

## Genesis Chapter 1 Summary - John Karmelich

First let me address those of us who are familiar with Genesis. A key concept in Chapter 1 is the world was made in seven days! Many of us take the idea of "seven days" to mean literally seven days. Many people who take their bible seriously consider that to be seven "time frames". I suspect we'll find out in heaven the correct answer to that debate! Studying Genesis is always good, as it's full of great truths to keep in mind in our relationship with God! As I stated in the last lesson, Genesis is a hard book to "get one's arms around" since its scope is so broad! As I state often, I write these lessons to help us grow in our trust in God! My lessons are designed to help people draw closer to God! So you know, to prepare for these lessons, I listen to sermons (audio format) read a few commentaries and different translations, then I pray and then I start writing what I'm assuming God is guiding me to say. With that said, let me share things about this first chapter of the first book in the bible.

Keep in mind this was roughly written 3,500 years ago. When Moses penned it, he was surrounded by a world where people worshipped what was created versus the God who created everything. Therefore, it's full of "firsts" not only as to what affects the rest of the bible, but for people new to the idea of what of what God did to create the world.

Let me begin by sharing two "fairly trivial" facts but teaches us a little about God. First God's name He uses in the first verse is a "plural". In English, "one John" is singular, and "two John's" are written in a plural format! What we have in Hebrew for the word God is "Elohim"! It is the plural of "Eloh". All I am saying is we get clues of the Trinity in the opening verse! Later in the chapter it translates, "Let US make man in our image!" He's not talking to the angels since they can't create anything!

Speaking of creating there are several words in Hebrew to make something. For example, one of those is for making "something out of something" like making a pot of our clay. The word used in Genesis 1, Verse 1 is a word to mean make something out of nothing! The idea's God began with nothing to make our world including all creatures and the stars in the sky. That's more logical than, "Nothing existed in the beginning, then it exploded to create the universe!" As one preacher put it, "If there was a big bang, there has to be Big Banger to light the fuse!" My point to grasp is there's lots of wonderful details here in Genesis if one is fascinated by the little details. Genesis is not designed to teach us all things we can learn about history, but it gives us enough information to explain why the world began! I realize that I am getting into bible trivia, but as believers I want us to realize we get clues of the Trinity in Genesis!

So why does God give us a creation story, why not start with Moses's life or the beginning of the Israel nation? Because God wants us to understand He is in charge, he created the world for people to honor Him in and to dominate over all factors. So why did He create deadly animals? As to trust in the God who created us to overcome whatever the world "throws at us" at any given moment!

With that said, Chapter 1 is divided into six days. I've beaten to death the six literal day versus periods of time, so I'll sneak in my bias here and there as we discuss these six days and understand why it is He wants us to learn about the six days and how it's relevant to our lives. OK then, time to get through the "big six days" (or eras depending upon your perspective) in say a page and a half: Let's begin:

Day 1 is essentially about the fact the heavens (sky above the earth) and the earth were created. What I noticed is that in effect all three members of the Trinity were involved (yes, a Christian perspective) as

the word Elohim is plural and the Spirit of God hovered over it. When the earth first existed, it was in effect a big water ball on the surface.

On Day 2, the text specifies God separated the water, so that there was a thick vapor of water above the sky and of course the oceans below. What I pondered is why do it that way? After all, God could have just said, here's the planet as it exists today. If God's God, that means He could make it in milliseconds or billions of years! Day one included the mention of light, but no sun or stars till the 4th day. Light in Day 1 was God working with what He created again out of nothing! I suspect the reason God wants us to know that He made it this way, is because of one day God will restore the world to the way he made it at first, with a water vapor above the earth to block out harmful rays that age us. Ever pondered why the first people in the bible lived so long? It's the water vapor that existed in the sky at that time! That covering came down when the flood came! OK then, time for Day 3:

Day 3 is about the creation of land on the surface. God separated the water on the ground into separate bodes of water. So why tell us all of this? Why couldn't it just be made as we know it today? I suspect it's so we realize God's in charge of where lands begin and end! Since land now existed, time to create plants and trees. Those who argue for a literal 7-day time frame point out the sun wasn't created till day four, so how could plants survive without sunlight? Thus, the debate continues!

One of the trivial things scholars like to point out is God says "it is good" seven times in Chapter 1. We don't get any "this is good" statements on Day 2, but we get two on Day 3. A Jewish tradition for some of that faith is to get married on a Tuesday, because that's the 3rd day (if the 7th is a Saturday). They'll marry on Tuesday because that's the day of the "double blessing" by God!

Day 4 was the creation of the sun, moon and stars. Note that one of the reasons for those is to mark the seasons (i.e., the Jewish calendar is a lunar month, let along spring, fall etc.) As many of you know the way sailors sailed at night was they used the stars to navigate. I'm not going to get into the star distance debate here. I'll just say I've read some interesting things from both literal seven-day people and people who argue for long periods of time. To me again, it's a boring argument because God by definition will do what He wants when He wants. An underlying point is God created all these things and we're called to worship the creator not the things created.

Day 5 was birds and fish. That included in my opinion dinosaurs (who I believe couldn't survive after the flood). He also created powerful creatures to show with His power we can survive even with those types of things, but this chapter also implies all creatures were planteaters till sin came in the world!

Day 6 is a "busy day" in effect. It says God created all the things that live on the ground. That includes large animals as well as insects! One of my mentors Dennis Prager likes to ponder, "Why did He make the mosquito?" I don't know, but the question is worth pondering! While God is making things that go on the ground, he made mankind. This is also the first time He's specifying humans as well as creatures were made male and female. In fact, the first bible command is: "To be fruitful and multiply" to fill the earth. Obviously, creatures and mankind have done that!

The chapter ends on Day 6. Obviously, the bible will spend a lot of time talking about what "resting" is all about. I'm convinced a big reason God took six days and rested on the seventh is to show the pattern He desires for mankind to take one day off from whatever we consider work to honor Him as God! We obviously see miracles and changes to the world through the bible, so the idea of God being done is for the creation, not for Him working in the world! In effect the chapter ends by saying God made all these creatures as vegetarians that we'll read changes after sin enters the world. It's a remind that when God's

going to change the world back to how it was in the beginning, we no longer have to fear, wild animals as a danger. In summary God wants us to know He made all things! His desire is for us is to recognize that fact and realize one day we get to enjoy a world as He wanted to create it for us! OK then so much for Chapter 1. Thanks for reading!

On the same page as this study is a more detailed study I wrote many years back. You are welcome to email me if you want or join my list to the get the latest lesson. Thanks for reading. John