

97-08-17a

This is Sunday, the 17th of August, 1997. As we continue our worship this morning, if you'll turn with me for our Scripture reading to Psalm 8. In our last two studies in Genesis, we've seen some of the other Scriptures that talk about God's acts of creation. We have many references to that throughout Scripture.

It is one of the defining attributes of God, that He is the Creator. And here in Psalm 8, we have another wonderful hymn of praise that recognizes God in that facet of His existence. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants, You have ordained strength. Because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor.

You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands. You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, that pass through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth.

Turn a few pages over to Psalm 24. I can't look at this scripture without hearing George Beverly Shea singing the song whose lyrics come from this psalm. Psalm 24, also a psalm of David.

The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein. For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor swung deceitfully.

He shall receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of His salvation. This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek him, who seek Your face. Lift up your heads, O you gates, and be lifted up, you everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O you gates, lift up, you everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

Selah. This is the issue that God brings before the nation of Israel when Moses presents them with this first book of the Pentateuch. As we've seen in our last two weeks of study,

the account of God's creation, which had fallen away from the consciousness of Israel during their period of bondage in Egypt, is brought to their minds by the inspired account that Moses brings to them and that God the Holy Spirit brings to us.

It stood in distinction with all of the other ideas about the universe, with all of the other accounts of creation. And it presents God as unique, and it displays His glory from the very outset. He is the first subject of the Bible.

He is the first actor, the first verb in the Bible to create, bara, only has God as its subject. There's never another actor that produces that particular action of creation. So, from the beginning, in the beginning, it's the glory of God that counts.

And what does that mean to us? It's very interesting to find out how the universe came to be and where everything came from. But what is God's point in giving us that account? It's God's glory. That's what we see in Psalm 24.

It's not just to get information and to have the facts about the origin of man and the universe, but to see that the origin is divine, that it's a part of God's plan and a part of God's purpose, and that everything in the universe is completely under God's control. We saw last week in the contrast between the truth that's presented in Genesis and the ancient myths of Babylon and Sumeria and so forth about where the universe came from, that the truth of this account is unique in presenting God as being the source and also as being completely in control. Remember last week in the Enuma Elish and the Sumerian flood story and so forth, the gods are squabbling and quibbling and running amok, and creation sort of happens as an afterthought.

Man is created because they need somebody to do the work because they're too busy having Peyton place up there in their godly realms. And they get upset with man because he's too noisy, and so they want to destroy him with a flood, but then the flood gets out of hand and they lose control of it. They're never presented as omnipotent and omniscient and as organized and predictable the way the true God is.

And we see remnants and echoes of the truth that have drifted down through these cultures but have been woven into myths and legends that don't reflect the glory and the character of the true God. So this account stands in distinction. And it's interesting because in most of the creation accounts, even in the ancient myths and legends, life is seen as coming from the sea, coming out of the chaos of the unformed world and so forth.

It can happen in various ways. It can be an action by a divine entity. It can be some sort of reproduction by a god or a demigod.

It can be the spoken word of some deity that brings something into existence. But in most of the early myths and legends, life comes from the sea and sort of happens out of

it. It comes walking ashore out of the brine.

And Genesis came out and cleared the air and defined what actually happened. And life did not come out of the sea. Life was formed in the sea by divine fiat, by the spoken word of God.

And this was a big contrast. It was a big shock. It ran counter to everything that was popular in terms of belief.

And isn't it interesting today, where does the common cultural understanding say that life came from? It came out of the primordial soup. The lightning struck the ooze and we started out as aquatic, microscopic organisms that eventually crawled up on land and took a big gulp of air and somehow did not die and reproduced and so forth. And we tend to look at the ancient myths and legends and think, well, those poor unsophisticated agricultural economy type of people, how could they have possibly known? We're so much further along and yet we have the same silly beliefs in our day.

We just have a lot of technical jargon and quote-unquote scientific evidence to support it. But the Genesis account does the same thing today that it has always done. It presents the truth of a divine creator who is outside creation, who is not defined by that creation, isn't a part of it or isn't worshipped by worshipping the creation.

He is the source and he is the origin. The application for that is the same for us as it was for the nation of Israel. We are not subject to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

God is not somehow maneuvered and manipulated by his creation. He is not a victim of circumstance in the creation. He stands outside it.

He is its creator, its organizer. He completely dominates and rules the entire thing. Any circumstance, any event that comes up in our life is only there because divine will has permitted it.

There's nothing that escapes God's notice. There's nothing that escapes his plan. There's nothing that's not incorporated into his purpose, good or bad, light or dark.

Whether it's the darkness or the light as we're going to see this morning, it's a part of God's plan and God controls it. And the application of the alternative, which is that there's a sort of a chaos that just happened to organize itself or any derivative philosophy that incorporates that idea, says there are things that are beyond God's control. There are things that God just can't work together for good.

That God is sort of a comfortable example of love and peace and benevolence and so forth, but he's not the mighty God. He's not the king of glory who establishes his throne upon the seas. And the seas throughout the Old Testament are a picture of evil, the

uncontrollable forces of nature that man can't tame, that man has no ability to superimpose his will on, but God does.

And that's a contrast that's important for us to remember, and it's one of the purposes for this account. We reviewed that and we're ready now to do what I think is the really fun stuff, and that's to go through and see the account almost word by word here in the first few verses of Genesis chapter 1. Genesis begins and begins the Bible, as I said, with God. In the beginning, God.

And that phrase in the beginning, as I think I mentioned last time, in Hebrew is ba-rashit. The prefix ba is the preposition for in, and it is attached to rashit, which is related to the Hebrew noun rosh, which means head, and it is used for a beginning. This word is not all that common in the Bible.

We find it used four times. This phrase, in the beginning, is used four times in Jeremiah, and it's talking about the reign of kings. So in Jeremiah 26.1, 27.1, and 28.1, you have the phrase, in the beginning of the reign of whoever.

There are three kings listed there, Jehoiachin and a couple of others. So it says, in the beginning, but you notice it's in the beginning of the reign. It's a modifier for another noun.

We don't ever have it in the absolute sense that we have it here in Genesis 1.1, where it stands alone as an absolute, and grammatically it's the difference between an absolute that stands alone or a construct that is somehow related and dependent on other words. So in Jeremiah, there's four times, in the beginning of the reign. It wouldn't make any sense if you didn't have the reign of the king in the sentence.

One other place where we do have rashit used in the construct, it doesn't have the preposition ba, which means in. And it has the preposition ma, or it's preceded by an m, which means from. And this is in Isaiah 46.9 and 10.

And this is an interesting passage when God says, Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is no other. I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning. Ma rashit.

And from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. It's fascinating to me to see that the only other case where we have this absolute use of rashit is related by its theme with Genesis 1.1. God is using an alliteration. He's referring back to, not an alliteration, an allusion.

He's alluding back to Genesis 1.1. He says, My purposes have stood from the beginning. I have declared the end from the beginning. One of the things that this particular passage tells us is that even in this account of the beginning, we're going to see elements of the end.

God says, I've declared the end of all things, the purpose of all things, from the very beginning. We know that one of those purposes is to declare the glory of God. The heavens declare the glory of God and the works of his hands.

So, this word ties the idea of God's creation to God's purposes, which he has declared from the beginning. The verse continues, In the beginning God created. As I have mentioned, the word God here is Elohim.

Our word God in English is a good translation of Elohim because of the way that we use it. We also use the word God with a small g to talk about Zeus and Apollos and Vulcan and the other mythological gods, pagan idols referred to as gods, and Elohim can be used in that way. Its meaning is determined by context.

And, of course, here this is God in the sense of capital G. God also has a personal name, which we will find starting in Genesis chapter 2, the tetragrammaton YHWH, which the Germans assigned the wrong vowels to and transliterated as Jehovah, which more probably is pronounced Yahweh. That's God's personal name, but he is God in the sense of capital G-O-D, and that's how he's referred to here. In the beginning God created, Barah.

There are never any materials mentioned when Barah is used. And the implication, although it's not a part of the definition of the word, but the implication is that this is creation, ex nihilo, out of nothing. And so we have, in the beginning God created, et ha-shemayim ve-et ha-aretz.

The shemayim is the heavens and the aretz is the earth. Shemayim is a dual, the I-M ending, is why we put an S on heaven and say the heavens and the earth. And the exact nature of the heavens is going to become more clear as we move forward.

But at this point, when we stop at verse 1, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. What do we have at this point? What are the heavens? Well, we tend to think scientifically. We've seen space shots from the satellites and from the lunar lander and the people on the moon looking back.

And when we think of the heavens and the earth, we think of the vast black emptiness of space and planet earth hanging there in the middle with its blue seas and atmosphere and the continents and white clouds and so forth. We think you've got the heavens, which is space, and you've got planet earth. But think for a moment about the original recipients of this letter.

If I'm a goat herd standing out there in the wilderness of Egypt or the wilderness of Palestine, and I cue this account, the heavens and the earth, what's my perspective going to be? What do I think of? Am I suspended in space looking back at a starry background and a round planet? I have a horizon line, don't I? And I've got that which is

below the horizon, which is what I'm standing on and what the goats are eating from, and I've got the sky above, the heavens and the earth. And that's the perspective that we should keep in mind. There's no harm in remembering that there is a universe, but the perspective here is you've got the solid ground and you have space above.

You have that which is solid and that which is not. If you want to look at it scientifically, you have space and matter. And, of course, that defines our universe.

Talk to any astronomer and you've either got space, which is devoid of matter, or you have matter. You have molecules and atoms and so forth. So this is fascinating even from a very scientific and physics professor point of view because God starts out creating space and matter.

Well, what is the third component in the known universe besides space and matter? If all you have is space and matter, you're sitting at absolute zero because there's no energy. There's nothing to animate the matter. There's nothing to build with.

There's nothing that can exert a force. There's nothing that can create a dynamic. There's nothing that can move the matter through the space and so forth.

Well, what do we have in verse 2? The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And then in verse 3, then God said, let there be light, and there was light. If you want to look at it from the standpoint of physics, here's your third element.

After space and matter, now you have energy. Light is energy. This is going to be the animating dynamic force that's going to set the universe in motion.

And I find this very satisfying from a scientific point of view. Scientists tend to say, well, if you're reading Genesis, you're off in myths and Hebrew legends, and you're not scientific. This is as scientific as you can get.

These are the three components of the universe. Everything else you want to define can be classified as either space, matter, or energy. And the Bible begins with that.

But before we move forward to the appearance of light in this universe, we need to take a look at verse 2. Verse 2 begins with a conjunctive waw, we like to say, or a conjunctive waw, if you're German. A little downstroke w, which has been the source of controversy like you cannot imagine. This one little downstroke, it looks sort of like a shepherd's staff, has been the object of endless amounts of analysis and argumentation back and forth.

It boils down to this. What is the relationship between Genesis 1.1 and Genesis 1.2? In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now, the earth was without form and void.

It was *tohu wa mohu*. Well, was it that way when God initially created it, or did it become null and void? Is there a gap between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2? Well, what people believe is that this little conjunction, *waw*, will tell us whether or not that there is a gap between there or not. I think I may have mentioned the gap theory before.

In fact, I'm sure I have. There was no such thing as the gap theory until people began digging up dinosaur bones and counting the layers of strata in the walls of the Grand Canyon and so forth and deciding that the earth was exceedingly old and that there wasn't enough room in the biblical account to fit dinosaurs and cavemen and so forth. So people began looking for a way to pry open the Bible account and allow for ages and eons for the formation of stalagmites and stalactites and the cutting of the big Colorado River and so forth.

And here's where they found it. Ah, well, let's just stick a crowbar in here and pry in a big amount of time between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2. This way, we can account for the vast geological age of the earth. Another method is to expand the definition of a day and say, well, a day with the Lord is a thousand years.

And so each of these days of creation, maybe that was an epoch. Maybe that was a geological age. And we can shoehorn in a whole lot more time than what the Bible account seems to say on the surface.

But this is a late interpretation that nobody thought of until they had a need to try to lever in some time here. The other argument that there must have been something that took place in the interim is a passage over in Isaiah. Isaiah 45, verse 18 and 19.

Let's turn to that. Isaiah 45, 18 and 19. Thus says the Lord who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited.

I am the Lord and there is no other. And so forth. I have not spoken in secret in the dark place of the earth.

I did not say to the seed of Jacob, seek me in vain. Well, the word in vain there, or whatever your English translation has, is *tohu*. The same word we find in Genesis 1, 2. So the argument is, from verse 18, God who did not create it, *tohu*.

And yet Genesis 1, 2 says, now the earth was *tohu*. So the idea is, well, God created it perfect, everything was fine, and then something bad happened and the earth became *tohu*, *wabohu*. And this has more weight because it's a biblical argument rather than an argument from the observations of science, and one that we need to take a look at.

First of all, let's find out what *tohu wabohu* means. What light does the Bible shed on this phrase? The word *tohu* is used 11 times in Isaiah. I'll give these to you briefly in case you want to go look these up.

This is a great thing to do, is do a word study. When you want to find out what a word means, find the other places in the Bible where it's used and try to get a flavor for its meaning in context. So in Isaiah 24.10, in Isaiah 29.21, Isaiah 34.11, Isaiah 40.17, and verse 23.

So you have Isaiah 40.17 and 23. You have Isaiah 41.29, Isaiah 44.9, Isaiah 45.18 and 19, Isaiah 49.4, and Isaiah 59.4. Those are 11 places where *tohu* is used. And the root idea, I will tell you what I think it means in context, and you can examine those passages and see if this holds up.

It has the core idea of emptiness. It is something that lacks inhabitants, that lacks population, that lacks activity. It's an area where nothing is going on.

People have read more into this word. They have read into it chaos or waste. You can look at these passages and see if there's that much weight in the word.

The idea is emptiness. This word is used in Deuteronomy 32.10. And the nice thing about some of these passages is that there will be a parallel with another word. We do this a lot in the Psalms, where you have parallel distics, or two lines that say the same thing in different words.

We find out the meaning of an obscure word by looking at the parallel to it in the other line. So in Deuteronomy 32.10, we find *tohu* in parallel with *Midbar*, which is the word for desert, the place of wandering for Israel. And in 32.10, it says, talking about Jacob, he found him in a desert land, and in the wasteland, it says in the New King James.

He howled in wilderness. He encircled him, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. He found him in a desert land, he found him in the emptiness.

He found him in a place where there was nothing. There was no provision, nothing to sustain, nothing to make his existence anything other than miserable. But you can see that the New King James translators put the idea of wasteland in this, and of course they're drawing on Genesis 1.2 and their understanding of that.

But there are three parallel lines here, the desert land, the wasteland, and the howling wilderness. The word wilderness there is *yeshimon*, which you often find translated as wilderness. It's not civilized.

There's no city, there's no gates, there's no roads. It's just out in the open. So the idea of emptiness seems the most conservative thing to see in the word there.

We find this word used in Job 6.18. Job 6.18, you have Job speaking here and appealing for pity and so forth. He says, he talks in verse 14, To him who is afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friend, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. My brothers are dealt deceitfully like a brook, like the streams of the brooks that pass away.

Verse 16 of Job 6, Which are dark because of the ice, and into which the snow vanishes. When it is warm, they cease to flow. When it is hot, they vanish from their place.

The paths of their way turn aside. They go nowhere and perish. Well, that nowhere is Tohu.

This is the place of death, the place of vanishing for a straying traveler in Job 6.18. It's also a wonderful passage describing the fair-weather friend, isn't it? They vanish away like the snow when it melts and drips into a crack and goes away. When it's warm, they cease to flow. When it's hot, they vanish from their place.

Job was obviously feeling pretty forsaken at that point. One of the passages I mentioned in Isaiah where Tohu is used is instructive, Isaiah 24.10. One of the reasons we're spending a little bit of time on Tohu here is we're trying to resolve for ourselves this whole idea of whether there was a great event that took place between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2, whether God, for example, the fall of Satan occurred and God cast Satan to the earth and he laid it waste. Isaiah 24.10 can start in verse 7. The new wine fills, the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh.

The mirth of the tambourine ceases, the noise of the jubilant ends. The joy of the harp ceases. They shall not drink wine with a song.

Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. The city of confusion is broken down. Every house is shut up so that none may go in.

Well, that word confusion is Tohu, the city of emptiness. It's a deserted city. It's broken down.

The houses are boarded up. Nobody goes in. It's empty.

At least that's how I would translate Tohu in this context. What do you have when you have a ghost town, when you have the houses boarded up and nobody goes in? It's broken down. It looks like Dresden after the bombing in World War II.

Tohu. You have Job 26 and verse 7. Job 26.7. This is one of the poetic portions of Job talking about the actions of God in His omnipotence. Also a reference to creation, actually.

Verse 5. Job 26.5. The dead tremble, those under the waters and those inhabiting them. Sheol is naked before Him, and destruction has no covering. He stretches out the north over empty space, over Tohu.

He stretches out the north over Tohu, over nothingness. He hangs the earth on nothing. He binds up the water in His thick clouds, yet the clouds are not broken under it, and so forth.

And if you think about the north, once again, not from the standpoint of a rotating earth and the north pole, but think about someone standing on the earth. How did they know which direction was north? They didn't have a lot of trees with moss growing on the north side. How did they know which direction was north? Well, in the night sky, you had an axis of rotation that the heavenly bodies moved around and they could see it.

Israel, Palestine was in the northern hemisphere. Egypt is in the northern hemisphere. So there was an interesting point in the sky around which everything seemed to revolve, and that was the north.

And someone standing on the earth, looking up in the sky at night, saw this focal point. Why does the Bible have so much to say about the north, or the sides of the north, or it seems as though God's dwelling place is in the north? Well, that was the most interesting place in the sky. That was the point around which everything else revolved.

God suspends the north over nothingness. God is the creator of the north. This magical point, this special point up in the sky, God created it.

God suspended it over the *tohu*, over the emptiness. And it's another reminder of the true view of God as the creator and originator of all things, even the mystical things, even the unknowable and the mysterious things. God creates those and stretches them out.

So these are some of the uses of *tohu*. It's important to see this distinction and this use of the word in the Old Testament. Why? Because it doesn't mean waste.

It doesn't mean something that used to be good and got destroyed. There are lots of good words for that in Hebrew. This emphasizes the idea of a vacancy, of something that ought to be full and is not.

Here's a city that was built to house people, but there are no people in it. Here is the vacant place under the north. Well, there's supposed to be the ground.

There are supposed to be people living on the planet. But that north has been suspended over this empty place. The wilderness, the place where the travelers go, it's vacant.

It's an emptiness. So the suggestion is, when we do this word study and look at this idea of *tohu*, that it's not trying to describe something that has been laid waste or something that used to be organized and is now chaotic. It's vacant.

It's unpopulated. It does not have the normal complement of inhabitants. You can also see from these passages how people will read other meanings into it.

They say, well, see, here's a city. There used to be people, and now they've been cleared out. So that's why it's vacant and so forth.

But the emphasis of the word is on the emptiness as a status. In fact, one of the lesser known facts about Genesis 1-2 is that *tohu* and *bohu* are not adjectives. They are nouns.

In English, these two words would serve as predicate nominatives. They're not predicate adjectives. *Tohu* and *bohu* are nouns.

So rather than saying the earth was void, void is an adjective. A good translation, my translation, is emptiness. The earth was emptiness.

It's a noun. The word *bohu* is very rare, and it always occurs in conjunction with *tohu*, and it's because of the alliteration. We say *helter-skelter* and this kind of thing, and *bohu* is one of those words that gets tacked on to *tohu* when you do find it.

It only occurs a few times in Scripture. But this is the idea. It's emptiness.

It's without meaningful substance. There are figurative uses of *tohu*, such as in Isaiah 29-31, another one of those 11 uses, where it's used of conversation. This is a conversation that has no substance, has no good ideas that inhabit the conversation.

It's used of idols in Isaiah 44-49. These idols are a wind, a *ruach*. We'll be talking about *ruach* here pretty soon.

But the idols of the pagans that surround Israel are wind, and their images are emptiness. They are *tohu*. There's no value.

There's no meaning. There's no substance in the idol worship of these surrounding cultures. Even the description of the suffering servant in Isaiah 49, when he performs his labors in pursuit of fulfilling God's plan, the suffering servant's labors wind up appearing to be empty in Isaiah 49-54.

There is apparent futility in the suffering servant's labor. It doesn't appear to have accomplished anything of substance. Returning to Isaiah 45, 18 and 19, that's where we went initially.

You remember it says God did not create it to be a chaos or a void, depending on how they translate that. What is the idea that God is expressing? Thus says the Lord, Isaiah 45, 18, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it to be *tohu*. Who did not create it and leave it empty.

What's the next phrase? Who formed it to be inhabited. He didn't form it to be empty. He formed it to be inhabited.

I am the Lord and there is no other. I have not spoken in secret in a dark place of the earth. I did not say to the seed of Jacob, seek me in *tohu*.

Seek me in the emptiness. We find the meaning of this in that preceding phrase. God did not say to Israel, look for me in a dark place of the earth.

Look for me in a void. God has put the knowledge of himself in the heart of every man. God has made his presence and his power known through acts of creation.

We saw that in Romans 1. God can be sought and found because God has put substance of himself out there where it can be seen. God doesn't tell us, seek me, but he puts nothing out there. This, by the way, is also an argument, if you understand it, against the reformed idea that people are commanded to seek God, but there's no way that they can find him because he's unattainable because of depravity.

God says, I haven't told people, seek me in the tohu, where there's no chance and no hope of finding him. He's out there. His presence and his person are visible and manifest, and he wants us to seek and to find.

So, none of these is a clincher. None of these is a big sledgehammer that just squashes all of the other possible interpretations. But these verses and these uses of these words tend us and lean us in the direction of understanding that what Genesis 1 is giving us is an account of what God did, and it is a process.

The very fact that creation took place over six days tells us that there is a progressive accomplishment of God's purpose. He didn't speak and say, let there be the universe, and everything was in place. The earth, the sky, the firmament, the animals, the fish, the birds, man.

God could have done that. With a single statement, God could have brought everything around us into existence. But God spreads this out.

Do you think that God got tired on day one and had to kind of wait a while before he exerted himself to do the things he did on day two? Why did God space it out over six days? There's a purpose in everything that God does, and this is an account of a process, of a gradual finishing of a project that God accomplishes. And so it's natural that in the beginning, when God creates the heavens and the earth, they're not yet complete. They're not yet inhabited.

God didn't stop after day one. As it says in Isaiah 45, he didn't create the earth to be Tohu, but that's how it started out, but that wasn't God's purpose, and God did not leave it unfinished. God did not leave it empty.

So it is best, and there are numerous other arguments that don't really have much by way of meaningful application in our minds that can be brought forward, that this is what we call a wow consecutive here, that this is an unbroken account from Genesis 1.1 to 1.2, and that it's describing a process that God went through to create the earth and then to finish it. That's what he does with man, doesn't he? God did not speak man into

existence. He did not say on the sixth day, let there be man, and there was man.

And God saw man, that he was good. It doesn't happen that way, does it? He forms him out of the dust of the ground. He starts with dust, which is not a man.

He finishes the body, completes it, which is still not a man. Then he bends over and breathes into the nostrils of that not yet living body, the breath of life. Well, God did not create man to be an inanimate object, but that's how he started out.

God did not create man to be dust of the earth, but that's how he starts out. And so we see this pattern going all the way through the account. Now, that leaves us with a fresh problem.

Well, if there's not a gap between Genesis 1.1 and 1.2, then where did all the dinosaurs come from? Where did all the geological evidence of vast antiquity of the earth come from, and so on? Well, as we go through and complete the study of the first few chapters of Genesis, that will become clear. Suffice it for now to say that there is plenty of room in the biblical account to explain and actually predict, in some cases, the existence of all of these things. And we'll note those as they come up.

We'll have to suspend that for now or we'll never get through verse 2. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, without occupants, it was empty, or emptiness, to try to bring out the idea of the noun here. The earth was emptiness and void, or voidness.

I don't know how to make another noun out of bohu, but those are both nouns. It was empty and formlessness, you might say. And darkness was on the face of the deep.

And we have the realization here that in this earth that God had created, shrouded in darkness, we have not only the idea that it is not space, but that it is water or watery. The darkness is on the face of the deep. It's not on the face of the land.

It's not on the face of the ground. Darkness is on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God hovers over the face of the waters.

Well, what are we to make of this? We'll pause and take our break. And when we come back, we'll find out what's going on in this watery emptiness. And exactly what the Bible means by ruach ha elohim, hovering over that mass.

Let's pause and take a break.