

**In the beginning** God created the heavens and the earth...  
...but the earth was empty and desolate and darkness covered the face of the seas—  
yet the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

-----  
God said, "There will be light"...and there was light!

God saw the light—that it was good!

God made a distinction between the light and the darkness. God named the light  
"Day" and the dark He named "Night."

**There was evening and there was morning. Day one**

-----  
God said, "There will be an expansive dome in the midst of the water, dividing water  
from water." So God made the expansive dome and separated the water that is  
beneath the expansive dome from the water that is above the expansive dome. --  
Thus it happened!

God named the expansive dome "Sky."

**There was evening and there was morning. Day two**

-----  
God said, "The waters beneath the Sky will be gathered to one place so that dry land  
will appear." --Thus it happened! God named the dry land "Land" and the gathered  
waters He named "Sea."

God saw that it was good.

-----  
Then God said, "The Land will sprout grass and plants producing seed and fruit trees  
producing fruit according to their type with seeds in it—throughout the Land." --Thus it  
happened! The Land brought forth grass and plants producing seed and trees  
bearing fruit with seeds in it according to their type.

God saw that it was good.

**There was evening and there was morning. Day three**

-----  
God said, "There will be lights in the expansive dome of the Sky, to distinguish  
between the Day and the Night and they will be for signs, seasons, days and years;  
and they will provide light in the expansive dome of the Sky—to shine over the Land."  
--Thus it happened! God appointed the two Great Lights—the greater light, the ruler  
of the Day and the lesser light, the ruler of the Night—as well as the stars. God put  
them in the expansive dome of the Sky to shine over the Land, ruling over the Day  
and over the Night, separating the Light and the Dark.

God saw that it was good.

**There was evening and there was morning. Day four**

God said, "The seas will teem with swarming creatures and flying creatures will fly over the  
Land, over the face of the expansive dome, the Sky." God created the Great Sea Monsters  
and all the swarming creatures that swarm the waters according to their types and all  
winged flying creatures according to their types.

God saw that it was good.

God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the Seas; and flying  
creatures, multiply in the Land!"

**There was evening and there was morning. Day five**

-----  
God said, "The Land will bring forth living creatures according to their types—livestock,  
small animals, and wildlife of the Land according to their types." --Thus it happened! God  
made the wildlife of the land according to their types, the livestock according to their types,  
and all the small animals of the ground according to their type.

God saw that it was good.

-----  
Then God said, "Let us make Human in our image, according to our likeness; and he will  
rule over the fish of the Sea and over the flying creatures of the Sky and over the livestock  
and over all the Land and over all the small animals in the Land."

So God created Human in **His image**;

In **the image of God** He created him;

**Male and Female**—He created them.

-----  
God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the Land and subdue  
it. Rule over the fish of the Sea and the flying creatures of the sky and over all creatures  
swarming over the Land."

Then God said, "Look! I am giving to you everything that makes seed throughout all the  
Land. And every tree that has fruit on it bearing seed, to you it will be for food. And to  
every creature of the Land, every flying creature of the Sky, and everything swarming over  
the Land that has living breath in it, all green plants will be food. --Thus it happened!

God saw all that He had made and, behold!—It was exceedingly good!

**There was evening and there was morning. Day six**

-----  
So the Heavens and the Earth and all their hosts were completed.

God finished on the seventh day from all His work that He did.

He ceased on the seventh day from all His work that He did.

So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. For on it He ceased from all His work  
that He did in creating.

[Translation of Genesis 1:1-2:3]

## Creation – A Narrative Commentary on Genesis 1 by James-Michael Smith

Nothing. No planets, no stars, no oceans, no sky, no *anything!* It is from this nothingness that God brings into being all that we know. All that we are, all that we ever will be—brought forth in an act of creation beyond comprehension. Yet before we have time to ponder this further, we are thrust into the midst of Earth's primordial watery darkness, with chaos and desolation as our only companions. But wait! We find out that actually we are not alone in this dark and chaotic world—like a great majestic bird, God's Spirit soars over the deep; over the Abyss...and where the Spirit of God is, light and life cannot be far behind!

The darkness will not last! Light is breaking through! The earth begins to give signs of a cycle—a continual movement from darkness to light. There is separation; there is order. This is to be a world of light *and* darkness—day *and* night. Not a cosmic struggle between two opposing forces, as many will later imagine. But rather, a cosmic dance, between two wondrous partners, in devotion to their Lord and King! Two vast realms in which creation will play out at the command of the Creator.

Not through strength. Not through struggle. But through one thing, and one thing alone—the WORD!

The earth is shrouded in a state of watery mist. Water below, water above, water in front, water in back—everywhere water! But like the darkness, this chaotic watery state will not remain. God speaks and the Sky—the vast canvas upon which the Great Artist will paint innumerable masterpieces each day and each night—comes into being. The waters are divided: those below covering the earth, and those above providing the rain, the snow, the clouds and the vast, blue expanse upon which living eyes will one day gaze! But that is not all! While many ancient people will come to believe that the waters are an untamable force of darkness and evil that no one can control—a force that cannot be conquered; a realm that cannot be restrained—those who listen carefully can hear the waters themselves declaring that there *is one name* to which they bow! One Being, before whom they tremble! The One who will later reveal Himself simply as “I AM.”

The seas roar! Creation trembles! And in an unimaginable act of wondrous power, God transforms the world from a watery realm of chaos into a world with solid dry ground! Mountains, valleys, plains and hills—all are called into being by the King of all Creation! But they are not to serve as homes for imaginary gods who look down upon hapless humanity. Nor are they magical gateways to and from heaven or hell. No! The rocks which form the highest mountain and the lowest valley exist primarily as an awe-inspiring witnesses to the power of the Divine Word!

Again God speaks; again creation obeys! Yet this time He instills His newest creation, the Land itself, with the ability to bring forth life! The tiny thistle, the mighty cedar, the life-sustaining olive tree, the healing herb, and countless others spring up from the Land in all their glory. Like billions of arms extended upward in worship of their Maker, the branches tower above the Land, ready to provide nourishment and shelter for whatever God might bring forth next.

The stage is set! The realms are ready for their rulers! Ready for those whom the King will now begin to appoint over them. The first to be appointed are the Great Lights. The lights, shining forth day and night without ceasing, appear for the first time in the Sky. There are two—a larger one to rule over the Day. To provide light, heat and energy. The other smaller one, to rule the Night. To serve as a marker for the times and seasons—accompanied by an entourage of tiny

lights, the Stars. But one thing is clear. While these great lights are appointed to rule, they are not appointed to rule all of Creation. They are not gods or goddesses—no more so than are the Mountains and Seas! They are simply parts of God's orderly creation...still awaiting its full glory.

Just as the Light and the Darkness—the Day and the Night—are to come under authority and dominion of the Great lights, so too the Sky and Seas are now introduced to their rulers. The highest heights and darkest depths will be inhabited by God's creation! Swimming, swarming, soaring! The Seas and the Sky—places that will long be unapproachable by the rest of creation—are the realm of those creatures whom God has appointed to rule, to live, and to reflect His wondrous artistry in design.

The final realm awaiting its ruler is the Land. And just as God infused the Land with the ability to bring forth life in the form of vegetation, so now it is commanded to bring forth what will live upon its surface, feeding off its vegetation. Cattle! Horses! Foxes! Sheep! Rams! Lions! Badgers! Mice! The surface of the land explodes with life! Running! Jumping! Scurrying! Digging! The Land is their domain...but their ruler is yet to come...

At last, the ones whom God appoints as stewards of His entire creation make their appearance! These creatures...so different from the millions and millions others who have come before them! No scales, no wings, no claws, no fur, no feathers, no fangs—what kind of creature IS this...“Human”? The answer is shocking! This creature, out of ALL the others, is the creature who alone is created in the image of the Creator! Though there are two types—male and female—BOTH are fashioned in the Image and likeness of God Himself! It's as if the Divine sculptor has left His fingerprints all over them both! Like God, they will too create. Like God, they will too rule. Like God, they will too love! And all of Creation has awaited their arrival!

No realm of creation of lies outside their authority! These “Humans” will spread and cover the world. They will serve as God's co-regents, His ambassadors, His caretakers of all that has come before them. They will draw their sustenance from the life-giving Land, and will rule over all that they encounter. What a glorious position! What an honor! Inhabiting and exploring, experiencing and naming, relating and governing! Human and God, working together! All that has come before—from the most distant Great Light to the smallest Swarming creature—from the mightiest oak to the most tender sapling—from the most majestic mountain to the gentlest stream—all has lead up to this moment! From dark nothingness, to disordered chaos, to watery surface, to green dry land, to creatures of the sea, to creatures of the sky, to creatures of the field, to creatures bearing the Image of the Great King Himself... ALL of it is good. No, all of it is EXCEEDINGLY good!!

The God of Creation, the King of All That Is, has finished His work. The Great Artist steps back to appreciate His masterpiece. And what a masterpiece it is! So much so, that nothing else is needed. No work remains. After a six-fold cycle of creating, forming, and fashioning, God does what is perhaps the most amazing thing of all—He ceases His work! A Heavenly end to the work of creating. Not so much for God's need; after all, He has created all there is solely by speaking it into being! But rather, for His creation's sake. To establish a seven-fold cycle of labor followed by appreciation...work followed by Worship. And while the details of this Creation process may remain to varying degrees obscure to Human, the message will remain clear for all time! God brought forth all that is, in order to prepare the way for His most precious creation. A creature so precious that, though Human will soon break away from God in rebellion, the King of the Universe will choose that very Human form through which to appear within His creation and rescue it from its self-inflicted decay. To right all wrongs and wipe every tear. To be their God, and they, His people! But that's another story for another time...