





1

Cultural, Historic, and Geographic Significance



In the Beginning



Genesis 1:1 Lesson 1

The slide features a white background with a dark blue border. At the top left, the text "Cultural, Historic, and Geographic Significance" is written in a blue, italicized font. On the right side, there is a smaller version of the Talmidim Way logo, which includes the word "Genesis" in white and "A Talmidim Way Study" at the bottom. In the center, the title "In the Beginning" is displayed in a large, bold, dark blue font. Below the title, on the right, is a blue speaker icon with sound waves. At the bottom left, "Genesis 1:1" is written in a blue, italicized font, and at the bottom right, "Lesson 1" is written in a blue, sans-serif font.

2

Cultural, Historic, and Geographic Significance



In the Beginning

Genesis 1:1

Lesson 1 

3

Intro Lesson Topics

Acts 17:11

Blessing for Torah Study

Introduction to the Torah

Introduction to Genesis

Genesis 1:1



4

Acts 17:11 (ESV)

Now these (Berean) Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise indicated, all photographs are from Photo Companion to the Bible, copyright © 2012-2022 Todd Bolen, bibleplaces.com. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



5

Worldview influences presuppositions/interpretation



Acts 17:11 keeps us in check



6

Blessing for Torah Study

Blessed are you, LORD God, King of the universe who sanctifies us and commanded us to immerse ourselves in the words of Torah. Sweeten the words of your Torah in our mouths. Blessed are you Lord, giver of the Torah. אמן!



7

Organization of the Hebrew Bible

Tanakh – Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim

The Torah is read through once per year following a standardized reading schedule

Act 15:21 “For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.”

There are 12 reading “portions” in Genesis (and 54 total in the Torah)



8

Introduction to the Torah

Torah – teaching or instruction, specifically divine instruction.

More than do's and don'ts

God's revealed will

How to live rightly before God and with men (Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18, 2 Ti 3:16-17)



9

Introduction to the Torah

- **The Torah is a Jewish document that was taken VERY SERIOUSLY by Jesus, Paul, and the early church**
- To best understand what Moses was communicating, we need to view the words through the clearest lens possible and let the text speak to us (*Exegesis*).
- Act 15:21 “For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.”



10

Organization of the Torah

First five books of Moses = "Pentateuch"

Genesis	Exodus	Leviticus	Numbers	Deuteronomy
Bereshit	Sh'mot	Vayikra	B'midbar	Devarim
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth	These are the names of the sons of Israel...	The LORD called Moses and spoke to him...	The LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness...	These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan
Beginnings of creation, the nations, and the family of Abraham	Deliverance from slavery and birth of Israel	Ethics and Holiness of Israel – God's will	Wilderness Wanderings – successes and failures	Moses' farewell sermons (Second Law); blessings for obedience 

11

The Oral Torah

Pentateuch = written Torah

Mishnah+Gemara(+others) = Talmud = Oral Torah

Talmud is held as authoritative by most Jews

Said to passed orally from God to Moses, etc.

Portions of the Talmud were recorded before Jesus was born

Later portions of Talmud appear to be anti-Christian



12

The Oral Torah – “Traditions of Men”

Jesus’ citations of the Oral Torah are not always negative:

- Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 are the “greatest commandments”
- The “Golden Rule” of Matthew 7:12 was first ascribed to Rabbi Hillel
- The description of the Last Supper procedure followed the prescribed Passover tradition of His day (not in Exodus)
- Jesus recognized the authority of the Sanhedrin as prescribed in the Oral Torah



13

The Oral Torah – “Traditions of Men”

The areas where Jesus disputed with the establishment tended to involve what are called “fences” or “hedges.”

Good intentions to prevent inadvertently violating a commandment

Many ended up being applied in the extreme to exclude people God wanted to be included or had become empty religious gestures.

We do this today! I’m sure Paul could write to each of our churches today and correct us where we are off-track.



14

The Oral Torah – “Traditions of Men” – Sabbath controversies

Jesus ALWAYS remained within the constraints of the written Torah

Most often he was elevating a *mitzvah* (a command) far beyond how it was being practiced

Jesus and Paul weren't attacking the Torah or Judaism

They were attacking nonbiblical practices that had arisen within the Judaism of their day



15

Why Study the Torah?

Imagine a two-act play

Jews and Christians have tickets to the same play

Most Jews left at intermission

Most Christians didn't show up until well after the second act had started

Neither group has the complete story of who Jesus is!



16

Why Study the Torah?

“Beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures” (Luke 24:27).

“If you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me” (John 5:46).



17

Genesis Introduction

בְּרֵאשִׁית – pronounced b^oray-SHEET

Many (maybe most!) things that had their beginning in Genesis will be fulfilled in Revelation!

Two world views: Cosmic accident or deliberate design

We hold the Bible as inerrant in the original manuscripts, but Genesis is not specifically a history or science textbook.

www.answersingenesis.org



18

There are at least 200 NT references to Genesis

- All NT books except Philemon, 2, 3 John
- Jesus, Himself makes 25 references
- All but seven chapters in Genesis are referenced in the NT
- More than 100 of the allusions are from the first 11 chapters of Genesis
 - The so-called prehistory chapters
 - The world says these are “myths, legends, fanciful tales”
 - The apostolic authors treated these chapters as factual
- There are 58 NT references to Abraham, the father of the Jews

The New Testament is a collection of Jewish books, by Jewish authors, to Jewish audiences, including gentiles who were trying to find their place in a Jewish sect



19

In The Beginning – ex nihilo

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

בְּרֵאשִׁית א

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם
וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

So the Scriptures begin, not from the first-person perspective of some man's understanding of God, but from an omniscient third-person perspective, a Voice that reveals the Glorious Power that created the entire cosmos by means of His Word. – John J. Parsons



20

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

בְּרֵאשִׁית – literally “in beginning”

ב – prepositional prefix usually meaning “in”

ראש – head or chief

בָּרָא – he created (verb)

אֱלֹהִים – God, gods (subject, doer of the verb’s action; the subject usually follows verb in Hebrew)

אֶת – untranslated – comes before a definite direct object (DDO marker)

הַשָּׁמַיִם – the heaven/heavens (object, receiver of the verb’s action)

Prefix ה means “the”

Hebrew has a handful of words that are in a plural or dual form but are usually translated singular.

וְ – DDO marker

Prefix ו most often means “and”

הָאָרֶץ – the earth (object)



21

God created all things through and for Messiah

In the **beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through him**, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3)

The **world was created** only for the sake of Messiah.
(b.Sanhedrin 98b)

But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, **through whom also he created the world**. (Heb 1:2)

He was in the world, and the **world was made through him**, yet the world did not know him. (John 1:10)



22

In the beginning, was wisdom

The LORD possessed me (Wisdom) at the **beginning** of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. (Pro 8:22-23)

But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the **wisdom of God**. (1Co 1:24)

And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: “The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the **beginning of God's creation.**” (Rev 3:14)



23

The beginning of a period or phase

Jewish writing is not necessarily chronological

Traditional interpretation: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Alternate interpretations:

In the beginning of God's creation..., **the earth was formless and void.**

In the beginning of God's creation..., *when* the earth was formless and void, **God said, ‘Let there be light.’**

Before time began, God created space for heaven and earth” – Jeffrey Feinberg



24

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Genesis 1:1 is the most analyzed verse in the Bible

Seven words = seven days of creation

Hints to the CONSPICUOUS patterns of sevens throughout the entire Bible

28 Hebrew letters



25

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ Genesis 1:1

εν αρχη ην ο λογος και ο λογος ην προς τον θεον και θεος ην ο λογος John 1:1

For Genesis 1:1 in Hebrew, the (number of the letters x the product of the letters)/(number of words x the product of the words) results in 3.1416×10^{16}

That's somewhat curious as it is the first five digits of π

When we do the same thing for John 1:1 in Greek "εν αρχη ην ο λογος και ο λογος ην προς τον θεον και θεος ην ο λογος", the result is 2.7813×10^{65}

In math, this is the first five digits of e , otherwise known as the natural logarithm

Two verses that were written thousands of years apart in different languages (yet clearly connected by the plain text) have two very common mathematical constants tucked away.

Seems too coincidental to be accidental!



26

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

א is the first letter in the alphabet. Why does the Torah begin with ב and not א?

The Torah does not begin with an א because God (אֱלֹהִים) was already there in the beginning.



27

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

בי ראשת – in Me, is the beginning

בית ראש – house of the head

בית ארש – house of the betrothed

בית אשר – house of the blessed/happy

The above three בית examples also speak of the Messianic redemption, which we studied in Revelation.

In that day we will be IN HIS HOUSE under His direct AUTHORITY, as His BRIDE and we will be BLESSED!



28

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

בְּרֵאשִׁית בֶּר א

In the beginning, was the SON of א



29

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Grammatically, אֶת is an untranslated marker that points to the direct object of the sentence

Often hints at **Yeshua, the א and the ת**

Sentence: The object receives the verb by the subject through אֶת,

Creation: receives the action by the creator through **Yeshua**.

If God (subject) wants to do something (verb) with us (object), He works through the אֶת/Yeshua

First and last letters of the Hebrew aleph-bet.

“I am the Alpha/Aleph and the Omega/Tav, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” (Rev 22:13)



30

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Zechariah 12:10

וְהִבִּיטוּ אֶת אֶת אֲשֶׁר־דָּקְרוּ

They shall look upon him, the אֶת, whom they have pierced.

See talmidimway.org for additional examples of Yeshua in Genesis 1:1



31

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Genesis 1:1 has seven words, with two אֶת

Could these represent the 1st and 2nd comings of Jesus the אֶת?

The first is in the 4th position and the second is in the 6th position

His first coming came at the end of the 4th millennium, where He taught “Repent for the kingdom of HEAVEN is at hand.” After He was crucified, He ascended into HEAVEN.

The fifth word in Genesis 1:1 is הַשָּׁמַיִם, heaven.



32

Deeper Meanings?

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Genesis 1:1 has seven words, with two אֶת

Could these represent the 1st and 2nd comings of Jesus the אֶת?

The first is in the 4th position and the second is in the 6th position

The Jewish sages say Messiah will come at the **end of the 6th millennium**

For Christians, this would be the second coming of Revelation 19, which describes the Messianic kingdom on EARTH.

The seventh word in Genesis 1:1 is הָאָרֶץ, the earth.



33

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת

הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

*B'reisheet bara Elohim et ha-shamaiym
ve'et ha-aretz*



34

References

Avraham, Yisrael. "6.11 Hebrew Quest Discussion of Genesis 1:1." Hebrew GRAMMAR Quest. Last modified 2021. Accessed August 8, 2022. <https://holylanguage.com/grammar/6.11-hebrew-quest-discussion-of-genesis-11.html>.

Feinberg, Jeffrey Enoch. Walk Genesis! In the Begining. Baltimore, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 1999.

Hamilton, Victor P. "The Book of Genesis." In New International Commentary on the Old Testament (NICOT), edited by Robert L. Hubbard and Bill Arnold. E-Sword. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990.

Lancaster, Daniel T. Shadows of the Messiah. Edited by Boaz D. Michael and Steven P. Lancaster. 3rd ed. Vol. 4. 5 vols. Torah Club 3. Marshfield, MO: First Fruits of Zion, 2015.

Missler, Chuck. Genesis: An Expository Commentary (Supplemental Notes). Coeur d'Alene, ID: Koinonia House, 2004.

———. Learn the Bible in 24 Hours (Supplemental Notes). Coeur d'Alene, ID: Koinonia House, 2005.

Parsons, John J. A year through the Torah: a journey for Christians, 2013.

Parsons, John J. "The Written Torah - Torah Shebikhtav." Hebrew for Christians. Accessed July 28, 2022. <https://www.hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Torah/torah.html>.

Pryor, Keren Hannah. A Taste of Torah. Marshfield, MO: First Fruits of Zion, 2016.

Walton, John H., Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament. (E-Sword). Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2000.



35



36