



FOUNDATIONS

Midrash on Genesis 1-2

Study 4:

“The seven days of creation”

Day Two

“And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse ‘sky.’ And there was evening and there was morning—the second day” (Genesis 1:6-8).

Before a baby is born it is submerged in the waters of its mother’s womb. It has been given natural life from the moment of its conception and it will be born of water. However, the “spiritual water” of the new birth from the Spirit of God has yet to be formed within the soul of that baby foetus in the womb. Although we see an exception in John the Baptist who was “filled with the Spirit from his mother’s womb” the fact remains that every human being born into this world is under the power of sin, spiritually unregenerated and under the judgment of God. David the Psalmist said, *“Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (Psalm 51:5).* Jeremiah also said, *“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)* David also said, *“Even from the womb the wicked go astray. They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies” (Psalm 58:3).*

The Bible is very clear that there is a natural birth and a spiritual birth. One is from below and of this world while the other is from above. Indeed the Lord Jesus Himself said that there was an “expanse” as it were separating the two kinds of birth, one kind produced by the “water” of human birth and the other kind produced by the “water” of the Spirit of God (John 3:5). There is the nature of the old creation and the nature of the new creation and God separates the two. Indeed the Lord Jesus also said that new wine was for new wineskins and that to put new wine into a patched up old wine skin would not be sufficient to hold the new wine. In fact the old wineskin would break. In the new creation God does a brand new work. He does not try to patch up the old nature but brings to birth in the spirit and soul a new nature, His very own likeness and nature. That nature of course is the very same nature that Jesus Himself has and is clearly seen in the fruit of the Spirit in the life of everyone who has been born from above.

The Lord Jesus emphasised the absolute necessity of the new birth when He said, *“Except a man be born again (from above) he cannot see (perceive or enter into) the kingdom of God” (John 3:3)* Within us there is no natural ability to distinguish

between what is pleasing to God and what is not pleasing to Him. As it is written, *"The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not (cannot) submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God"* (Romans 8:7-8).

The "water" of the natural birth and the things of the flesh are clearly separate from the "water" of the spiritual birth and the things of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus put it this way, *"I tell you the truth unless a man is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit"* (John 3:5-6) As it is also written, *"He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him"* (1 Corinthians 6:17) Again the Lord Jesus said, *"The Spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are life"* (John 6:63) So then there is a natural birth here below and a spiritual birth from above and God distinguishes between the two consequently we see this illustrated when God separates the waters above from the waters below forming an expanse between the two. God is clearly telling us even from the beginning of creation that there is a natural birth from below and a spiritual birth from above.

In the Bible water is used as an allegory for the life giving power of the Holy Spirit. Water also refers to the power of God's Word to cleanse and renew the heart and mind. Through the Word of God the Holy Spirit separates us from the world, the flesh and the devil. At God's command light came into being and God separated that light from the darkness. In the same way at God's command His word goes to work separating in us the things that are soulish, devilish natural from the things that are Godly and spiritual. As it is written, *"Having been washed by the water of the Word"* (Ephesians 5:26) and again it is written, *"He chose to give us birth through the Word of Truth"* (James

1:18). Again we read, *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your word...I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You...The entrance of Your word gives light, it gives understanding to the simple"* (Psalm 119:9,10,130).

Indeed it is only through God's Word that we receive faith as it is also written, *"So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word (Rhema) of God"* (Romans 10:17). For faith to come there must be a personal revelation (Rhema) to our spirit that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God and the only way to God. As it is written, *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12) The Lord Jesus Himself also said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* (John 14:6). Indeed the apostle John tells us concerning the power of God's Word to convert the soul that *"these (the scriptures) are written that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and that by believing you may have life in His name"* (John 20:31). So then in the work of the new birth both the Holy Spirit and God's Word work together to produce the new creation in Christ. As it is also written, *"He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit"* (Titus 3:5b).

Now we also read that, *"God called the expanse "sky."*

This expanse would be "the heavenly realms" or that domain or expanse of air just above the surface of the earth. This we would call the "air." It is the same word used for the air through which television and radio waves pass. It is little wonder that television pollutes the minds and hearts of billions of people around the world with its adultery, immorality, violence, sodomy, licentiousness and materialistic values. While

Television is also being used to preach the gospel primarily most of the so called TV preachers peddle the Word of God for profit bringing the way of truth into disrepute and making the word born again a household joke!

In the Bible Satan himself is called “the ruler of the kingdom of the air” or “The Prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2). This expanse is the domain of Satan and his fallen angels. These are “the rulers, the authorities, the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” and those whom every true believer has to wrestle with everyday (Ephesians 6:12).

This expanse called “sky” is the first heaven. The second heaven is the stellar heavens including the planets and the solar system itself. The Third heaven is the very throne room of God Himself. It was to this realm that Paul himself was taken. At that time he was not sure whether he was in the body or out of the body. Time as we know it on earth became obsolete for Paul and he heard things in paradise that were “inexpressible things that man is not permitted to tell” (2 Corinthians 12:1-4). Paul also said that if he were absent from the body then he would be with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6-9).

This realm where God lives then is the third heaven that is way above the planets including the solar system and the universe itself. It was to this realm that Jesus ascended after His resurrection, a realm where Jesus had pre-existed with the Father before He became flesh and dwelt among men. This realm also is the destiny of every true believer whose bodies have not yet “fallen asleep in Christ.” The Lord Jesus Himself said that this would be so when He said, *“Do not let your hearts be troubled, Trust in God; trust also in Me. In My father’s house are many*

mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:1-3).

In Genesis the word “heaven” is literally rendered “heavens” denoting that there is more than one heavenly realm. God himself created all things including the heavens and the earth. He created the spiritual world of heavenly beings including the angels and that realm where time, as we know it on earth does not exist. God’s plan of Salvation was an eternal reality for it is written that, “the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world.”

So then the expanse between the waters called “sky” is also the realm where the angels of God and Satan are engaged in perpetual warfare against each other. In the Old Testament we read where the Prince of Persia withstood Daniel for twenty- one days to hinder the answer to Daniel’s prayers. It took twenty-one days for the angels of God to break through the ranks of the fallen angels to bring the answer to Daniel’s prayer. This was a battle in the heavenly realms! Sometimes these “spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” hinder the answers to our prayers. If our prayers seem to go unanswered it could well be that there are spiritual beings battling in the heavenly realms on our behalf. As it is written, *“Are not angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?”* (Hebrews 1:14).

One thing we always need to keep in mind as believers is that God has raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus and that all things are under His feet and under ours as well because we are in the body of Christ. (Ephesians 1:19-23 2:6)

Ultimate victory over everything Satan throws at us is assured and even in this life we can overcome Him by the power of Jesus' indestructible life. Remember that the Lord Jesus also said, *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven"* (Luke 10:18-20). Of course the Lord Jesus was not speaking about literal snakes and scorpions at all but about the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms that are at war with us. As believers we are at war with Satan but we can overcome him as it is written, *"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; and did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death"* (Revelation 12:11).

And so we read, *"So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it"* showing us that God always separates in us the things of the Spirit from those things that are "earthly, un-spiritual and of the devil." Through the power of the Spirit in us these things are crucified and rendered powerless to enslave us any longer. In that sense we have the power to tread on the "snakes" and "scorpions" that seek to destroy our strong position in Christ. The devil may be able to kill our body if God permits but we will not be dead but asleep. We are absent from the body but at home with the Lord.

Surely it is absolutely essential that we must be born again because heaven and hell are eternal realities and man, made

in God's image and likeness, like God will live forever even after the body dies either in heaven or in the lake of fire. As it is written, *"Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment"* (Hebrews 9:27). It is also written, *"How shall we escape if we ignore such a great Salvation"* (Hebrews 2:3) and again it is written, *"So as the Holy Spirit says: Today, if you hear His voice do not harden your hearts"* (Hebrews 3:7a).

Again it is written, *"If any man is in Christ he is a brand new creation, the old has gone and the new has come."* Are you a new creation in Christ right now? Has the Holy Spirit and the Word of God separated you from a life of sin, unrighteousness and rebellion against God? Are you a "heaven dweller" or is your life consisting in the things of this life and by nature you are still an "earthly dweller?" Is your mind and heart fixed only on "earthly things?" Can it be said of you that you live as an enemy of the cross of Christ whose destiny is destruction, whose god is your stomach, and you glory in the shameful things, whose mind is on earthly things?

It is only the power of God's Word that can change us from a natural, carnal man into a truly spiritual man. Unless you have been born of the water and of the Spirit you will never see the kingdom of God, either understand it in this world or enter into it in the world to come. Indeed it is written, *"Except a man be born again from above he will never see the kingdom of God...So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so."*

BLOW THE TRUMPET IN ZION

" For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ "

