

## 1. THE FIRST BEGINNING

The beginning is always a good place to start. But maybe I am speaking of a different beginning than the beginning you had in mind. I'm talking about our respective tours-of-duty in mom's **womb**—the beginning of our lives. So, if I may be so bold, what memories linger from your nine-month sojourn? Were you bored? Lonely? Impatient? Was it fun? Sorry, you won't get much help from me. Some people claim to have a vivid memory of life inside the womb. I don't.

What if God had given us tiny cameras during **gestation**? Before leaving we could have snapped a photo from inside the womb as a keepsake. Do you think such a photo would ever hang in a photo gallery. Of course, all our photos would show exactly the same thing: **amniotic fluid**. We would all use the similar words to describe what they reveal: *dark, shapeless, empty*.

So, what's the point? Well, that stark photo of nothing is the point. But you will need a Bible to understand why. Read *Genesis 1:1-2*.

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The Bible's opening verses give us a good picture of another beginning. Without stating the exact date or the location where it all happened, these opening words tell us the creation event was very real. We are at the beginning of the story of our universe. This is a **finite** moment; it's not a myth. The story line is familiar to most people. It has a beginning, a middle, and an end, which is comforting. You and I have experience with beginnings—the beginning of a race, the beginning of a movie, the beginning of a marriage, or a new life. Beginnings are filled with promise, hope, and a few surprises. Even though God is eternal, the creation story will be understandable because it has a beginning. All people have a beginning, a middle, and sort of an end. But let's not get too far ahead of ourselves by talking about the middle or end just yet.

The word that follows *In the beginning*, is even more important. That word is *God*. From the moment we read that word, there should be no doubt about whose story this is. This is God's story. And with that tiny shred of information, the story of how our universe began is launched.

It doesn't even take a whole chapter before we realize that God's story is also our story. It includes us and, in many ways, it is about our situation in life. God's Word belongs to us. It's a

gift, much like the created universe was a gift from God. It is ours to keep pure, test, treasure, apply, share, and defend.

Our first Bible impression is an image that looks similar to that imaginary photo taken inside our mother's womb. Moses, the inspired writer of Genesis, described it as dark, shapeless, and without substance. Nothing was there, ... except God. God was there.

To be clear, this is not God's beginning; it is the beginning of his created universe. God is *timeless*. The Bible's word for timeless is ***eternal***. His creative work—the entire universe—was a function of his eternal will. To put that another way, our universe was always a twinkle in God's Fatherly eye. He is rightly proud of that, ... and he's hungry for our attention. The Creator wants us to learn about his creation work. That's why he had his story written in words that people can read and understand. God's words are true. They are powerful. They are life (Deuteronomy 32:47). They matter. They change us. They change the lives of other people. The effort we put into reading the Bible will be well worth our time. Expect to be blessed every time you study it.

END VIDEO. BEGIN CONVERSATIONS.

## REMEMBER WHEN ...

What is the earliest thing you remember in your life?

## WORD POWER: **womb; gestation; amniotic fluid; finite; eternal**

## FROM THE TOUR

The Bible contains 66 individual books. Why do you think God told us his story in such detail?

Why is it important to know that our eternal God was there before the universe began?

What blessings can we expect whenever we read his Word from the Bible?

## LEARN MORE

Read *Psalm 102:25*. Why is it a mistake to believe that the theory of evolution explains the beginning of the universe?

Read *Romans 1:20*. Give examples of how the wonders of the universe help us understand more about the "divine nature" and "eternal power" of our God.

Read *Hebrews 11:3*. Why is faith a game-changer for understanding how we got here?

## TAKE-AWAYS

Finish this sentence: After studying this Bible text, I think our prayer should thank God for ...

Consider how you would explain that God created all things to a friend.



In the beginning  
you laid the foundations of the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

*Psalm 102:25*