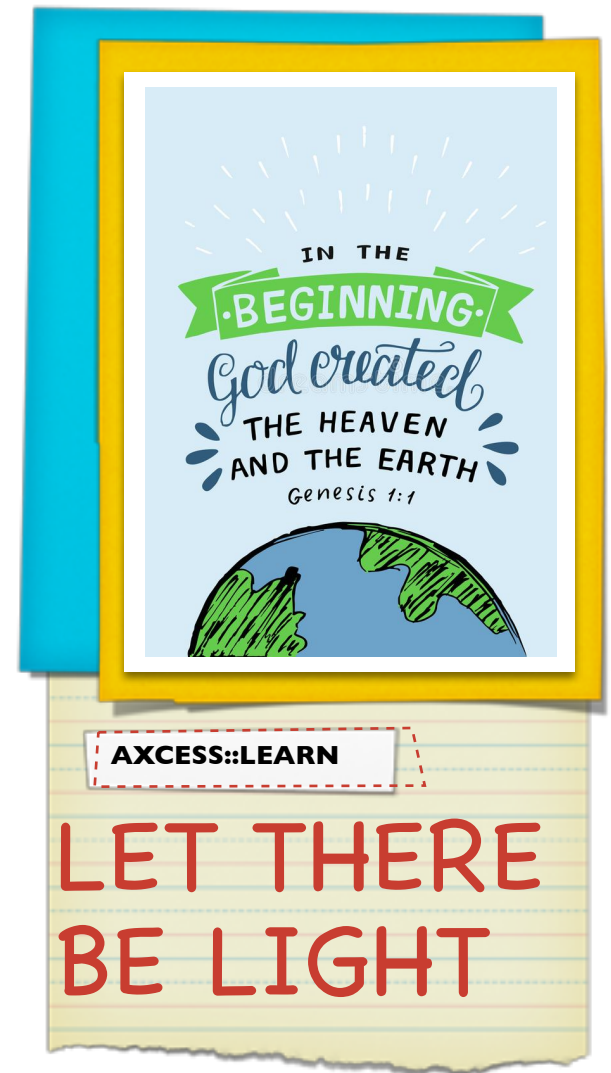




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≥< **So many questions** - How old is the earth really? How could earth be only 6000 years of age while scientific data tells us that the universe is closer to about 14 billion years old? How did everything come into existence? How could God have been there already “in the beginning?” Who created God? What can I learn from the Creation story?

## GENESIS 1:1-5

≥< **v.1**- “In the beginning God (*Elohim*) created the heavens and the earth.”

The heavens and the earth, or the material universe, had a beginning. They were created by God. When were they created?...In the beginning! The first day of the Creation story may not have occurred at “the beginning.”

≥< **v.2** - “The earth was formless and void (*tohu wabohu*). Darkness (*choshek*) was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit (*Ruach*) of God hovered over the surface of the water.”

How long did the earth sit there lifeless, dark and chaotic? We aren’t told. But at some point God decided to spark it with life and give it order.

\*\*The Hebrew word *Ruach* is properly translated as Spirit, wind, or moving force.

≥< **v.3** - “Then God said, ‘Let there be light (*owr*)’; and there was light.”

The Hebrew word for light here means “illumination, enlightenment”. It is closely associated with life and joy and goodness. With this understanding let’s look back at the Hebrew word for darkness in verse 2: *Choshek* expresses a sense of blindness, misery, falsehood, and ignorance. It means “something that leads to death and destruction.”

≥< **v.4** - “God saw that the light (*owr*) was good (*tov*), and God divided the light from the darkness.”

In these verses, what God created was illumination and enlightenment, of which He is the source. Then it was separated from its opposite: darkness, blindness and falsehood. Note that God did not create darkness. Essentially the darkness is nothingness, no life, void.

So what exactly is this illumination and enlightenment? It could very well have been the primordial essence of God that we call the *shekinah* glory, since He was simply there.

There is no reason not to suggest that this *owr* in the first day of Creation is the same light that will be in the first day of the *new* creation, as revealed in Revelation 21 & 22:

*“The city has no need for the sun or the moon to shine on it, because God’s Sh’kinah gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it.”*

-Revelation 21:23-24

≥< **v.5** - "God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. So there was evening, and there was morning, one day.”

Hebrews have always considered the day to begin at sunset, and end at the next sunset. That is the new day begins in the evening. In this verse, evening came first; marking the transition from one day to the next.

Throughout the Bible, the Hebrew system of measuring days is being used. So when reading through the Torah and the New Testament Gospels we need to keep this in mind and set aside our own modern methods of timekeeping if we want to understand the timing of events.

## WHO IS GOD?

The first thing we must understand when studying the Torah is the word *God*, because there are two primary ways in which we can know God: by His name and by His characteristics. By means of the four dimensions that make up our physical universe (length, width, depth & time) we can only know God by His name and characteristics. Yet, by means of God’s Spirit, we can “know” Him in another way, which is available only to believers.

This *Ruach* way of knowing God incorporates an additional fifth dimension of reality, which does not exist naturally in the four-dimensional universe that we live in.

In our day’s earnest cry for world peace, an interfaith movement has gained steam. And the basis for this movement is the concept that no matter the name used for God/god (whether that is Buddha, Krishna, Brahma, Allah, or even Yahweh/Yehoveh), we’re all essentially speaking of the same being, just from different cultural or language perspectives. This is NOT true. For not only are the meanings of the *names* of each of these various gods completely different, but also the characteristics and attributes of each of these gods is different. Therefore, it is impossible that they could be the same god.

STUDY NOTE \*\*\**Italicized words in brackets interlaced in the text are the Hebrew words that were used in the oldest known manuscripts. Approaching Scripture through the Hebrew mindset and context can help us to appreciate more fully and to properly interpret what the passage is actually intending to communicate.*