

# Genesis 1:1-2

## **Purpose:**

Genesis is written by God to teach us. Genesis is:

- History. This is recorded fact. It's like a photo album; we see snapshots of actual events.
- Theology. We learn about who God is. We see His nature, His power, His purpose and His interactions with us.
- Anthropology. We learn about who we are. We see our nature, our limitations, our place and role.

God was there as history unfolded, so He is able to tell us about it. God knows Himself and wants us to know Him, so He is able and willing to reveal Himself. God created us and knows us, so He is able to teach us about ourselves.

## **Form:**

Genesis is written as a story. A story focuses on people and events. A story leaves gaps; it zooms in and out. A story sometimes goes into great detail, and sometimes doesn't.

Genesis is not a detailed, scientific analysis. It is not a transcript, detailing every word and action.

## **Interpretation:**

To understand Genesis, we need:

- Faith. Allow God to instruct you. *Hebrews 11:3*.  
Faith is not the absence of fact or study; rather, it is an attitude of humble dependence.
- Read. Allow the rest of the Bible to clarify. *Acts 17:11*  
Genesis is only understood in the context of the rest of the Bible story.
- Study. Allow outside sources to sharpen the picture.  
Language studies, historical documents, etc. can help give color and nuance to the story.

**Genesis 1:1:** This is a clear and unambiguous statement. There is no uncertainty at all. There is a God, and that God created the world.

This statement frames the rest of the Bible; it is the foundation of the whole story of human history.

Other passages in the Bible reiterate this truth.

*-John 1:3                    -Psalm 148:1-6*

**Significance: God has power and authority.**

He is able to create and manipulate the world in supernatural ways. As Creator, He has the right to control the world.

**Genesis 1:2:** This is mysterious and undefined. Where did the waters come from? What is the 'deep'? What does it mean that the earth was 'formless and empty'?

This statement forces us to recognize our limitations. There is much we can't understand, or won't be told by God. We must choose to be OK with that.

Other passages speak to dealing with the mysteries.

*-Luke 18:17   -Psalm 131   -Luke 10:21   -1 Cor. 13:11-12*

**Significance: We must be content with level of unknowing**

We are like children. We can understand some things, but not others. As we mature, we are able to understand more. But we never will understand everything. We must recognize that we won't be able to completely understand all there is to know. And we must choose to be satisfied with that level of unknowing.