

LESSON ONE * PART II * BOOK 1

Attributes of God

Genesis 1:1-5

Now we're going to start with Genesis chapter 1:1 in this lesson, and we would invite you to take your Bible and follow along with us as we study God's Word. As you study with us you might also take notes as the people here in the studio do, because it's the only way to really get involved in Bible study. I trust that you don't just read your Bible, because you have to learn how to study it, and I think that's the reason the Lord constructed it the way He did. He did not just lay it out in 8th grade reading form, but rather all these little tidbits are buried, and you just have to compare Scripture with Scripture to dig them out.

Genesis 1:1

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

We'll be taking this rather slowly, in fact in our study format, Genesis is something that we take verse by verse. We will almost take it that slowly in the Book of Exodus, but there will be parts of the Old Testament that we will just skim over rather lightly. And then we'll come back into a Book like Daniel, and take it pretty meticulously, then the four gospels, and when we get to the Book of Acts, I definitely teach that Book verse by verse, as well as all of Paul's epistles. But for starters now let's look at the very first verse in the Bible.

Genesis 1:1a

"In the beginning God..."

Now there's where I usually stop. Like I said in the last lesson, we don't know when *in the beginning* was, and I don't concern myself whether it's billions of years or if it's thousands, I say it really doesn't make that much difference, but what does make a difference is "WHO" started it all? GOD!

So in the beginning whenever it was, God started it all. Here we have the term of Deity spelled G-O-D in our English, but in the Hebrew it was Eloheim. **And Eloheim in the Hebrew is a plural word.** If you have a text in your Old Testament that refers to the pagan gods, plural, it's the same Hebrew word only without the capitalization. It's the small "e"- eloheim. **And so it's the Triune God of a plurality of persons.** And I'm a stickler in that I am a firm believer in the Trinity, or the Triune God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. **Now always remember that none of them supercede, or are above one of the others. They are all co-equal.** And we see this teaching throughout all of Scripture. Now, in the beginning, whenever it was, God, the Triune Godhead created... Now again, the word in the Hebrew is "Barah", which means "called out of nothing". I think this is so important. God didn't start with something and then somehow rearrange it. **He started with absolutely nothing but Himself. And out of that nothingness He called the universe into being.**



Now when we get into the New Testament here in a little bit, I'm going to show you what person of the Godhead actually spoke the word and called it into being. But for here, as the Triune God spoke the word and out of nothing He created everything. The heavens as well as the earth. Now I think it's rather interesting that way back here in the very first verse of Genesis before the nation of Israel has even been hinted at and before we have any idea of the call of this man Abraham, that God is already giving us a clue that throughout all of His dealings with you and I, as members of the human race, He's going to constantly divide things between heaven and earth. Now, why would He do this? Genesis chapter 12.

As soon as Abraham is called out of Ur of the Chaldees, as I showed on the timeline in our last program, God separated him from that mainstream of humanity and promises that out of that one man will come a distinctive race and nation of people – the nation of Israel. But here's what makes them distinctive. From the very onset of the promise to Abraham until the nation is finally dispersed after they had rejected their king, Israel had it constantly drummed into their mindset that they were a special, called out, separated, covenant people of God, **and all their promises are earthly. And so we refer to them as God's earthly people.**

Now, the last time I taught this someone misunderstood me and when I said that there is nothing in the Old Testament pertaining to a Jew dying and going to heaven. Well, what I really meant was, concerning his eternal abode. Now, we know that when an Old Testament saint died he went to Paradise. He certainly didn't stay on the earth. And even today when a Jew dies he goes to his place of reward. If he's a believer he goes to Paradise. But what I have in mind when I say that the Jew who had no concept of dying and going to heaven, I meant in their resurrected state. When the Jews experience their resurrection as believers, they will not be a heavenly people, they are going to be an earthly people, in that earthly 1000 years kingdom that is still future. And so consequently, even in their life in the flesh, all of Israel's promises were earthly.

And that's why so many of them had such tremendous wealth. Abraham was a wealthy man. Isaac was wealthy for his time. Jacob was wealthy. David – glory of all of his kingdom, included wealth. You know Solomon and my when the Queen of Sheba saw it, the first thing she said was "the half has never yet been told". Well, why? Because those Jewish people were enjoying those earthly promises.

Now when we get over into the epistles of Paul and the out calling, as we mentioned in our last program, and God now calls out of the mainstream of humanity, the Body of Christ, the Church, a mixture of predominately Gentiles, but also Jews, now we have a group of people to whom all the promises are not earthly, but what? Heavenly!! Every thing that is promised to the Church is not earthly, it's heavenly. And our future is going to be to rule in the heavenlies. Well, this is immediately what I want people to recognize that as you study your Bible, you have to separate these two entities in God's dealing. **When you separate completely the nation of Israel even in**

the New Testament from the Church, the Body of Christ then all the contradictions disappear. All of the major questions disappear. And every thing becomes so sensible.

I had a young man just the other day out in Indiana to come up and he said, "My wife's been a Christian a long time. I've never interfered with that but I've never had any interest. I never went to Church with her, I never read the Bible. I had no interest. But I watched a few of your programs and you're the first one that makes sense." Well, I don't take the credit for that. I believe that's the work of the Holy Spirit. **But the Bible is a sensible Book and it makes sense IF you simply keep these two areas (the nation of Israel and the Body of Christ, the Church) separated.**

So in the beginning the Triune, the Almighty God, called out of nothing, everything. The heavens. The angelic hosts. The earth. Everything that's in it all began with our Creator. Now let's take a look at how the New Testament treats this very same event, as we have here in Genesis. I'd like to have you turn now with me to John's Gospel, chapter 1. All these writers are inspired of the Holy Spirit. They are moved of God to write what they write. And so now naturally John, as he speaks of the beginning, is going to use the same language that Moses did. I feel Moses wrote the first five books. And so John's Gospel, chapter 1 and verse 1 says *"In the beginning..."* He doesn't say twenty million years ago. He doesn't say ten thousand years ago. All John says is *"in the beginning"* just as Genesis says. But in the beginning, according to John was the Word. It is capitalized so it is a term of deity.

John 1:1

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

So in the beginning was the Word, a person of that Triune Godhead, and this person, the Word, was with God, that is from eternity past, whenever that was, and the Word was God. Now we know we have some cults that disagree with me and they try to tell me that Jesus was not God. Well that flies in the face of the Book. Jesus was just as much God as God the Father or God the Spirit. And we're going to see why I say that in just a few moments.

John 1:1-2

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God."

In other words, the Triune Godhead was complete and they were in absolute consensus with what they were going to do. Now verse 3.

John 1:3

"All things were made by him;..." (by whom? The Word.)

Now you know I'm a stickler for grammar because after all the whole idea of language is to communicate. And that is what the word **"Word"** implies. There had to be a person of the Godhead who would communicate with whatever it was that they're going to call creation out of. Now personally, I think it was God Himself. But now, that's not unusual. God talks to Himself. Every once in awhile my little wife will be in the kitchen and I'll hear her and I say, "Who are you talking

to?" She'll just say, "Forget it, I'm talking to myself." Well, I imagine you all have the same experience from time to time and God does too.

I've mentioned the fact one time that Martin Luther just had a real hang up with Christ's statements from the cross when He seemingly spoke to God. And Martin Luther came to the conclusion that it was God speaking to God. Absolutely it was. And so the Word was the communicator. He was the one who spoke the power of creation. When we get to Hebrews in a little bit I'm going to show you that it's the Word, the Son of God, Christ, who has spoken in this Book. This is the Word of the very person of the Godhead who is the Communicator, which is God the Son.

Now if you doubt that this is speaking about God the Son come down to verse 14 and there is the clincher.

John 1:14

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (Now you know God the Father or God the Spirit never became flesh so who is it? Well it's God the Son – it's Christ!) (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Now let's move on quickly to Colossians, which is well into Paul's writings. Let's go to chapter 1, and here we find a tremendous little portion of Scripture. Remember we're fitting this all back with Genesis 1:1. Now let's look what Paul says in Colossians chapter 1 and we almost have to come down to verse 12.

Colossians 1:12

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13. Who (speaking of the Father. Here's where grammar comes in. Who is modifying the word Father.) hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

Now in verse 14 the modification is going to change.

Colossians 1:14-16

"In whom (the Son) we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15. Who (speaking of the Son) is the image (that which you can see and touch) of the (what?) invisible God,) (remember the Triune God is a Spirit, He's invisible, and) the first born of every creature.: (and now look at verse 16, and tying it with Genesis 1:1) For by him (the Son) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities, or powers: (yes, Satan himself is a created being. He was created by God the Son. Not only did He create) all things (but they) were created by him, and for him:"

And then you come down into verse 17 and not only is He before all things, not only is He the Creator of all things, but:

Colossians 1:17b

"...by him all things consist."

And what does that word mean? Held together. Why doesn't the universe just explode in nuclear fission? Why don't the planets act like an atom and split one another into tremendous energy and explosion? And I think someday they will according to Peter. Well why don't they tonight? Because God the Son controls every particle of it with the power of His Word.

Now let's come back with me to the Book of Ephesians chapter 3, and look what the apostle Paul said here. Let's drop in at verse 9.

Ephesians 3:9

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, (the same God of Genesis 1:1) who created all things by Jesus Christ:"

Now isn't that something? I make a point of that for a reason. I remember when I was teaching a class up in Iowa years and years ago, and I made the point, **have you ever stopped to realize that the people who nailed Christ to that cross, and set Him up as a public spectacle were the created being of the Creator that they were crucifying?** That shook up that class, because they had never had that kind of concept of who Jesus really was. But it's true! **It was the created beings, crucifying their Creator!** I hope you never lose sight of that fact. I know when I have to think of my own salvation, I just have to thank God, that here He is, the Sovereign totally God of the universe, and yet it's the same God that died the death that I should have died. **It's the same God that rose from the dead, and extended eternal life to all that would believe, and you can't separate that from Him. He is, and was the Creator!**

Now let's go to another over in the Book of Hebrews chapter 1. For sake of tying in what I said moment ago with regard to every word of this Book, how it came to us. Yes the Holy Spirit inspired it, but it's the Word of God the Son. And the apostle Paul over and over says: "I hear Him speaking to me." Who? Jesus! Now look what it says here in Hebrews 1:1

Hebrews 1:1-2a

"God, (the Triune God of Genesis 1:1. The Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit) who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers (that is the forefathers of Israel in the Old Testament) by the prophets, (But don't stop there, because this same God) Hath in these last days..."

What are the last days of Scripture? Everything from Christ's advent on. A lot of people think that the last days are just like the Tribulation and the Second Coming. No that's the latter days. The *last days* is that whole period of time from His first advent to the end of the Age of Grace. So in these last days, from the time of His first advent, this same God hath already:

Hebrews 1:2b

"... spoken unto us by his Son, whom he (God) hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;"

Now isn't that plain, and isn't that beautiful? Let's go back to the Book of Acts chapter 2 for a moment and look at a passage. I've been using this more and more in my teachings lately just for an example. It's a perfect example of how everything as I said in the last program is under the Sovereignty of God, without seemingly taking away the free will of mankind and nations. Yet everything comes to pass as He originally foreordained it. Nothing ever takes God by surprise or is He ever a day late.

You know I told my classes here in Oklahoma so many times, that if there is a period of human history where that truth is so evident that God is Sovereign, and yet He's let generals, and presidents, and dictators seemingly make decisions of their own free will, yet the Sovereign will of God shines through. There is no greater time where that is so evident than in World War II. All you have to do is go back and look at the history of World War II and how many times things just all of a sudden fell into place at just the right time, it's absolutely amazing. Well here is where it all began in Acts chapter 2, verse 22 and 23. This is where Peter is addressing the nation of Israel with regard of them having crucified the Christ.

Acts 2:22-23a

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders and signs, which God did by him (Jesus) in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23. Him, (Jesus of Nazareth) being delivered by the determinate counsel..."

I think in at least my own thinking, and I never want to do violence to the translation here, but I think in my own English I could use the word *determining counsel*. You all know what it is to counsel. It the meeting of minds. In other words when our president calls a cabinet meeting, what's the purpose? For counsel. They're not going to make a decision until there's a meeting of the minds, at least we certainly hope that's the way it works.

Now that's exactly what the Triune God did someplace way back in eternity past. Now I don't think they had to sit there all afternoon between the three of them, and batty this back and forth. No, no, but nevertheless the Triune God sometime in the past came together, before anything was ever created, and what did they do? They laid out this whole plan of the ages. And in that plan of the ages, was the coming of Jesus of Nazareth to the nation of Israel. In that plan of the ages, was the nations rejection of the their king, in that plan of the ages was the crucifixion, was the resurrection, was the ascension, and every little jot and tittle detail was all formulated back there in this pre-determining counsel, before anything ever began to happen.

Now in the moment or two we have left let's go back to Genesis 1:1, and just look at it once again.

Genesis 1:1

"In the beginning* (whenever that was) ***God (the Triune God in all of His power and Sovereignty delegated to the Son to call it all into being). ***created the heaven and the earth.***"**

So the Son spoke the Word, and the universes began to come together. He spoke the Word and the angelic hosts were created, and He spoke the Word to that dust, and Adam appeared. He put Adam to sleep, and He spoke the Word and who came on the scene? Eve. And so it is in all creative acts of

God, it's God the Son, yes the same One that hung there on that cross of Cavalry that spoke the Words of creation, and everything begin to happen.

Now for just a little review of what we have learned today. Everything in God's dealing with the human race you have to **separate** between Him dealing with the nation of Israel, His earthly people, and the Church to which is His heavenly people.

And as you study your Bible remember that God primarily deals with Israel, the Jew from Abraham to the writings of Paul. But when you come into the letters of Paul, he speaks primarily to the non-Jew, or Gentiles, and he addresses us today in the Church Age. When you read Romans through Hebrews, you read that as if God has written it to you with your name and address on it. But when you read the Old Testament, don't try to put that into your life today, because that was written to and given to the nation of Israel. We can use it for our learning, but not for our doctrine.