

Beginning, Heavens, Earth

Thoughts on Genesis Chapters One, Two

“In beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

“In beginning was the Word...” (John 1:1a).

“That which was from beginning...” (I John 1:1a).

As shown in the preceding English translations, there is no definite article before “beginning” in the Hebrew text of Gen. 1:1 or in the Greek text of John 1:1 and I John 1:1. Rather, there is an indefinite beginning opening each of these three books, *allowing for more than one beginning*.

Thus, this indefinite beginning in Gen. 1:1 *would allow for “the heavens and the earth” to have been created at a different time from that of the remaining material universe, with BOTH having beginnings (note Job 38:4-7 — the earth’s creation, with its rulers [cf. Job 1:6-2:7], seen separate from the remaining universe)*.

THEN, the special and particular place that “the heavens and the earth,” along with “man,” occupy in God’s plans and purposes *could ONLY add credence to the matter*.

BUT, let’s get some context from the WHOLE of Gen. 1.

“Heavens” in Genesis Chapter One

“Heavens,” as seen in Gen. 1:1 (Heb., *shamayim*), is a plural word throughout the Hebrew text of the O.T., in all of the more than four hundred times that it is used (ten times in Gen. 1, translated “air” three times [“fowl of the air,” “fowl of the *shamayim*”; vv. 26, 28, 30]).

The extent of the expanse referred to by “the heavens” *MUST be understood textually or contextually*.

On day one the *shamayim* covered the expanse that was darkened in connection with a destroyed earth (v. 2). Then, light was restored to this expanse (vv. 3-5).

On day two the *shamayim* covered the expanse between two bodies of water (v. 8).

Day three, kept within context, the *shamayim* evidently covered the same expanse as on day two (v. 9).

On day four, contextually, the *shamayim* had to do with the expanse between the earth and the sun and moon, with the stars mentioned, though not associated with the expanse (vv. 14, 15, 17 [on the “stars,” see parenthetical data on the next page]).

And on days five and six, the *shamayim* had to do with the expanse where the birds flew (vv. 20, 26, 28, 30).

(Note that the extent of the expanse, the *shamayim*, on day one was left indefinite, though later dealt with on day four — Scripture further explaining other Scripture.

The light brought into existence on day one [vv. 3-5] is seen enveloping the restored sun on day four [vv. 14-19], forming the sun’s exceeding brightness existing today.)

BUT, what about the expanse referenced by “heavens” in Gen. 1:1, preceding day one?

Little thought is invariably given to this expanse. The matter is usually glossed over and thought of, apart from the continuing context, as referencing the entire universe.

BUT, in continuing statements dealing with this expanse throughout the first chapter (statements in each of the six days, describing God’s restorative and creative work), the expanse is always dealt with in a quite limited extent.

On days two, three, five, and six the expanse had to do with the area close to and surrounding the earth; And on days one and four the expanse extended out to include the sun and moon in our solar system, but not beyond.

("The stars" mentioned on day four would seemingly be included in this expanse [English translation], *but NOT so.*

Note how verses 16 and 17, describing God's work on this fourth day, read:

"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he *made* the stars also.

And God set them in the firmament of the heaven [‘the heavens’] to give light upon the earth."

The word "made" in v. 16 [Heb., *asah*, "to do," "to make"] has to do with the same type work previously seen in the preceding three days — *a restorative work*. And this work has to do with the sun and moon *ONLY, NOT* with the stars.

The word *asah* appears in the Hebrew text relative to the sun and moon *but NOT relative to the stars* [note that the word appearing in the English text relative to the stars is in italics, indicating that it is not in the Hebrew text].

The text should read, "...to rule the night, the stars also." That is, the moon and stars were to rule the night. But *NOTHING* is said about the stars being restored with the sun and moon. The English text, including the word "made" before "the stars," is a translator's interpretation.

The stars which one sees [only a minute percentage can be seen with the naked eye (far, far less than one percent)] are in our own galaxy and *would NOT* have been darkened. They *would NOT* have been affected by that which occurred on the earth and its associated heavens at the time Satan fell [described back in v. 2a]. Nor would any part of any other galaxy in the universe have been affected.)

In the light of how the word "heavens" is consistently used *ONLY* one way throughout God's work during the six days of Gen. 1:2b ff, unless interpretation is thrown to the winds, the word *could NOT* possibly be used any other way in Gen. 1:1, introducing the whole of the matter.

Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of its context, in the light of other Scripture, and in the light of the way Scripture has been structured (*e.g.*, note previous understanding of the extent of the “darkness” on day one from God’s revealed restorative work on day four).

And, *IF* Scripture is interpreted in this manner when dealing with Gen. 1:1, then that meant by the extent of the expanse (the *shamayim*) will be self-explanatory.

BUT, IF this is not done...

Beyond the preceding, the Bible is about the present heavens and earth (the present earth, with its associated heavens), *NOT* about our galaxy or the estimated billions of galaxies forming the physical universe.

Nor is the Bible about the new heavens and new earth (the new earth, with its associated heavens).

In the preceding respect, note II Peter 3:7-12, where “the heavens,” along with “the earth,” will one day pass completely out of existence.

From understanding Gen. 1:1ff correctly, the passing from existence of the present heavens and earth in II Peter 3:7-12, along with the creation of “a new heavens and new earth” in Gen. 21:1ff, *can ALL be understood correctly.*

Other parts of our galaxy, or the universe at large, *are NOT in view.*

Again, compare Scripture with Scripture and simply allow Scripture to interpret itself.

God’s Universal Government

Then, in connection with the preceding, note God’s established government of the universe, which has to do with the whole of the matter seen in Genesis chapter one.

Scripture reveals that angels govern provinces (like the earth, governed by Satan), and these provinces evidently ex-

ist throughout these estimated billions of galaxies comprising the physical universe (Job 1:6-2:7). And as Satan governs his province from a place in the heavens above the province (Eph. 6:12)—as Christ and His co-heirs will do during the Millennium (Eph.1:3-14; 2:6; 3:1-11; Heb. 3:1) — evidently other angels, governing provinces throughout the universe, rule their assigned kingdoms from the heavens above the provinces as well.

THEN, God rules from the heavens over ALL.

This is the universe which man, beyond the Millennium, on the new earth, will evidently have a part in governing from “the throne of God and of the Lamb” in Rev. 22:2-5.

Satan, insofar as we know or can know, was the only Messianic angel in the universe that sought to move outside of God’s established laws relative to his assigned position. And, apart from the one province over which he was placed in the beginning, Satan *has had NOTHING to do with God’s universal government* (though at a time in the distant past, he sought universal power and authority [Ezek. 28:12-19], *resulting in the destruction of the province over which he ruled*).

And, as seen, THIS past destruction did NOT extend out into the universe.

NOR will the future destruction be ANY different.

Again, the Bible is ABOUT the earth, from beginning to end, NOT the material universe.

(Our sun is a medium-sized star, with revolving planets, forming our solar system; and within our galaxy there are an estimated two hundred to five hundred billion other stars with many [possibly most], having revolving planets, together forming solar systems. And astronomers, with their powerful telescopes in use today, have been able to see these planets revolving around many of them [several thousand of them].

Then, astronomers estimate that billions of galaxies exist, each containing multiplied billions of stars [suns], with many evidently possessing revolving planets.

And these form the kingdoms which appointed angels have ruled, under God, since time immemorial.

And David could only see a very minute part of this in just one galaxy when he looked up into the heavens and said:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and
the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the
angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works
of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;
The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and
whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all
the earth! [Ps. 8:3-9.]

Now, to Something Else in Gen. 1, 2

“Numbers” and their meaning, as seen beginning both Testaments, occupy a very significant place throughout Scripture.

1) After Four Days

On the restoration of the earth in Gen. 1, it is evident that God completed His restorative work pertaining to the material creation (the heavens and earth) at the end of the fourth day (Gen. 1:2b-19).

His work on days five and six (Gen. 1:20-28) *had to do with populating an ALREADY restored earth* (animals, then man).

And it is here, in the opening chapter of Genesis, that the foundational base for the meaning of the number “four” is *UNCHANGEBLY ESTABLISHED and SET.*

Accordingly, throughout ALL subsequent Scripture, the num-

ber “four,” when dealing with numeric values, would ALWAYS be used in the SAME manner seen in these opening verses, referencing “the creation,” “the earth” (cf. Dan. 8:4, 8, 9; Rev. 20:7, 8).

Genesis chapter one records the past restoration of the material creation, the earth; Revelation 6-19 records the future restoration of the material creation, the earth.

And with the number “four” inseparably connected with the first restoration, one could ONLY expect to find this number inseparably connected with the second restoration as well.

Then, to help in this respect, note something else about HOW God began the revelation of Himself to man, also UNCHANGEABLY ESTABLISHED and SET in Gen. 1.

God opens His Word with a foundational framework, SET in a septenary form, showing in a very succinct manner NOT ONLY WHAT the whole of subsequent Scripture was about BUT HOW the whole of subsequent Scripture would be structured.

This is the way God began His Revelation to man, SHOWING within this septenary structure HOW He restores a ruined material creation, then man (man dealt with later).

a) Genesis and Revelation

And with the preceding in mind, note that EXACTLY the same thing is seen at the close of God’s Word, in the Book of Revelation, when God, once again, restores a ruined material creation.

The past restoration of the material creation in Genesis, covering four days, SET in a septenary structure, is the way God opened His Word.

And the future restoration of the material creation in Revelation MUST occur in EXACTLY the SAME manner. It HAS to occur EXACTLY the SAME way, for the way God restores a ruined creation was UNCHANGEABLY ESTABLISHED and SET in Genesis.

And to see this, all you have to do is turn to Rev. 6, at the beginning of the future restoration of the material creation, and begin reading.

This restoration opens with the introduction of “four horsemen” (vv. 1-8). And it is evident (from the place occupied by these horsemen [opening eight verses], that stated about each, and their number) that *the ENTIRE restoration is seen in FUTURE time (and, as will be shown, of necessity, in PAST “time” as well) through the actions of these four horsemen, paralleling, numerically, the “four days” opening Gen. 1.*

In Revelation, *EVERYTHING pertaining to this restoration (ALL the judgments of the Tribulation and those immediately following) are seen encapsulated within the actions of these four horsemen (effecting the restoration of the earth, the outworking of that introduced in the previous chapter, in chapter 5).*

And, *EXACTLY* as God’s work during the first four days in Genesis *NOT ONLY* resulted in the restoration of the material creation *BUT* was set within a septenary structure, the actions of the four horsemen in Rev. 6 will *NOT ONLY* result in the future restoration of the material creation *BUT* are also set within a septenary structure as well.

God’s redemptive terms for the earth are seen contained in a threefold, septenary arrangement of Judgments — a seven-sealed scroll (ch. 5), with the seventh seal, once broken, containing seven trumpets and seven vials of wrath (chs. 8-10, 15, 16). And the breaking of these seven seals of the scroll occur during the last seven years of Man’s Day, and time immediately following.

(“Three” is the number of *Divine perfection*, and “seven” is *God’s number, showing the Divine completeness of that in view.*)

THEN, as Gen. 2:4-Mal. 4:6 forms commentary for that seen in the septenary structure of Gen. 1:1-2:3, Rev. 6:9-19:21 forms commentary for that seen in the septenary structure surrounding Rev. 6:1-8 (*ALL following [6:9ff], wherein the septenary structure is seen, is encapsulated within the actions of the four horsemen in vv. 1-8 [cf. John 1:1-2:11]).*

b) *Genesis, Daniel, Revelation*

NOW, note *HOW* the number “four” is used in the Book of Daniel in a different manner, relating to and providing a part of the *SAME* word picture.

Gentile world power throughout the Times of the Gentiles, from its beginning to its end (the final 2,600 years of Man’s 6,000-year Day), is depicted through a “four-part great image” (2:31-45) and “four great beasts” (7:1-28).

And *the same climactic end* wrought through the actions of the four horsemen in Rev. 6:1-8 (developed in continuing Scripture, succeeding commentary [6:9-19:21]), is seen at the end of these two corresponding sections in Daniel, *each depicting, after different fashions, the end and destruction of Gentile world power* (cf. Isa. 63:1-6; Ezek. 38, 39; Rev. 14:14-20; 19:11-21).

Genesis introduces matters, covering the entire time from creation to the Messianic Kingdom, with the government of the earth in view throughout (first thirty-four verses).

Then, Daniel is about the government of the earth during the entire Times of the Gentiles, ending with the destruction of Gentile world power, followed by the Messianic Kingdom.

And *THAT’S* what Scripture is about, the government of this one province in God’s kingdom — correcting matters after one fashion at the time Gentile world power is destroyed and Satan is bound, then taking 1,000 years of a righteous rule, with “a rod of iron,” to bring matters regarding correcting the government of the earth *to a FINAL and COMPLETE end*.

THEN, AFTER the Son delivers a *COMPLETELY* restored kingdom up to His Father (I Cor. 15:24-28), the earth, with its heavens, will be “burned up,” “dissolved,” “the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (II Peter 3:7-13; cf. Rev. 7:12).

As can be seen, *God is NOT going to countenance one of the provinces in His kingdom which had any past connection with sin, death, and destruction to EVEN remain in existence, in ANY form.*

ONLY THEN, ONLY AFTER THIS has been done, will God bring into existence “a new heavens and new earth” (NOT a renovated heavens and earth, BUT a completely NEW heavens and NEW earth). The OLD, associated with sin and death, will have passed COMPLETELY out of existence; and the NEW, associated with righteousness and life, will have been brought into existence [Rev. 21:1ff].

2) After Six Days

Then, rather than “four,” as in the creation’s restoration, note that “six” is used relative to man’s restoration, foreshadowed in Gen. 1 and dealt with throughout Scripture.

“Six” is man’s number (Rev. 13:18). Man fell, and God is taking six days, 6,000 years, to effect his restoration, with a view to the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period.

3) Four Days, Two Days, the Seventh Day

Now, the redemption of the province (four days), the redemption of man (six days), all with a view to the Messianic Era (the seventh day), should provoke thought on why all seven days in Gen. 1 are so often divided into “four days” and “three days” (four days for the earth’s redemption, two additional days for man’s redemption, with the seventh day added to the last — “on the third day.”

This division of “seven” into two parts, “four” and “three,” is seen numerous places throughout Scripture, with a tremendous amount of Biblical truth dealt with through this means — “on the third day,” “after six days,” with the ending points for both being the same, “the seventh day.”

This is simply one of the different ways that God has structured His Word.

Numerous things can be stated in a very succinct manner through the simple use of numbers. The way God has begun each Testament provides a case in point.

The first sixty-two verses in John's gospel, beginning the N.T., incorporate this numeric arrangement, with events during the first four days dealt with in a separate respect from the remaining three days. Four days (vv. 29, 35, 43) take you to the end of chapter one; then the remaining three days appear as a unit beginning chapter two — "And the third day...", plus the previous four days, take you into the seventh day, into the Messianic Era (first sign in this gospel).

As well, note that events in the O.T. are spread across four days (4,000 years), with those in the N.T. taking two additional days (2,000 years). And all six are with a view to restoration (the earth and man), with man's rule over a restored earth to be realized on the seventh day (a day dealt with throughout Scripture, beginning in Gen. 1:28; 2:1-3).

4) After 483, 490 Years

For an indispensable part of Scripture on *HOW* all of this will be worked out, note Daniel's prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (Seventy Sevens, 490 years) in Dan. 9:24-27.

All but the last seven years of Daniel's prophecy, along with all but the last seven years in the Jewish dispensation, were fulfilled at the time of Christ's crucifixion in 33 A.D. — seven years short of the full 490 years, seven years short of a complete four days, a complete 4,000 years.

And at this time God, so to speak, stopped the chronometer marking off time in Daniel's 490-year prophecy and began a completely new dispensation, working for another two days, another 2,000 years, with a completely new entity — *the one new man* "in Christ."

And once God has completed His work with this new man, He will remove the new man from the earth (Rev. 1:10; 4:1, 2), turn back to Israel (Rev. 6:1ff), and complete the Jewish dispensation by restarting the chronometer, marking off the last seven years in Daniel's 490-year prophecy.

THIS “time” FROM Daniel’s prophecy, FROM man’s finite vantage point, is yet FUTURE. BUT, with “time” continuing from the point that it left off in the spring of 33 A.D., from God’s vantage point, it will be fulfilled 2,000 years in the PAST.

The Jewish people, in THAT day, timewise, will FIND themselves in the POSITION of having JUST crucified their Messiah, at a TIME preceding His burial and resurrection (cf. Zech. 12:10-14).

And Israel’s Messiah will THEN lie in the grave two days (the present dispensation, where He will have ALREADY lain in the grave two days [note Israel’s blindness throughout these two days]), with BOTH of God’s firstborn Sons to be raised up on the third day (the seventh day), with Israel’s sight restored.

THESE final seven years of “time,” with their associated judgments — completing the fourth day, completing the fourth 1,000-year period dating back to the restoration of the earth and man’s creation in Gen. 1 — will result in the restoration of the earth the SECOND time. And this restoration will occur EXACTLY where it is supposed to occur, where it HAS to occur, at the end of four days, at the end of 4,000 years.

NOR can this restoration occur at ANY other “time,” for THIS “time” was UNCHANGEABLY SET at the beginning in Genesis.

BUT, with “time” comprising the fifth and sixth days, the fifth and sixth 1,000-year periods (the present dispensation) having ALREADY been completed BEFORE events seen in the previous several paragraphs even BEGIN to occur, Christ can return following the completion of Daniel’s prophecy, and, following certain events, usher in the long-awaited seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period, the Messianic Kingdom.

And IF you are wondering how God can work with “time” and do something of the preceding nature, DON’T!

Note Eccl. 3:14, 15 in this respect:

“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past” (cf. Josh. 10:12-14; Isa. 38:8, 9; 46:9, 10; 48:1ff; Rom. 9:20).

Beginning the Old Testament (the first thirty-four verses), the Messianic Kingdom is seen to come after six days, after 6,000 years. And the same thing is seen beginning the New Testament (first sixty-two verses of John’s gospel).

BUT, beyond this, in *BOTH Testaments*, the kingdom is seen to come at the end of four days, at the end of 4,000 years.

To see this in the O.T., other than referencing Dan. 9:24-27, where the kingdom follows the fulfillment of this prophecy (v. 24), note Hosea 5:13-6:2. *The two days and third day in the text can ONLY have to do with the Jewish dispensation, NOT the subsequent Christian dispensation.*

Israel is to be raised up, to live in God’s sight, “after two days, on the third day” (time extending from Abraham to the end of Daniel’s Seventieth Week, seven years following Christ’s crucifixion).

And to see this in the New Testament, turn to the four gospels and Acts. The kingdom of the heavens was offered to Israel at the end of four days, at the end of 4,000 years, *EXACTLY* when it should have been offered.

Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy, with the kingdom following, *was nearing completion*; and the four days, the 4,000 years *were almost up, with the earth about to be redeemed.*

BUT, wait a minute!

According to the way *BOTH Testaments* begin, *TWO additional days, TWO additional 2,000-year periods, MUST FIRST come to pass BEFORE the kingdom can be established.*

And *THAT* (as previously shown, in part) is dealt with, explained, and clarified by *comparing Scripture with Scripture, allowing Scripture to interpret itself*—studying the typology of the O.T., Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy, the gospels and Acts, and Paul’s gospel *TOGETHER*.

(On the previously mentioned offer of “the kingdom of the heavens” to Israel at the end of four days, note something about the matter in relation to “heavens” in Gen. 1:1ff.

This expression, “the kingdom of the heavens” [correct rendering from the Greek text, *NOT* “the kingdom of heaven”], appears thirty-two times in Matthew’s gospel. And it is peculiar to this gospel, except possibly John 3:5 [some Greek manuscripts have “the kingdom of the heavens” instead of “the kingdom of God” in this verse].

But, since we have Matthew’s gospel, the way John 3:5 is translated in this respect would be immaterial. The expression, “the kingdom of God,” found in all four gospels [also in Acts and some of the epistles], would be limited to and refer to the subject at hand, “the kingdom of the heavens.”

On the other hand, the translation found in almost any English version of Scripture, “the kingdom of heaven,” certainly *HASN’T* helped matters. This translation *does NOT* identify the referenced kingdom in a proper manner; *NOR would* the expression, “the kingdom of God,” standing alone, apart from the expression, “the kingdom of the heavens.”

BUT, IF translated properly, and an individual begins with Gen. 1:1 and remains with the way “heavens” is dealt with throughout this chapter, along with other related parts of the O.T., *the expression becomes self-explanatory.*

This expression, having to do with REGALITY and LOCATION, can ONLY have to do with the heavens in relation to the earth, from whence Satan and his angels presently rule, from whence Christ and His co-heirs will one day rule.)

Now, Something Else

All six days in Gen. 1 have parts to them, both “*ABOVE*” and “*BELOW*,” which is where the teaching seen in John 1, 3, “brought forth from above,” is introduced in Scripture.

On the first day there was light from above dispelling the darkness below.

On the second day there were both waters above and waters below.

On the third day there was land rising out of and above the waters below.

On the fourth day there were lights in the heavens above providing light on the earth below.

On the fifth day there were birds above and sea creatures below.

On the sixth day there were land animals below, with man then created to rule the whole, from the heavens above, on the seventh day.

Note that the things dealt with in John 1, 3 (also see James 1, I Peter 1, and I John 2-5) *draw from that seen at the very beginning, in Gen. 1, among numerous other places in the O.T.*

No wonder Jesus, responding to Nicodemus' lack of understanding (v. 9), asked him the question that He did (v. 10)!

"Nicodemus answered and said unto him, 'How can these things be'?"

Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?'"

Brought forth from above, as opposed to being brought forth from below, can be seen at every turn in Scripture.

How was Eve brought forth when she ate of the forbidden fruit? How was Cain brought forth when he slew Abel? How was Noah brought forth when he built the ark? How was Abraham brought forth when he left Ur and went out to another land, by faith?...

And Christians, as Abraham, have been called to another land and are to exercise faith, follow what God's word has to say about the matter. They are to be *brought forth FROM ABOVE in all areas of life, fixing their thoughts upon things ABOVE, things relative to or connected with the future kingdom,*

NOT brought forth FROM BELOW in any area of life, NOT fixing their thoughts upon things relative to or connected with the present kingdom.

Christians are to study these things out and put these different things seen at the outset in the first thirty-four verses of Genesis and the first sixty-two verses of John together, *allowing them to NOT ONLY know and understand WHAT Scripture is all about BUT to ALSO know and understand HOW to properly deal with the numerous things seen throughout all subsequent Scripture.*

The WHOLE was set forth at the beginning, in each Testament (Isa. 46:9, 10).

Know and understand this FIRST!

THEN, with a CORRECT foundation, you can deal with the SAME thing in ALL subsequent Scripture, BUILDING the superstructure upon the CORRECT foundation, in a PROPER manner.

(Note that dealing *with* the septenary structure beginning each Testament in relation to *the WHOLE of Scripture* covers “time” and “events” having to do SOLELY with the LAST 7,000 years of the existence of the present heavens and earth.

That’s WHY the WHOLE of Scripture does not move beyond this seventh day, for the WHOLE of Scripture rests on the foundation set forth at the beginning of each Testament. This is simply the way Scripture, in an overall respect, has been structured.

ALL of the types and signs point to and foreshadow things out ahead, mainly things having to do with the seventh day; BUT, NONE point to and foreshadow things beyond the seventh day. They CAN’T, for that would be moving beyond the established “time” in the previously SET foundation.

And the same would be true for the Psalms, the Prophets or the central teaching of Scripture anywhere else, O.T. or N.T.

EVERYTHING MUST be kept within the 7,000 years of “time” covered by the previously laid foundation. And EVERYTHING MUST be built upon and rest upon THAT foundation.)