

Soroti BIBLE SCHOOL

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Genesis 1 and 2 – Creation

Babylonian myths	Genesis
The first lines are about the heavens and the earth. 'When on high the heaven had not been named.'	The first line opens with God. 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'. Gen 1, v 1.
The Babylonian gods are not creators separate from the universe; they are seen to have brought a universe forward that pre-existed. The universe is a direct expression of them.	God is a creator God, it is God who created the heavens and the earth and He is separate from it. Gen 1, v1. God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing, by speaking them into existence.
There are many gods, which themselves have a beginning. The god Marduk is created and begotten.	There is only one God, without rival, who existed before time, space and matter.
Marduk is established by the other gods as supreme ruler.	God is the creator of all things and is supreme and sovereign ruler by virtue of being the sole creator.
Marduk and the gods create a savage man to serve the gods, including by providing them with food so the gods don't have to work so hard. 'Without fail let them support their gods!' Savage man is created out of the death of one of the gods.	The God of Genesis creates the man out of the dust of the ground and honours him by making him reflect the greatness of his creator. God provides food for his creation, including for human beings. Man is given dominion over creation and enjoys it in relationship with his creator.
The sun, moon and stars were objects to be worshipped.	God created these objects, which are simply 'lights' and are specifically not named. Gen 1, v 16 simply says: 'He also made the stars'.
The gods of the Babylonians needed sacrifice and needed to be supported by the creatures they had created.	God existed before time and requires nothing from man. In fact, God blesses both him and the creation.

Separation in the realms		Creation in those realms	
Day 1	1, v 3 – 5: God separates light from darkness.	Day 4	1, v 14-19: God creates the sun for the day, the moon and stars for the night.
Day 2	1, v 6-8: God separates the sky from the sea.	Day 5	1, v 20-23: God creates birds for the sky and fish for the sea.
Day 3	1, v 9-13: God separates dry ground from water.	Day 6	1, v 24-31: God creates livestock, wild animals and people.

Two different narratives about creation

1-2, v3	2, v 4-25
The style is poetic and highly structured.	The style is prose and told as more of a story.
The work of creation is told in detail and in order.	The work of creation is summarised briefly in Gen 2, v 5 before moving quickly to the creation of Man.
The creator is called Elohim – God	The creator is called YHWH Elohim – LORD God, so includes the more intimate name for the divine being given to Moses in Exodus 3, v 14.
Genesis 1, v 1: 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'. The heavens are first, then the earth.	Genesis 2.4. 'This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens...' The heavens are first then the earth. The order is then switched, so the earth is first and then the heavens.
No specific geographical locations are mentioned.	Geography is an important part of the story. We learn that Eden is 'in the East' (v8), indicating that this story was written or developed somewhere to the west of this region. The land of Havilah is mentioned (another name for the region around Babylon) and Ashur, on the Tigris River. The nearby Euphrates River is also mentioned by name and natural minerals are listed.
The man and the woman are created at the same time (v 27).	The man is created first and then the woman is created from him (v 22).

- There is only one God and the most common name used for Him in the Bible is the plural of the word God, suggesting that this one God could be made up of more than one part or person.
- This God is content to interrupt human history and correct falsehood with truth to bring encouragement and empowerment.
- God created the heavens and the earth from nothing by speaking them into existence, bringing order from chaos.
- God is separate from His universe but intimately involved in it.
- God brings His order to the universe in a highly creative way and the description of the act of creation is itself highly creative.
- God recognises the needs of humankind on the earth, including the need for food, fellowship and rest.
- Humanity was created as the climax of God's creation of the world.
- Man is represented on the earth by both men and women, who together reflect the image of God.
- Man reflecting the image of God is linked both to their relationship with God and the partnership that they enter with God to subdue and rule and have dominion over the world on behalf of God and in partnership with God.
- It is impossible to separate out God's creation of the world from God's fellowship with Man.
- God is the first to tell Adam that evil exists, and that evil is within his reach but outside of his experience, so God puts limits on what Adam can do to protect him from this evil.