



READING RESPONSIBLY

Correctly Handling the Word of Truth

LESSON 04: GENESIS

Who or How?

I. Introduction

Read Genesis 1-2. Which came first? Plants or humans?

→ Read Genesis 1:11-13, 26-27, 31

¹¹ Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

→ Read Genesis 2:4-9

⁴ This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

⁵ Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, ⁶ but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. ⁷ Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

⁸ Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹ The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

→ Read Augustine, Confessions, 11.12.14

How, then, shall I respond to him who asks, "What was God doing before he made heaven and earth?" I do not answer, as a certain one is reported to have done facetiously (shrugging off the force of the question). "He was preparing hell," he said, "for those who pry too deep."

II. Overview of Genre & Context: Origin Story

- Specific: origin story
 - Who made us?
 - Why did this being make us?
 - What are we supposed to do?

III. Big Issues: Who or How?

A. What is Genesis Trying to Do?

1. Enuma Elish

- 2nd millennium BC
- Creation story by the Babylonian culture
- Abraham, who was originally from Ur of the Chaldeans, would have probably been told this story as a child growing up in this culture.¹

2. Atrahasis

- Written by 1700 BC
- Creation story from the Akkadian culture

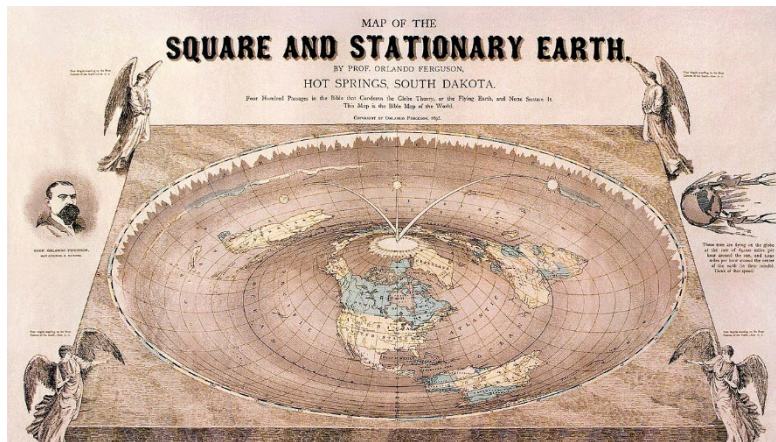
	Gen 1	Gen 2	Enuma Elish	Atrahasis
Origin of God	Eternally existent; not created (1:1)	(Not addressed)	The gods are created beings	Some gods eternal; some created
Demeanor of God	Calm, in command	Loving, listening	Belligerent, angry, insecure	Powerless
Reason humans are created	To be in God's image; to rule over animals; to fill the earth (1:26-28)	Man: To take care of the land (2:5, 15) Woman: To provide companionship and help (2:18)	To be slaves for the gods who don't want to work	To be slaves for the gods who don't want to work

¹ Hamilton, 34-35.

B. What is Genesis *Not* Trying to Do?

IV. Specific Examples

A. Concordism



Map of Square and Stationary Earth

B. The Dome

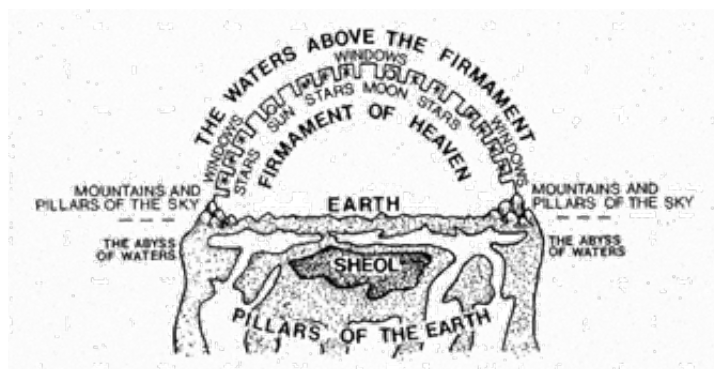


Image from Russell Pregeant, *Reading the Bible for All the Wrong Reasons* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2011).

V. Reading Genesis Responsibly: Strategies/Encouragement

A. Respect the limits of science and theology.

B. Look for what God is like.

	Gen 1	Gen 2
Name used for God	Elohim	Yahweh Elohim
Location of God	High, removed, lofty	Down on the earth, getting hands dirty
Method of Creating	Speaking	Forming
Scheme	Well-ordered, planned from beginning (sovereign)	Responsive to input from the human (accommodating)

C. Look for the God-human relationship.

VI. Next Lesson: Law

Question: Read Leviticus 19:19. Please ensure your attire is scriptural before you begin the lesson.