



Genesis 1, Part 1

. . . nothing is gained by speculating as to when the matter constituting our planet was brought into existence. On the time aspect of the creation of our earth and all upon it, Genesis makes two statements: (1) “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (v. 1). (2) “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made” (ch. 2:2). Related scriptures add nothing to what is set forth in these two texts regarding the time involved in creation. To the question: When did God create “the heaven and the earth”? we can only answer, “In the beginning.” And to the question: When did God complete His work? we can only answer, “On the seventh day God ended his work” (ch. 2:2), “for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day” (Ex. 20:11). (Siegfried H. Horn, *SDA BC on Genesis*; 1953)

These remarks regarding the creation account are made, not in an attempt to close the discussion, but as a confession that we are unprepared to speak with certainty beyond what is clearly revealed. The very fact that so much rests upon the creation record—even the whole edifice of Scripture—prompts the devout and prudent Bible student to conform his declarations to the explicit words of Holy Writ. Indeed, when the broad fields of speculation tempt him to roam afar in uncharted areas of time and space, he cannot do better than to meet the temptation with the simple rejoinder, “It is written.” There is always safety within the protecting bounds of Scriptural quotation marks. (Ibid.)

1. *The Adventist gap theory*—Genesis 1:1 refers to the **creation of the universe** including the earth in its raw state billions of years ago, **then** several thousand years ago the six-day creation took place. This view was predominant among Adventist pioneers.

2. *The original Creation account.* This view sees the six-day Creation week referring to our planetary system and not to the universe as a whole.

3. Theistic evolution



In the Beginning

- * Beginning—*reshith*—first, what comes first, the start; in the beginning—*bereshith*
- * The English word *Genesis* is derived from the Greek *genesis*, which means “beginning,” derived from the Hebrew *bere’shit*, “in the beginning”—the first word of the Bible.

The book of Genesis was written about 1,500 years before Christ, while the Hebrews were in bondage in Egypt. It contains a sketch of this world's history covering many centuries. The early chapters of Genesis cannot be placed in a historical setting, as we ordinarily think of history. We have no history of the antediluvian world, except that written by Moses. We have no archeological records, only the mute and often obscure testimony of the fossils.

After the Flood the case is different. The archeologist's spade has brought to light many records of the people, their customs, and forms of government during the period covered in the later chapters of Genesis.

(Siegfried H. Horn, *SDA BC* 203–204)

The great civilizations that had risen in Egypt as well as in Mesopotamia are not described in Genesis, but their existence is strongly felt in the experiences of the patriarchs. The people of God did not live in splendid isolation in a political or social vacuum. They were part of a society of nations, and their civilization and culture did not differ markedly from those of the surrounding peoples, except as their religion created a difference.

Being the most important remnants of the true worshipers of Jehovah, they were therefore the men who formed the center of the inspired author's world.

(Ibid., 204)

Higher Criticism of Genesis

- * The book of Genesis was the first book subjected to a critical examination in this modern age, and that examination started the era of higher criticism of the Bible. In 1753, a French court physician, Jean Astruc, published a book, *Conjectures*, in which he contended that the different names of the Godhead occurring in Genesis show that the book is a collection of various source materials. Astruc retained Moses as the collector of these sources and compiler of the book . . . Critical-minded theologians have worked for more than two centuries to separate the supposed sources of Genesis and assign them to different authors, or at least to periods in which they were supposedly composed, gathered, changed, edited, and finally put together in one book. Adhering to these critical views, the scholars agreed on one great principle; namely, that the book consists of many documents of different value, authorship, and time of origin. However, they differ widely in their opinions concerning which parts are to be attributed to a certain period and which to another. The great variance in views of the different critical schools shows how unsound the foundation of their hypotheses is. The fallacy of many critical arguments has been revealed by the archeological discoveries of the last hundred years. (Ibid.; 1953)₁₁

- * The use of three different names of God, with one name apparently preferred in a certain section and a different name in another, allegedly shows that more than one author is responsible for the composition of the book.
- * The sacred names for God, Lord, and Jehovah are used throughout the Hebrew Bible and do not indicate different authors, as the critics maintain. The LXX and the most ancient Hebrew Bible manuscripts, including the recently discovered Isaiah scroll, show that the name “God” found in a certain passage in one copy is given in another manuscript as “Lord” or “Jehovah,” and vice versa.

- * The many repetitions of stories contained in the book show, according to critical scholars, that parallel sources were used and crudely blended together into one narrative by a later editor.
- * Repetitions frequently found in narratives are no sure indication of different sources for a given literary work. The defenders of the unity of the Mosaic books have shown by many non-Biblical examples that similar repetitions are found in various ancient literary works of one and the same author, and also in modern works.

- * Conditions reflected in the stories of Genesis allegedly do not fit into the periods described, but into much later times.
- * An increased knowledge of ancient history and conditions has revealed that the author of Genesis was well informed about the times he describes, and that the account of the patriarchs fits exactly into the setting of their time.

- * Place names of a much later period are given to localities when their earlier names had been different.
- * Place names have been modernized in certain cases by copyists to enable their readers to follow the narrative.

- * The traditions about the Creation, the Flood, and the patriarchs as they existed in ancient Babylon are so similar to the Biblical record of them that most modern theologians assert the Hebrew writers borrowed these stories from the Babylonians during the Exile and edited them in a monotheistic style to make them inoffensive to their Hebrew readers.
- * The fact that the Babylonians had traditions to some extent similar to the Hebrew records is no proof that one nation borrowed from the other, but finds its explanation in a common origin for both records. The inspired book of Genesis conveys divinely imparted information in an elevated and pure form, whereas the Babylonian records narrate the same events in a debased pagan setting.

- * Gives a synopsis of four critical analytical sources for the book of Genesis—Yahwist source, Elohist source, Priestly source, and Deuteronomomic source, but he does refute any of them.
- * He also explains the Documentary Hypothesis, a combination of the Yahwist and the Priestly sources, and says that it is not satisfactory for three reasons.

* The result of this critical analysis for Genesis is to show that Moses did not write the book. He is not the author.

- * And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: (Hebrews 1:10)
- * Psalm 102:25-27

- * Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God. (Psalm 90:2)
- * Brought forth——*yâlad*——give birth, beget, born



The Earth Was Without Form and Void

Tohu wabohu


- * Tohu—nothingness, nonexistence
- * Job 26:7—He stretcheth out the north over the empty place [*tohu*], *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing.
- * Jeremiah 4:23—without form and void
- * Isaiah 40:17—And they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity [*tohu*]. (v. 23 also)

- * Isaiah 49:4—Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: *yet* surely my judgment *is* with the Lord, and my work with my God.
- * Labored in **vain**—emptiness
- * Strength for **nought**—*tohu*
- * And in **vain**—vapor, breath, vanity



Darkness Was Upon the Face of the Deep

- * Deep—The “deep,” from a root “to roar,” “to rage,” is frequently applied to the raging waters, the roaring waves, or the flood, and hence the depths of the sea. (S. H. Horn, *SDA BC*)
- * Face—The biblical record shows that originally there was no light on earth and that the surface matter was in a fluid state, because “the face of the deep” stands parallel to “the face of the waters” in this verse. (Ibid.)



The Spirit of God Moved Upon the
Face of the Waters

Spirit of God

* *Ruach*—wind, breath, air, mind, spirit

The Father and the Son engaged in the mighty, wondrous work they had contemplated, of creating the world. The earth came forth from the hand of the Creator exceedingly beautiful. There were mountains, and hills, and plains; and interspersed among them were rivers and bodies of water. The earth was not one extensive plain, but the monotony of the scenery was broken by hills and mountains, not high and ragged as they now are, but regular and beautiful in shape. The bare, high rocks were never seen upon them, but lay beneath the surface, answering as bones to the earth. (*ISP* 24.1)



The waters were regularly dispersed. The hills, mountains, and very beautiful plains, were adorned with plants and flowers, and tall, majestic trees of every description, which were many times larger, and much more beautiful, than trees now are. The air was pure and healthful, and the earth seemed like a noble palace. Angels beheld and rejoiced at the wonderful and beautiful works of God. (*ISP* 24.1)



After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God says to his Son, “Let us make man in our image.” (*ISP* 24.2)

As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of noble height, and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned. His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was neither white, nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble—perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful. (*ISP* 24.2)

This sinless pair wore no artificial garments. They were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. While they lived in obedience to God, this circle of light enshrouded them. Although everything God had made was in the perfection of beauty, and there seemed nothing wanting upon the earth which God had created to make Adam and Eve happy, yet he manifested his great love to them by planting a garden especially for them. A portion of their time was to be occupied in the happy employment of dressing the garden, and a portion in receiving the visits of angels, listening to their instruction, and in happy meditation. Their labor was not wearisome, but pleasant and invigorating. This beautiful garden was to be their home, their special residence. (*ISP* 25.1)

In this garden the Lord placed trees of every variety for usefulness and beauty. There were trees laden with luxuriant fruit, of rich fragrance, beautiful to the eye, and pleasant to the taste, designed of God to be food for the holy pair. There were the lovely vines which grew upright, laden with their burden of fruit, unlike anything man has seen since the fall. The fruit was very large, and of different colors; some nearly black, some purple, red, pink and light green. This beautiful and luxuriant growth of fruit upon the branches of the vine was called grapes. They did not trail upon the ground, although not supported by trellises, but the weight of the fruit bowed them down. It was the happy labor of Adam and Eve to form beautiful bowers from the branches of the vine, and train them, forming dwellings of nature's beautiful, living trees and foliage, laden with fragrant fruit.

(ISP 25.2)

The earth was clothed with beautiful verdure, while myriads of fragrant flowers of every variety and hue sprang up in rich profusion around them. Everything was tastefully and gloriously arranged. In the midst of the garden stood the tree of life, the glory of which surpassed all other trees. Its fruit looked like apples of gold and silver, and was to perpetuate immortality. The leaves contained healing properties. (*ISP* 26.1)

Very happy were the holy pair in Eden. Unlimited control was given them over every living thing. The lion and the lamb sported together peacefully and harmlessly around them, or slumbered at their feet. Birds of every variety of color and plumage flitted among the trees and flowers, and about Adam and Eve, while their mellow-toned music echoed among the trees in sweet accord to the praises of their Creator. (*ISP* 26.2)

Adam and Eve were charmed with the beauties of their Eden home. They were delighted with the little songsters around them, wearing their bright yet graceful plumage, and warbling forth their happy, cheerful music. The holy pair united with them and raised their voices in harmonious songs of love, praise and adoration, to the Father and his dear Son, for the tokens of love which surrounded them. They recognized the order and harmony of creation, which spoke of wisdom and knowledge that were infinite. Some new beauty and additional glory of their Eden home they were continually discovering, which filled their hearts with deeper love, and brought from their lips expressions of gratitude and reverence to their Creator. (*ISP* 26.3)



And God Said . . .