

## In the Beginning God – Genesis 1:1 (Psalm 90)

### I. Introduction:

- A. When we speak of a foundation; what are we talking about? (*Underlying principle; load-bearing part bldg*)
1. Of what are the foundations of buildings usually made? (**Concrete**)
  2. What makes up concrete? (**Cement, water, sand or small gravel; larger pieces of gravel**)
  3. What if we leave out, or limit, any of those ingredients? (**Not a good foundation**)
- B. Jehovah, Elohim – God is not made up of various ingredients, but He is known by various characteristics.
1. What are some of the attributes of God? (**Holiness, love, omnipotence, omniscience...**)
  2. What if God was not holy, or what if He wasn't omnipresent? (**He would not be God**)
  3. What divine attributes are declared in the first verse of the Bible? (**Eternity and omnipotence**)
  4. Would Elohim be God if He was not eternal? (**No**)
- C. Of course, none of God's attributes will ever be lost, but what if they were removed from our perception God?
1. If the attribute of holiness was removed from our understanding of God, what would we come? (**Idolaters**)
  2. If the Lord was not omnipotent, or omniscient, or sovereign, He would not be Almighty, and we would be worshiping a false god.
  3. Jehovah cannot sacrifice one attribute – including His apparently lesser attribute of **eternity**.
  4. Our God – Elohim, Jehovah – is of everlasting duration – He is eternal by nature.
- D. At first glance someone might not think this important.
1. But again like concrete, if one ingredient is missing or out of proper proportion with rest, it is not concrete.
  2. And if God had not been God in the beginning, then the rest of **Genesis 1** would be non-existent – the rest of the Bible would be moot.
- E. Please turn to **Psalm 90**. In this song, Moses proved himself to be a well-informed theologian.
1. His general theme is the relationship between God and man.
  2. Every generation of man has dwelt in the Lord – not the other way around as sociologists try to say.
  3. And man's millennia are, anthropomorphically speaking, as yesterday in God's memory – **verse 4**.
  4. Man is like grass when compared to Jehovah – and grass can be burnt – burnt up even by the sun.
  5. Sure we may live out our threescore and ten years, but what is that in relation to the eternal God?
    - a. *“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” – verse 12.*
    - b. *“O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days”* because without your blessing we are nothing – **verse 14**.
  6. We are **absolutely dependent** upon the Almighty God. *“Let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: & establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it” – verse 17.*
- F. **Verse 2** is particularly significant in giving us a commentary on **Genesis 1:1**.
1. *“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”*
  2. This declares that the **world** had a **beginning**, but **God** did **NOT** – He existed before any physical matter.
  3. What does *“from everlasting to everlasting”* suggest? (**Existence on either side of creation**)
  4. But then there is the statement *“thou **ART** God.”*
  5. In Biblical grammar, *“art”* is what tense of the verb *“is?”* (**Present tense**)
  6. What does that tell us about Jehovah **today**? (**He is; He exists**)
  7. What does the word *“art”* suggest to us about God's relationship to eternity past? (**He exists even in past**)
- G. Was there ever a time when there was no time? (**Yes**)
1. Will there every be a time when time will no longer have relevance? (**Yes**)
  2. We understand **time**, but **eternity** is difficult because, it is contrary to anything we have experienced.

3. But the dictionary tells us that eternity is an *infinite, immutable duration* – without any bounds.
4. **Genesis 1:1** says that at some point when there was no time, the God, who was already in existence, began to create things.

## II. On what does God depend for His existence? (*Nothing*)

- A. Did He need to create the universe in order to be God? (**No, He was God before He created anything**)
  1. In order to see, does He need the light which He created on day #1? (**No**)
  2. Does He need you or me for any reason? (**No**)
  3. God is independent of everything.
    - a. He depends on nothing for His beginning or His ongoing being.
    - b. Did God need to save sinners in order to augment His glory? (**No**)
  4. So God never had a beginning – rather beginning began with Him.
    - a. *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”*
    - b. Early in creation – perhaps on the first day when God said, *“Let there be light”* – time was created.
  5. And just as God created all things, including light, all those things are dependent on Him – including time.
  6. But, again, in the midst of all which He caused, He didn’t cause Himself – Jehovah has always been.
- B. Elohim – Jehovah God – had no beginning, and He shall never have an ending.
  1. The **Psalmist** said in his **102<sup>nd</sup>** –
    - a. *“Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.”*
    - b. *“They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, & they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”*
  2. If there was some sort of **weakness** in God, then we might not be surprised to learn He is even **mortal**.
  3. But as **Paul** said, God *“is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;”*
    - a. **Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto;**
    - b. **whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”**
  4. God’s saints who shall exist for ever – will do so only as dependent upon God for immortality.
- C. What sort of succession, change or progress did God pass through before **Genesis 1:1**? (**None**)
  1. **Psalm 102** says, *“Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”*
  2. God not only **exists** and **remains** in His being, but He **remains** the **SAME** in His being.
  3. How entirely different that is from us, who change with every passing day – every minute.
  4. But God is above time, and time has no effect on Him.
  5. There is no succession or development in His being, nor even in His thoughts; He sees everything at once.
  6. Jehovah may decree a series of events, & they may take place in time, but He witnesses them all at once.
- D. God is in His own eternity. There is no concept of eternity apart from the Lord.
  1. Would there be a future eternity if there was no God? (**No**)
  2. If there was no God, there would not be anything, because *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”*

## III. Again, would Jehovah be God if He wasn’t eternal? (**No**)

- A. **I Timothy 6:15-16** tells us that the attribute of **IMMORTALITY is unique** to the **Lord**.
  1. Your life and mine are precarious, completely dependent upon the Giver of life – both now and for ever.
    - a. There was a time when we were not, but then by God’s grace, through our parents, we came to be.
    - b. And now we are in a constant state of change, & sadly for most of us the change is decay – not growth.
  2. But Elohim is both eternal and immutable – Does not God change; does God decay? (**No**)
  3. If God moved from the past into the present, or into the future, as we do – that too would mean change. But His eternity shields Him from that kind of change – growth or decline.
- B. **LIFE** is a part of His eternity – it is essential to His being – it is a part of His essence.

1. He gives life, but He doesn't receive it and never has. That is at the root of **Genesis 1**.
2. God is life. Will He ever die? (**Absolutely not**)
3. It is just as impossible for Him never to have been as it is for Him to die.
4. The Bible says – “*in HIM we live & move & have our being*” – but no one gives **HIM** life.
5. He alone necessarily exists; and what necessarily exists, has existed from eternity.

C. God's **infinite PERFECTION** requires His eternity.

1. What are some synonyms for “*perfection?*” (**Flawlessness, sublimity, impeccability**)
2. Could God be **infinitely perfect** and yet be of **finite** duration? (**No**)
3. To be finite is a **great** imperfection – all we need to do is look at ourselves for proof.
4. But nothing can be added to, or subtracted from, Him who is eternal.

D. God's **almighty power** – His **OMNIPOTENCE** – requires His eternal being.

1. Think about **Revelation 1:8** – “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*”
2. If God came into existence at some point, then His power was also activated at that point.
3. If that was true, then there would have been a point when God was not God, because there was a time when God wasn't omnipotent.

E. Also, logic suggests that if God is not eternal, then He couldn't be **the FIRST CAUSE** of all things – the Creator.

1. What comes first: the founder or the foundation? (**The founder/engineer**)
2. If God is not the eternal Being, there could be no being now.

F. Even the **NAME** by which God is known requires His eternity.

1. In **Exodus 3:14** in our **English Bible** the Lord told Moses that His name is “*I am that I am.*”
2. But in the language of his day, what Moses heard was “*My name is Yahweh, Yahweh.*”
3. And what is the meaning of “*Yahweh, or Jehovah*” (**It means “I am.”**)

G. **Genesis 1:1** does not use the name “*Yahweh.*”

1. It is “*Elohim,*” but connecting the dots through **Genesis** and into **Exodus**, we see they both refer to the same God.
2. Almost every name in the Bible (every name?) has meaning of some sort.
3. “*Adam*” has meaning as does “*Eve;*” “*Jesus*” means more than “*Hey you,*” and so does “*David.*”
4. And “*Jehovah*” or “*Yahweh*” indicate that there is neither past or future with the Person of that name.
  - a. Now, if I named my dog, “*Yahweh,*” it would only prove that I am an idiot.
  - b. But if I named him “*Dog*” that would make some sense, because that is what he is.
5. God is “*Yahweh*” – and Who gave Him this name?
  - a. I didn't name God, nor did anyone else.
  - b. It is the name which He took when speaking to Moses, because it accurately reflects who He is.
  - c. And “*Yahweh*” speaks of eternal existence – “*I am, I have always been, I will always be.*”
6. And just as He did throughout the Bible – in **Revelation 1** God reiterated His name and His nature.
  - a. “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*”
7. The Lord is an unbounded sea of being and infinite life, He is in an eternal present.
  - a. He who has always been said, “*Let there be light,*” and there was light.
  - b. Has there ever been a point at which Jehovah was not what He is right now? (**No**)
  - c. Will there ever be a point when He will not be what He was in **Genesis 1:1**? (**No**)
8. His name will never be changed to “*I am not*” or “*I once was.*”

**IV. With these things as the foundation, we come to the beautiful temple which is built upon it.**

- A. Because God is eternal, His covenants and promises are eternal.
1. **Paul** saw something in **Genesis** which he shared with us in **Hebrews 6**.
    - a. *“When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,*
    - b. *Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.*
    - c. *And so, after (Abraham) had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.*
    - d. *For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.*
    - e. *Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:*
    - f. *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast.”*
  2. Before the foundation of the world, God promised eternal life to His elect people.
    - a. This promise is good and holds good, because the Promiser Himself is eternal by nature.
    - b. Theologians like to say that the name **“Jehovah”** is **God’s COVENANT name**. He is the **“I am.”**
    - c. He holds eternity in His hand, and thus **His covenant promises** are **steadfast** and **sure**.
  3. Paul told Titus he was *“in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.”*
  4. The eternity and immutability of God mean that those whom Christ has redeemed cannot be lost.
  5. God spoke through two of His prophets blending a single message.
    - a. *“I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” – Malachi 3:6.*
    - b. And *“it is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not” – Lamentations 3:22.*
- B. Are the plans and pleasures of God for His chosen people less durable & less eternal than God Himself? **(No)**
1. Will they will never grow old and feeble, because they are subject to the passing of time? **(No)**
  2. Many things are feeble and temporary, but the will, the promises & the unilateral covenants of God are not.
  3. The Lord, by His grace and power, may increase our delights throughout eternity, but He cannot take them away, because the promises of God are as eternal as the Creator.
  4. While we remain on earth, we need to remember our God is the great **“I Am that I Am”** to all his people.
  5. **Isaiah** tells us to *“trust in the Lord FOREVER; for in the Lord Jehovah is EVERLASTING strength” – 26:4.*
  6. And the Word of our God shall stand forever, because the God of that word is eternal.
- C. And while we are at it, we must not forget that Jesus Christ is a member of the Godhead.
1. Don’t separate the Father from the Son, for any reason.
    - a. Eternity is applied to the Son of God just as it is to God the Father.
    - b. **Colossians, 1:17** – Christ *“is before all things, and by him all things consist.”*
  2. The Lord Jesus Himself speaks of the glory He had with the Father before the world was.
  3. And in **Micah’s** prophecy of the coming Christ, he said, *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”*
- D. When the Son of God passed through Bethlehem as a baby, He was made in the likeness of man.
1. He became the God-man; God in the flesh – the Theanthropic person.
  2. In many ways he became subject to the very time which He created in **Genesis 1**.
  3. When He gave His life on the cross, He died in His flesh, but the eternal God did not – and could not – die.
  4. Although Christ is God, when Jesus Christ died, God did not.
  5. Then the eternal Son of God took the sacrifice which He made according to His own eternal covenant, and over time applied it to a few million worthless souls, saving them from their sin.
  6. The eternity of God is a part of the foundation of eternal salvation, just as it is has a relationship to God’s act of Creation.
  7. Deliverance from sin and its penalty are possible only through the eternal promise of the eternal God.
- E. Before I let you take a break, I’ll ask once again:

1. Are you wrapped in the **eternal** righteousness of the **eternal** Son of God?
2. Are you trusting the sacrifice which Christ Jesus made on the cross to deliver you **eternally** from your sin?
3. Or are you facing an **eternity** in the Lake of Fire, stoked by the **eternal** wrath of the Almighty God who created the heaven, the earth and the lake of fire?
4. I urge you, once again, to listen to the **eternal** Word of God and the Gospel of Christ – put your faith in the **eternal** Redeemer.