

The Waters Above You: Genesis 1:6-8

Scriptures for Today:

Genesis 1:6-8 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

Introduction

We're back in the book of Genesis chapter 1. This book has 50 chapters in total. Remember, Genesis means "beginnings," and in this first chapter we are seeing the beginning of all things as we know them. This is not man's theory of how the world began. This is God's actual record of how He created the heaven and the earth.

So far in Genesis chapter 1, we have seen that God is eternal. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." That was the beginning of creation, but it was not the beginning of God. God has no beginning and no end.

Psalm 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.

We also saw that the earth was without form and void, darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. At that point, the earth was unformed and empty. It was covered in darkness, and God was about to begin forming and filling His creation.

Last time, we looked at verses 3 through 5, where God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." The first thing God created after the heaven and the earth was light. And we saw the power of God's Word. God did not need tools, materials, or a process. He simply spoke, and it was done.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

God saw the light, that it was good. Then God divided the light from the darkness. He called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

So day one shows us God bringing light into the darkness, order into what was unformed, and distinction where there had been no division. God is not the author of confusion. He separates. He defines. He names. He rules over everything He has made.

And that brings us to the second day of creation. In verses 6 through 8, God is going to make the firmament and divide the waters from the waters. This is where we begin to see God forming the structure of the world above us, placing a firmament in the midst of the waters, and calling that firmament Heaven.

Verse 6

Genesis 1:6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

Notice again how this verse begins: **“And God said...”** This is the same phrase we saw back in verse 3.

Genesis 1:3

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

So far in Genesis 1, God is creating and forming all things by the power of His Word. He speaks, and creation obeys. There is no struggle. There is no process of trial and error. God does not have to experiment and figure things out as He goes. He speaks with absolute authority, and what He commands comes to pass.

Psalm 33:9

For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

That is something we need to keep in mind all throughout the creation account. This world was not formed by chance. It did not evolve over billions of years. It was created and formed by the spoken Word of God.

So when verse 6 says, **“And God said,”** we are seeing the authority of God’s Word again. God is about to make a firmament, and that firmament is going to divide the waters from the waters.

Before that happens, it’s important to remember the condition of the earth back in verse 2.

Genesis 1:2

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

At this point in creation, the earth is still unformed and empty. Darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the **waters**. So the picture we have is a watery creation, covered in darkness, before God begins forming and filling it.

On day one, God brought light into the darkness. He divided the light from the darkness and called the light Day and the darkness Night.

Now on day two, God is going to make another division.

Genesis 1:6 And God said, Let there be a firmament **in the midst of the waters**, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

The word we need to understand here is **firmament**. When people talk about the firmament, there are a lot of different ideas.

Some people think the firmament is only the atmosphere where the birds fly.

Some people think the firmament is only outer space where the sun, moon, and stars are.

Some people think the firmament refers to a solid dome over the earth.

Some people have other theories and explanations.

And people can get into long debates about this. But when we believe the Bible, we're not supposed to start with man's ideas and then force the Bible to fit those ideas. We start with what the Bible actually says. And we stick with what the Bible says.

So what does the Bible say the firmament is?

Look at verse 8.

Genesis 1:8

And God called the firmament **Heaven**. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

That is the clearest definition we are given in the passage. God called the firmament **Heaven**.

So if someone asks, "**What is the firmament?**" the simple Bible answer is: **the firmament is Heaven**.

But we need to understand what that actually means...

When we hear the word **Heaven**, sometimes we only think about the place where God's throne is. And the Bible does use the word Heaven that way.

But the Bible also uses the word Heaven to describe what is above the earth.

For example, later in this same chapter, the birds fly in the "**open firmament of heaven**."

Genesis 1:20

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

So the sky where the birds fly is called heaven. The Bible also says the sun, moon, and stars are placed in the firmament of heaven.

Genesis 1:14

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night...

So when Genesis 1:8 says God called the firmament Heaven, we should not immediately limit that to only one part of heaven. The Bible is showing us that the firmament of Heaven includes the expanse above the earth.

It includes the open heaven where the birds fly. It includes the heaven where the lights are placed.

And according to Genesis 1:6-7, it is the space God created between the waters below and the waters above.

“Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters...”

That phrase **“in the midst”** means it is placed between the waters. God is creating a space, an expanse, a Heaven, between waters below and waters above.

That is why the end of the verse says:

“and let it divide the waters from the waters.”

So the purpose of the firmament is very clear. God made the firmament to divide one body of waters from another body of waters.

Verse 7

Genesis 1:7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so.

Here in verse 7, God does exactly what He said in verse 6.

Verse 6 says, **“Let there be a firmament.”** Verse 7 says, **“And God made the firmament.”**

There is no delay. There is no failure. The firmament did not slowly develop over time. God spoke, and God made it. Then He gives us more details about the division:

“and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament...”

We see clearly that there are waters under the firmament and waters above the firmament.

The waters under the firmament are the waters connected to the earth. We know that because on the third day, God gathers those waters together into one place, and calls them seas.

But there are also waters above the firmament.

And that is where we need to slow down and be careful. The Bible tells us they are there, but it does not give us every detail about them.

It does not tell us exactly what those waters look like. It does not tell us exactly how far away they are. It does not tell us exactly how much water is there. But it does tell us that there are waters above the firmament.

And this is not the only place the Bible speaks this way.

Psalm 148:4

Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

Notice that phrase:

“ye waters that be above the heavens.”

So Genesis 1 says there are waters above the firmament, and Psalm 148 says there are waters above the heavens.

That lines up perfectly with what we are reading here in Genesis. God made the firmament. God called the firmament Heaven. And there are waters above the heavens.

So a simple way to understand it:

The firmament is the Heaven, or the expanse, that God made above the earth. It starts above the surface of the earth and stretches upward and outward. It includes the open heaven where the birds fly. It includes the heavens where the sun, moon, and stars are placed. And it extends beyond the heavens that we are able to observe, all the way to the waters that God placed above the heavens.

We cannot see those waters. We do not know exactly what they look like. We don't know how far above us they are. God does not give us those details. But He does tell us that they are there.

Now, someone might say, **“I don't understand how that works.”**

And that's okay. You don't have to understand every detail of God's creation in order to believe what God said. No one understands how life is formed in the mother's womb. No one understands how a soul is created.

Ecclesiastes 11:5 As thou knowest not what *is* the way of the spirit, *nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

There are many things God has made that are beyond our understanding. We can look up into the sky. We can study the stars. Man can build telescopes. Man can send rockets. Man can observe a lot of things in the heavens. But is it impossible for us to know the works of God who maketh all things.

God knows exactly what is above us. God knows exactly where those waters are. God knows exactly how His creation is structured.

Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are revealed belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we may do all the words of this law.*

There are secret things that belong to God. There are details that God has not chosen to reveal to us. And we need to be humble enough to accept that.

But the things God has revealed belong unto us. He revealed that He made the firmament. He revealed that the firmament divides the waters under it from the waters above it. He revealed that there are waters above the firmament. And Psalm 148 tells us there are waters above the heavens.

So we should not pretend to know every secret thing. We do not make things up or add things to God's Word so we can sound smart or so we can act like we understand the scriptures better than someone else.

If God says there are waters above the firmament, then there are waters above the firmament. If God says there are waters above the heavens, then there are waters above the heavens.

Our job is not to correct God's Word. Our job is to believe God's Word.

Verse 8

Genesis 1:8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

We looked at this verse earlier, but this is the moment that God gives the firmament its name. He calls it Heaven. This is important because God not only creates, but He also defines what He Creates.

On the first day, God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. Now on the second day, God calls the firmament Heaven.

o we are seeing a pattern in the creation account. God speaks. God makes. God divides. God names. And when God names something, that shows His authority over it.

God gave parents the job and authority to name our children. God gave Adam the authority to name the animals in the garden of Eden.

The Creator has the right to define His creation.

Man does not get to rename what God has already named. Man does not get to redefine what God has already defined. God made the firmament, and God called the firmament Heaven.

That is a truth we need to understand in every area of life. God is the one who defines reality.

God defines light and darkness. God defines heaven and earth. God defines male and female. God defines marriage. God defines righteousness and sin. God defines truth and error. God defines salvation.

The world is constantly trying to change the definitions that God has already established. But man's opinion does not change God's Word. If God names or defines something, then that should settle it for us.

Genesis 1:8 And God called the firmament Heaven. **And the evening and the morning were the second day.**

Day 1 God created light and divided it from darkness. He called light day and darkness night.

Day 2 He makes the firmament and divides the waters below from the waters above.

We can hear that, but not comprehend how amazing this is...

In one day, by the Word of His mouth, God established the expanse of the entire universe. He set a boundary and structure in His creation that man cannot fully comprehend.

Man can study the heavens generation after generation for thousands of years and never understand them. But He made it all in a single day. That should humble you.

The second day of creation should cause you to worship God.

Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

When you look up into the sky, you are not looking at an accident. You are not looking at something that came from nothing by chance. You are looking at the work of God.

Every cloud, every bird that flies, every star in the night sky, every part of the heavens above us should remind us that there is a Creator who is far greater than we are.

In Genesis 1:6-8 it records the second day of creation. God speaks and commands a firmament to be made in the midst of the waters, and its purpose is to divide the waters from the waters. Then God makes the firmament and separates the waters under the firmament from the waters above the firmament. The Bible later tells us that the waters under the firmament are gathered together and called Seas, but the waters above the firmament remain above the heavens. God then calls the firmament Heaven, showing that He not only creates, but also defines what He creates. The second day ends with the phrase, “And the evening and the morning were the second day,” showing a real day in God’s order of creation.

Application

1. Believe what God has revealed.

There are details about this passage that we do not fully understand. We do not know exactly what the waters above look like. We do not know exactly how far away they are. God has not revealed every detail to us.

But He has revealed enough for us to believe Him. Just like God promised Abraham in his old age that he would have a child. There was no human understanding that could explain how that would happen. But Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.

We do not need to understand every secret thing before we trust God’s Word. If God says there are waters above the firmament, then there are waters above the firmament.

When God says that salvation is by grace through faith and that is not of works. Just take Him at His Word.

2. Let God define reality.

God called the firmament Heaven. The Creator has the right to name His creation. He has the right to say what things are.

The world is constantly trying to redefine what God has already defined. It redefines truth, sin, righteousness, marriage, male and female, and salvation. But man’s opinion does not change God’s Word.

In your life, you need to ask yourself: Am I letting God define reality, or am I letting the world define it for me?

3. Obey the God who created you.

In this passage, God speaks, and creation obeys instantly. The light, the darkness, the waters, the firmament; they obey God perfectly. But man, who was made in the image of God, hears the Word of God and refuses to obey.

That should not be true of us.

When God speaks, our response should be faith and obedience. If God tells us to believe on Jesus Christ, we should believe. If God tells us to walk in truth, we should walk in truth. If God tells us to forsake sin, we should forsake sin. If God tells us to preach the gospel, we should preach the gospel.

Creation obeyed the voice of its Creator. We should do the same.

When you go outside. Look up into the firmament of Heaven. And worship God. Let's pray.