s spoken word accomplishes (Genesis 1), what expectations should you have about what His written Word will do in your life through this study? Be as specific as possible. **Discussion leaders should request sharing of personal answers from participants in order to develop a comfort level within the group. From this point forward, all GOD of the WORD answer sheets will simply refer to this as “personal sharing.”**

Reread Genesis 1:1-2.

- 4) In Genesis 1:1, the Bible claims that God existed before the universe.
- 5) According to Genesis 1:1-2 and John 1:1-3, who, specifically, who participated in the process of creation? **God the Father (“Elohim” [Genesis 1:1]), the Spirit of God (Genesis 1:2), and the Word of God (Jesus Christ [John 1:1-3])**
- 6) In verse 2, the words “the Spirit of God was hovering (or moving) over the waters” suggest anticipation and preparation to begin a work. Read Romans 15:16b, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, 1 Peter 1:2 and consider that the Spirit of God is currently hovering (or moving) over you. What is He possibly preparing you for? (While the verses depict a general aspect of the Holy Spirit’s work within believers, you may have some specific ideas, based on His current work in your life.) **The verses cited refer to the Spirit’s general work of salvation and sanctification. However, we can sometimes gain insights about specific works for which the Spirit of God is preparing us through our past and present circumstances and our spiritual gifting. For example, trials prepare us to help others in similar circumstances and spiritual gifts are to be developed and used for the benefit of other believers. Personal sharing**

Reread Genesis 1:3-19.

- 7) God’s creation of light was literal. In many other places, the Bible uses the term “light” symbolically. What does light represent in the following passages: 2 Samuel 22:29; Ezra 9:8; Psalm 13:3, 36:9, 43:3, 119:105; Isaiah 2:5; Isaiah 60:1, 19-20 (see together with John 1:1-9 and 8:12, Ephesians 5:14, and Revelation 21:23); Matthew 5:14-16; 2 Corinthians 4:4; and 1 John 1:5-7? **The term “light” is used throughout the Scriptures. God (most often, Christ) is said to be “the Light.” This light symbolizes hope, life and blessing, understanding, enlightenment, zeal, guidance, direction, truth, Christ/God, good deeds, the opportunity to know God and His truth, the penetrating power of the Gospel and those who are transformed by it, glory, and righteousness. Genesis 1 emphasizes that God is the ultimate source of light.**

- 8) Which phrase in Genesis 1:11-12 (also repeated in verses 21, 24, and 25) explains that God's creation was orderly and had divinely established parameters? **“According to their kinds”**
- 9) a) What purposes are given for the creation of the heavenly bodies in verses 14-19? **To govern and separate day and night, to mark seasons, and to give light to the earth**
- b) Write a prayer of thanksgiving for specific ways you have benefited from the existence of the sun, moon, and stars in the past twenty-four hours. Make an effort to thank the Lord for these specific gifts a number of times throughout the day. At the end of the day, record the impact of your mindfulness and thanksgiving. **Personal sharing**

Reread Genesis 1:20-25.

- 10) God blessed the living creatures in verse 22. What does it mean to “bless”? (You may consult a dictionary or speak from experience.) What was God's command to the living creatures? **The Hebrew word for blessed is “*barak*”. It means to grant (or invoke) favor, or to “endow someone with (a cherished thing or attribute)”.**<sup>i</sup> In the Old Testament, a major function of blessing was to confer abundant and effective life upon something or someone. God blessed the creatures He made (at least in part) by giving them the ability to achieve what He commanded of them (to “be fruitful and increase” [1:22]). They were also blessed in the more general sense that God gave them His hearty approval (“God saw that it was good” [1:21]).
- 11) Read Job 38:4, 39-41 and 39:1-30. From this passage and your own observation of nature, what is God's attitude toward the creatures He has made? **God expresses intimate concern and involvement in His creation and especially over His creatures. In this Job passage, He expresses His provision, delight, and an amazing attention to variety and detail in their creation. All of this reveals God's pleasure in creating them.**
- 12) Read Matthew 6:25-33. With what worry or personal need will you trust God today? **Personal sharing**

From Genesis 1:1-25:

- 13) Find and list all of the verbs (action words) that describe God's activity in Genesis 1:1-25. **Created (1:1, 21); hovering (1:2); said, “let there be” (1:3, 6, 14, 9, 11, 20, 22, 24); separated (1:4, 7); saw (1:4, 9, 11, 12, 18, 21, 25); called (1:5, 8, 10); made (1:7, 16, 25); set (1:17); and blessed (1:22)**
- 14) Which verses use the words “separated,” “gathered,” and “produced”? Can you relate these aspects of God's work in creation to His spiritual work within you? **God separated light from darkness (1:4). He also separated the waters to create an expanse (sky [1:6-7]). He created heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars) to separate day from night (1:14, 18). God “gathered” waters to create land (1:9). At His command, the land produced vegetation (1:12). The land produced living creatures at God's command (1:24). Once God creates spiritual life within an individual, these same terms express His ongoing work in them: He separates that person from sin, gathers the broken pieces of his or her life, and produces new life and good works.**
- 15) What do you learn about God (who He is and what His character is like) from Genesis 1:1-25? Which of these “attributes” of God (true qualities of His person) speaks to a need in your life today? **God is ultimately creative (He created something from nothing), all-powerful, and a moral being (He declared His creation “good”). He blesses (gives the ability to fulfill His good purposes). God is omnipotent and sovereign over His creation (He speaks and what He says happens). God sees all the details. Personal sharing**

<sup>i</sup> Soanes, C., & Stevenson, A. (2004). *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (11th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.