

אֱלֹהִים

ELOHIM

The very first name of God we encounter as we open our Bibles is Elohim. But do you see Elohim there in your English Bible? No, instead, what we read is: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Our English Bible is translation from the languages in which it was first written. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and it is there in the Hebrew that we find the name Elohim (This is what it looks like in Hebrew script: אֱלֹהִים).

For a moment, picture an exquisite jar that contains either a precious oil, syrup or preserved fruit. Both the jar and what is inside are treasures. God’s names are like exquisite jars. Hidden within each name of God are His exquisite attributes and characteristics, descriptions of His nature. Sometimes we even find a name within a name.

Elohim is an exquisite jar indeed. Not only do we find that Elohim is the Creator and origin of all things, but we learn that He is triune, self-existent, omnipotent (all-powerful), our Potter, and our Maker...and that’s just the beginning. In our study of Elohim, we have recommended resources for further study on Elohim’s self-existence and omnipotence. We will enjoy Him as Potter and Maker in a future study. The pages that follow will lead you on an exploration of Elohim as Creator.

Before you begin, ask Elohim, who created your eyes and heart, to give you eyes to see wonderful things in His word and a heart to receive and respond to His instruction.

IN THE BEGINNING ELOHIM CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH...GENESIS 1:1

DAY 1

ELOHIM in the Beginning

The account of creation is potentially familiar to many of us. So much so, that we may not realize that its familiarity does not exclude its on-going power to instruct and enlighten (2 Timothy 3:16). Let’s explore God as Elohim, our all-powerful Creator...in the beginning of our Bibles.

Read Genesis 1:1. The Hebrew word for ‘God’ in this verse is Elohim.

* Write the verse and replace ‘God’ with Elohim.

* Read Hebrews 11:3 with Genesis 1:1. What/Who existed at the point of Genesis 1:1?

Read through Genesis 1. (The text of Genesis 1 is included in this study). Every time you encounter the word “God”, replace it with “Elohim”, for that is the Hebrew word used for God throughout this passage.

Reread Genesis 1. Mark all references to God (including pronouns) in a special way or with a special color.

* What do you learn about God from noting the references to Him? What insights can you draw from this?

* Underline the phrase that is repeated in verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 29? What is it?

* Circle the phrase that is repeated in verses 7, 9, 11, 15, 24, 30. What is it?

* What connection do you see between these two phrases? What does this tell us about God?

* What verbs indicate how God accomplished creation?

List all that existed at the end of Genesis 1:

Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	
Day 6	

DAY 2

ELOHIM is Origin

All of Genesis 1 details Elohim creating, making, speaking everything in our natural world into existence. Elohim, Creator God, *willed or desired* all that is created... “*and it was so*”.

* Taking into account all that you learned in Genesis 1, describe in your own words the origin of all things.

Everything we see, has a point of origin. You and I call it our birthday. Psalm 90:2 tells us that even mountains have a birthday!

* But what about God Himself? What do these Scriptures say about God?

Psalm 90:2

Job 36:26

Isaiah 40:28

Habakkuk 1:12 in NIV, NLT, or CSB

Revelation 1:8

Isaiah 41:4

John 17:5, 24

Psalm 102:25-27

- * How would you describe God's "origin" according to these verses?

This is known as God's attribute of self-existence. He is the only Uncreated One. Without beginning or end of days, He has always been and always will be.

- * Why might this be a foundational truth for all of our understanding of who God is?
- * What implications might there be if this were not true?
- * How can God's self-existence be a source of comfort?

DAY 3

ELOHIM is Able to Accomplish

Have you ever had a wish or a desire to accomplish something? Perhaps it was a career or education path you considered following, a destination you wanted to explore, or a relationship you wanted to nurture. Maybe you have envisioned a creative or organizational endeavor that you dreamed of completing. Pinterest displays seemingly endless ideas for exercising creative energy.

- * What are some personal examples of this?

Yet, for you, did simply desiring to accomplish those things equate to their completion?

- * According to Revelation 4:11, what was necessary for Elohim to create everything?
- * What do Psalm 115:3, Psalm 135:6, Isaiah 14:24, Isaiah 46:8-11, Job 42:2, Proverbs 19:21 say about God's ability to accomplish what He sets out to do?

- * How did God describe His creation throughout Genesis 1 (v. 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31)?

I don't know about you, but my creative attempts don't always turn out as I planned or desired! Even when my projects end up being well-received by others, I know that what I originally envisioned and what was produced don't match up. I'm missing an ingredient the recipe called for, I forgot to print the worksheet for the lesson, the color I chose for my wall paint has the wrong undertones, the outfit that looked so great on the mannequin looks less than flattering on me.

Yet, with God everything goes according to His creative inspiration. Not one thing came to be apart from His will and desire. Everything turned out exactly as He envisioned!

Read Ephesians 1:11. This verse tells us that God has a plan.

* Specifically, who is incorporated into His plan?

* What description of God, the deliberate Creator, is given in the second half of Ephesians 1:11 (the phrase starts with “who...”)?

If that doesn't inspire awe!! God's ability to accomplish all that He desires is possible because He is omnipotent (all-powerful). Because the plans are His, they are always good and perfect. Even things that in the short-term seem less than ideal, God says in Romans 8:28 will ultimately work for our good.

*And we know that God causes everything to work together
for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.
Romans 8:28 NLT*

* Consider a current circumstance or desire that you have but have not been able to affect. How do these verses address that circumstance/desire?

DAY 4

ELOHIM Names

Return to Genesis 1 and reread verses 5, 8, and 10. Fill in the blanks below

After creating light, Elohim called it _____ and darkness He called _____. (v.5)

After creating an expanse between the waters above and the waters below,
Elohim called it _____.(v.8)

After gathering the waters into one place and letting dry land appear, Elohim called them _____ &
_____. (v.10)

* In Genesis 2:19-20, what did Adam do?

* What commission did Elohim give to people in Geneses 1:26?

* What do you think the act of naming in these instances might indicate?

Each time a pet or child has entered our family, we have named them. Our cars, vacuum cleaners, even the property our land sits on have all experienced a christening of sorts. We have this right, for they are under both our authority and protection. We are responsible for their care. Artists and sculptors name their works as an expression of their creative intent for the work and to receive credit for its enjoyment. Both Elohim's creation and naming of that creation reveal His ownership, authority and protection over it. Naming indicates His responsibility to His creation and the credit (praise) that is due Him as a result of our enjoyment of it.

* In what ways, according to the following passages, does God provide and care for everything under His authority?

Acts 17:24-26

Psalm 145:15-16

Psalm 64:9-13

Acts 14:17

Philippians 4:19

- * Read Psalm 100:3. What imagery does this passage use to further illustrate the truth in the previous passages? How does this picture add to your understanding of God?
- * What does it mean that you are under Elohim's authority and belong to Him?
- * Are there any areas in which you are trying to buck Elohim's ownership of and authority over you?
- * In what ways are you tempted to "be your own boss", to be your own authority? What does it look like in your life?

DAY 5

ELOHIM and the Word

Read John 1:1-3.

- * What connection do you note between these verses and how Elohim accomplished creation in Genesis 1?

At creation, Elohim used His spoken word to create everything out of nothing. We have been graciously given Elohim's written Word.

- * How do Hebrews 4:12 and 2 Timothy 3:16 describe the word of God? What kind of power does it have?

Elohim's Word is imbued with power, like lightning is composed of electricity. It is unlike anything else ever written, for it is the very words of Elohim to us and for us!

What do you think it means for your life that Elohim, who used His words to create everything out of nothing, speaks to you through the pages of your Bible? What could be (should be?) the result?

- * What do the verses you just read above reveal about the Scriptures' ability to impact your life, creating: hope, purity, self-control, peace, faith, etc. where there wasn't any before?
- * In what area of your life would you most like Elohim to exercise this kind of creative, something-where-there-was-nothing power?
- * Write out the words of Psalm 51:10 below.

- * Write a prayer asking Him for this below:

- * What assurance do you find in 1 John 5:14-15?

DAY 6

ELOHIM's Purposes for Creation

When a money manager creates a budget, they intend for it to organize spending. When a cook combines ingredients into a dish, they intend for it to nourish our bodies (and tongues). When a musician composes a song, they intend for its lyrics and melodies to communicate and move us. When an engineer designs a device or structure, they intend for it function according to its intended purpose. These intentions are manifestations of our being created in the image of God.

- * God, too, has intentions—purposes—for His Creation. What do the following verses say about Elohim's intent for creation:

Psalm 19:1-6

Psalm 97:6

Psalm 102:18

Isaiah 43:7

Isaiah 43:21

Romans 8:18-23

Ephesians 1:11-12

1 Peter 2:9

Revelation 4:11

- * Write out Jeremiah 29:11 inserting your own name where the pronouns 'you' appear.
- * Based on the verses you have studied today, what can you be sure part of your purpose is?
- * In what ways could God use the ways in which He has uniquely created you and the story He is writing in your life to bring Him glory and praise? Over what areas of your life can you declare to others that God has created beauty from ashes, a new creature from a dead one, a heart of flesh from a heart of stone?

DAY 7

ELOHIM Continues to Create

In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1). God's attributes never wax or wane, like our strength or patience do. He is just as much the Creator God, Elohim, as He was in the beginning. Let's search the Scriptures to see what He creates today.

Psalms 102:18

Isaiah 45:8

2 Corinthians 5:17

Revelation 2:17

Ephesians 2:14-16 (the "two" that Paul writes of are Jews and non-Jews)

James 1:17

Isaiah 65:17

2 Peter 3:13

Revelation 21:1-7

Ezekiel 36:26-27

Psalms 51:10

At the end of Day 5, you wrote a prayer to Elohim asking Him to create newness in your heart. As we close this study, continue that prayer below.

Begin by praising Him for the aspects of creation that most awe and inspire you.

Next, thank Him for the ways in which He created you physically and also for the new creation in Christ that He has made you (if you have accepted Christ as your Savior).

Now, confess to Him all of the ways in which you have tried to steal His glory, become your own authority, create your own kingdoms. Confess the ways in which you doubt His ability to create a new heart in you or those you love.

Finally, ask Him boldly to create a new heart and spirit in you. Be very specific with this! What exactly needs newness? What precisely is absent?

In Jesus' name. Amen!

*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think,
according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all
generations, forever and ever. Amen.*
Ephesians 3:20-21

For Further Reading:

Psalm 104

Job 38-42:6

GENESIS 1

The Creation of the World

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. **2** The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. **4** And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, “Let there be an expanse^[a] in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” **7** And God made^[b] the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. **8** And God called the expanse Heaven.^[c] And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9 And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. **10** God called the dry land Earth,^[d] and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants^[e] yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so.

12 The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **13** And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

14 And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,^[f] and for days and years, **15** and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so.

16 And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. **17** And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, **18** to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19** And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20 And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds[g] fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” **21** So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” **23** And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24 And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. **25** And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, “Let us make man[h] in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” **29** And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. **30** And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. **31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.