

Explore the Bible: December 3

The First Week • Genesis 1:1-5, 26-2:3

By Laura Lee Leathers



Leathers

Go
d
ca
ll
ed
Mo
se
s,
th
ro
ug
h
th
e
in
sp
ir
at
io
n
of
th
e
Ho
ly
Sp
ir
it
,
to

w
r
i
t
e
t
h
e
b
o
o
k
o
f
G
e
n
e
s
i
s
.
T
h
e
n
a
m
e
m
e
a
n
s
“
b
e
g
i
n
n
i
n
g
s
.”
I
t
w
a
s
w
r
i
t
t
e
n
f
o
r
t
h
e

Is
ra
el
it
es
,
wh
o
we
re
in
gr
ai
ne
d
wi
th
Eg
yp
ti
an
cu
lt
ur
e
an
d
re
li
gi
on
. Ge
ne
si
s
wa

s
wr
it
te
n
fr
om
th
es
e
pe
rs
pe
ct
iv
es
:
“G
od
di
d,
an
d
Go
d
sa
id
.”

As you work your way through the book of Genesis this quarter, be sure to highlight the “firsts.” Are you ready? Let’s begin with the first week—God spoke the world and humanity into existence.

The Beginning (Gen. 1:1-5) —The first verse of the Bible opens with a profound statement, “In the beginning God created.” It is foundational because of what it reveals about God. He is

presented as eternally existent. He has always been.

“God” in Hebrew is used in the plural form. It’s *Elohim* and speaks of God’s character of His majesty and power. It’s used 32 times in the first chapter. Because He is all-powerful, only He can create something out of nothing. *Bara* is the Hebrew word for “created.” The creation was deliberate and with purpose.

The heavens and the earth were created first. Notice the description of the earth (v. 2). It was without form and void. Darkness permeated, and we are told that the earth’s surface had watery depths, and the Spirit of God hovered over the surface of the waters.

God said, “Let there be light” (v. 3), the first time God speaks into something into existence. Most commentaries point out that this was the light of God’s glory. It came from Himself. It was the light of His divine presence (also see Rev. 21:23-25). God didn’t create the sun, moon, and stars until day four.

“God called” means “to proclaim a name over” (v. 5). He owned it. Therefore, the light is called “day,” and the darkness is “night.” Notice that evening is mentioned first and then morning, making one day. The Jews marked time with nightfall, starting a new day.

It should be noted that all three members, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were present at creation (see John 1 and Col. 1:15-17).

The Image Bearers (Gen. 1:26-31) – Please take the time to review the next five days of creation (vs. 6-25).

Day six, the creation of man, was the climax of God’s creation—His image-bearers. Before this, nothing had been made in God’s image. “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.”

“The issue was to make humans in God’s image and likeness. These two terms are interchangeable synonyms that together speak of the uniqueness and honor of humanity among all of God’s creations ... Being God’s image-bearers includes that humans are: rational, social, spiritual, moral, emotional, authoritative (designed for dominion), having speech and free will as well as being creative” (Lifeway Commentary).

He created male and female in His image, by design (Gen. 2:21-24). Notice the emphasis of the word created: “created man in His own image; created him in the image of God; created them male and female” (v. 27). Therefore, “to reject God’s creative design for our sexes is to reject God’s sovereign plan for our lives” (Lifeway).

God gave four imperatives that are in the Hebrew plural form. They were to “be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it” (v. 28). God gave Adam and Eve everything they needed to fulfill the task. He gave them intelligence and the gift of language to understand words and their meanings.

In the following two verses, we see God’s provision of food. And at the end of the day, all God had made was not just good; it was very good.

The Rest (Gen. 2:1-3) – Everything in God’s creation plan was completed. He was finished!

God blessed the seventh day and designated it to be set apart as holy. Why? Because we belong to Him.

Take a moment to read the Scripture passages found in Ex. 31:12-17 and Deut. 5:12-15. They tell us that the day was designated as a sign of His covenant and a reminder of God’s redemption from the Israelites’ slavery in Egypt. In Hebrews 4:1-11 is the reference to the heavenly rest for Believers.

Work was created as good. It is beneficial because it produces productivity, creativity, and allows an individual to

flourish. Work is still good, but it became more difficult after sin entered the world.

“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (Hebrews 11:3 NKJV).

Leathers is a member of First Church, Lexington. She may be contacted at laura.l.leathers@gmail.com.