

The First Words of Genesis 1:1 Are Not “In the Beginning”

The first word of the Bible is not “in the beginning.” It never was. For 3,000 years, the original Hebrew has concealed a name. A name that points directly to Jesus Christ. And almost no English Bible has ever revealed it. Once you see what Moses wrote in the very first word of Genesis, you will understand why John opened his gospel with the same secret. The Bible has been one unified story from word number one.

Let me show you the first verse of the Bible. Genesis 1:1 was written in ancient biblical Hebrew around 1,400 BC. In your English Bible, it reads, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Nine English words, but the original Hebrew is even shorter, just seven words: Elohim, hashim. And every one of those Hebrew words is doing something the English version cannot do. They are not merely describing creation. They are announcing a code, a pattern that runs through the entire Bible.

Let me show you what the very first word says. The first word of the Bible is בְּרֵאשִׁית (bereshit, pronounced beer-sheet). It is a compound word formed by adding the prefix *be-* ("in" or "at") to *reshit*. Most English Bibles translate it as "in the beginning." But that is not what bereshit actually means. In Hebrew, bereshit literally means "head" or "top." Because of this, the word *reshit* often conveys not just a starting point but the "first," "chief," "head," or "best" part of something.

The same word (*reshit*) appears in Proverbs 8:22, where wisdom says, "The Lord possessed me at the *reshit* of his way." The same root appears in Deuteronomy 26:2, where the Israelites are commanded to bring the *reshit*, the first fruits of their harvest, to the Lord. *Rishit* is not merely a starting point. It is the most important thing, the highest priority, the chief part. So when Genesis 1:1 begins with bereshit, it does not mean "in the beginning." It means something closer to the first fruit, or by means of the chief one, or through the principal thing.

Now hold that thought, because what the Bible hints at in its very first word is that creation itself was made through someone, a first fruit, a chief, a principal one. In ancient Jewish tradition, the rabbis spent centuries studying the very first word of the Torah, and they noticed something the rest of us have walked past. The word bereshit in Hebrew has six letters: bet, resh, aleph, shin, yod, and tav. Then read what the apostle John writes in the very first line of the New Testament. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made.

Did you catch that? Genesis says bereshit, meaning "in the beginning," and presents the first fruit God created. John says that in the beginning the word was already there, and through him

everything was made. The Hebrew Bible opens with a hint, and the Greek New Testament offers the answer.

Christ, the firstborn of all creation, the first fruit, and the principal one, was the *reshit* through whom God made the world. The first word of Genesis always pointed to him. Now look at the second word, בָּרָא (*barra*). It means “to create” or “to shape,” but not in the way you create a sandwich or write a poem. In Hebrew, *barra* is unique in that it is used only with God as the subject.

No human in the entire Hebrew Bible ever performs *barra*. You and I can יָצַר (*yatsar*) “to form” and עָשָׂה (*assa*) “to make.” We can build, shape, fashion, and craft. But we cannot *barra*, because *barra* means creating something out of nothing. It is creation that is not assembled from existing materials. It is creation that calls into existence what was not there before. A sculptor needs marble; a carpenter needs wood; a poet needs words; a composer needs sound. But God needed nothing. He spoke, and what was not became. That is *barra*.

Thus, Genesis 1:1 tells you, in its second word, something no other religion or philosophy has ever truly believed. The universe is not eternal. It was spoken into existence by a word. The same word John would later identify as Christ himself.

Now look at the third word, אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*), God. *Elohim* is one of the strangest words in the Hebrew Bible because, in Hebrew grammar, it is plural rather than singular. The Hebrew word for “one” is אֶחָד (*echad*). The Hebrew word for “God” is אֱלֹהָה (*Eloha*). But Genesis chooses neither of those. It chooses *Elohim*, “Gods” in the plural, yet always uses singular verbs when referring to the true God.

In Genesis 1:1, the verb *barra* is singular. He created. So the verse literally reads, “In the beginning, “Gods” created the heavens and the earth.” Plural noun, singular action. This is not a grammatical mistake. This is a doctrinal whisper. 3,000 years before the New Testament would spell out the doctrine of the Trinity, Moses opens the Bible with a word that holds the mystery in shadow. One God, multiple persons, singular will. The first verse of the Bible already points to a Father, a Son, and a Spirit long before the New Testament names them.

Now step back from the seven words and look at the whole pattern. The first verse of the Bible says *bereshit*, the first fruit, the chief one, the principal one, *barra*, created out of nothing, *Elohim*, the plural singular god created the הַשָּׁמַיִם (*Hashamayim*) and the הָאָרֶץ (*ha'aretz*), the heavens and the earth. All of this is in a single sentence, just seven Hebrew words.

Moses has just told you that creation was made by a triune God, that the world was spoken into existence from nothing, that at the heart of the act was a first fruit, a principal one through whom everything came, that the universe has both a heavenly and an earthly dimension, and that the creator is one yet plural in his being. This is the most theologically dense sentence in any sacred literature on earth, and almost every English translation flattens it into “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Now read what Paul writes in Colossians 1:15–17, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation: for by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have

been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (NASB).

Compare it to Genesis 1:1, "Bereshit." Bereshit means the firstborn, the first fruit, the principal one. All things were created through him. The Bible never begins with a generic creation story. It starts with a person. The first word of scripture hides the name of the one who would walk into the second half of the book in flesh. Christ was not added to the Bible. He was woven into the very first word.

So, when you open your Bible tomorrow morning and read those familiar seven words, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," remember that it is only a surface reading. In the language Moses actually wrote, the verse whispers something deeper. It whispers that creation has a center, and his name is "The Firstborn." It whispers that the universe was spoken into being, not assembled. It whispers that the one God who made all things is plural in being yet singular in will. It whispers that the Bible has been one unified story from its very first word.

You have read Genesis 1:1 several times, but until you have heard it in Hebrew, you have not truly understood it!