

THE FIRST PICTURE OF THE EARTH BEFORE MAN: PREHISTORIC TIMES

GENESIS 02:04–06

Introduction

Man has always wondered about prehistoric times. What was the earth like in the earliest days? What existed and what did not exist? How did vegetation and life upon earth get their start? What is the origin of plants and of life? These three verses give a picture of prehistoric earth. They are actually a brief review of the account of creation covered in the first chapter of Genesis. These three verses lay the groundwork for explaining what has happened to the earth and the heavens, to man and his world, since God created the universe. This is, *The First Picture of the Earth Before Man: Prehistoric Times*.

- I. The LORD God created the universe, the heavens and the earth (v. 4).
- II. The LORD God Himself created the universe (v. 4).
- III. The LORD God created the earth and the heavens in stages (vv. 5-6).

I. *Genesis 02:04 Creation of the Universe*

The LORD God created the heavens and the earth. This is the account of the heavens and of the earth “when they were created.” The Hebrew word account (toledoth) means generations, story, history, account. This is the true account of how the earth and heavens came into being. This is the true account — a brief review — of the origin of prehistoric earth. This is a brief review of chapter one of Genesis. Note the words “when they were created.” The stress is that *they were created*, the universe did not just come into being by itself. The heavens and the earth did not just happen...

- by chance
- by some random happening
- by something — some force or matter, some gas or energy — appearing *out of nothing*

For something to appear *out of nothing* is against all the laws of nature and science.

What is the truth about the origin of the universe, of the heavens and the earth? The truth is that the LORD God Himself created the universe, both the earth and the heavens. And in this declaration there is a stunning truth: the stunning truth is that God truly exists. Man’s denial and rejection of the truth cannot do away with God. God is — God *exists* — and God Himself created both the earth and the heavens.

Neh 9:5-6 “Stand up and praise the LORD your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise. You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.”

Psa 14:1 *The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.*

Psa 53:1-3 *The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, and their ways are vile; there is no one who does good. God looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. Everyone has turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

Psa 83:17-18 *May they ever be ashamed and dismayed; may they perish in disgrace. Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD — that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.*

Acts 17:24-28 *“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’”*

II. Genesis 02:04 The Lord God, Jehovah is the Creator

The *LORD God* Himself made the universe. Note the name used for God in these verses: the *LORD God* (Jehovah Elohim). The name for God changes or rather is enlarged here in chapter two of Genesis. *God* (Elohim) is combined with *LORD* (Jehovah or Yahweh). In chapter one, where the creative power and might of God needed to be stressed, just the general name for God, *Elohim*, was used. *Elohim* is the name that stresses His power and might as the Creator and Sovereign Majesty of the universe. (See *God, Elohim*, Gen 1:1). Now, in recording the early history of man upon earth, *Jehovah or Yahweh* is combined with the creative name of God: it was the *LORD God* — *Jehovah* (Yahweh) *Elohim* — who created the universe. Why the combined names? Why combine *Jehovah or Yahweh* with *Elohim*? Why is it now necessary to say that it was the *Lord God* who stands behind creation? Because *Jehovah* is the *personal name* of God, the *revealing and redemptive* name of God. God is about ready...

- *to reveal Himself* to man
- to establish a *personal relationship* with man
- to *redeem* man from his fall into sin and death

This passage is laying the foundation for what is to follow: the early history of man upon earth. The early history explains the relationship between God and man:

=> what happened to man and his world

=> how man became alienated and cut off from God

=> how God went about redeeming man from his fall into sin and death.

It is time for God to be revealed as *Jehovah*, as the *Lord God* of the universe. The universe was created by a *personal God*, a God who created the world so that He might establish a personal relationship with His creation, in particular with man. Simply stated, the Lord God — Jehovah Elohim — is the name that describes what God is about to do upon earth: *establish a personal relationship* with man and *redeem man* from his terrible plunge into sin and death. (See note 1, pt. c, Gen 2:7.)

Thought 1. The very name of God describes His glorious character, exactly what He is like.

- 1) God is the *LORD God* — Jehovah Elohim — *the personal God*: the only living and true God, the only God who can establish a personal relationship with man. His very purpose for creating the earth was to establish a personal relationship with us — with every one of us. This is the declaration of Scripture from beginning to end.

Gen 3:9 *But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”*

Deu 4:29 *But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all our heart and with all our soul.*

Isa 1:18 *“Come now, let us reason together;” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”*

Isa 45:18 *For this is what the LORD says — he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited — he says: “I am the LORD, and there is no other.”*

Isa 55:1 *“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”*

Isa 55:6 *Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.*

Jer 29:13 *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

Mat 11:28 *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”*

Acts 17:24-28 *“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’”*

Rev 3:20 *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.*

Rev 22:17 *The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.*

- 2) God is the LORD God — Jehovah Elohim — *the revealing God*: the only living and true God, the only God who can reveal Himself and the truth about man and the world. The LORD God alone can reveal where man has come from, why man is here, and where man is going. The LORD God alone can tell man why there is evil, suffering and death upon earth. He alone can reveal how man can be delivered from evil and death.

Note: the LORD God reveals the truth in four ways.

- a) The LORD God has revealed the truth through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Deu 18:18 *I will raise up for them a prophet [the Lord Jesus Christ] like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.*

Isa 45:18-19 *For this is what the LORD says — he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited — he says: "I am the LORD, and there is no other." I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in vain.' I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right.*

John 8:26 *"I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world."*

John 14:9 *Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

- b) The LORD God reveals the truth through the Holy Spirit.

John 16:13 *"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."*

1 Cor 2:9-10 *However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" — but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.*

- c) The LORD God reveals the truth through His Word, the Holy Bible.

2 Tim 2:15 *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

1 Th 2:13 *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

2 Tim 3:16-17 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*

Psa 119:89 *Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.*

Mat 5:18 *“I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.”*

2 Pet 1:21 *For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 20:32 *“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

d) The LORD God reveals the truth through nature.

Acts 14:17 *“Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.”*

Rom 1:20 *For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*

Heb 11:3 *By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

Heb 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

Psa 19:1 *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*

Psa 97:6 *The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory.*

3) God is the LORD God — Jehovah Elohim — *the redemptive God*: the only living and true God, the only God who can truly redeem and save man from sin, death and hell.

Psa 31:5 *Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, LORD, my faithful God.*

Psa 111:9 *He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever — holy and awesome is his name.*

Isa 43:1 *“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”*

Mat 20:28 *“Just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

Luke 1:68 *“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.”*

Eph 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace*

Col 1:13-14 *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

1 Tim 2:3-6 *This is good, and pleases God our Saviour. Who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time.*

1 Pet 1:18-19 *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

III. Genesis 02:05–06 Creation of the Heavens and Earth was in Stages

The LORD God created the heavens and the earth in stages (vv. 5-6). Note that the heavens and the earth were created:

=> before the field plants and shrubs

=> before rain

=> before man

The brief picture of prehistoric earth painted by verses five and six is this: the earth was encircled with a heavy mist of dense fog and thick clouds. It was this that watered the earth. Note this: apparently the light and heat from the sun and other heavenly bodies could not reach the earth at this time. When God created the earth, it was a barren planet hanging in space, and it was encircled by a thick, heavy layer of clouds, fog and mist. There was little light and heat and no growth, not at first, not when God first created the planet earth. The LORD God created the universe in stages and on successive days.

Now, note the emphasis laid upon the prehistoric earth:

=> The earth and the heavens — the universe — was created by the LORD God Himself.

=> The universe — the earth and the heavens — was created in stages by the LORD God.

The fact that God is — that God exists — that it was He Himself who created the universe, is the emphasis and stress of prehistoric earth, of these three verses.

Thought 1. God created the earth stage by stage. He had the power to take an unshaped and unformed earth and shape and form it. He had the power to take a lifeless and unpopulated earth and create life and populate it. Thereby God is the Sovereign Lord of the universe. As Sovereign Lord, God reveals two wonderful things to us.

- 1) God has the power to take a person and make a new creation out of him. And God has the power to take that new person, that new creation, and move him along stage by stage until he reaches the climactic moment of redemption at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Phil 1:6 Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

2 Tim 1:12 I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

1 Pet 1:5 Who [believers] through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Jude 1:24-25 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy — to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forever more! Amen.

- 2) God has the power to quicken dead, lifeless matter and give it life. Therefore, God has the power to quicken the dead spirit of man. He has the power to “quicken the dead, and call those things which be not as though they were” (Rom 4:17).

Eph 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.

Col 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins. ■