

The Battle for the Beginning, Part 9

Day 2: When God Created the Atmosphere – Genesis 1:6-8

A. The Second of Three Major Separations

1. This is the second of three major separations performed by the Father.

a. Note that the power to effect these separations was the spoken _____ of God.

1a. Note that God inscribed a circle on the deep (**v.27**).

aa. The word circle means compass and teaches that God, the Master Builder, set a compass on the mass and formed the perfect sphere we see today and spread a breathable atmosphere around the earth that separated the seas below and the celestial waters above.

2. The word firmament – *raqia* – means spread-out thinness.

a. The Hebrew word is a derivative of a verb that means to spread an overlay and is used in Exodus 39:3 where gold was hammered into thin, flattened, sheets making it suitable for overlaying the ark and other fixtures in the temple.

1a. The imagery is that of a protective layer that overlays the Earth and separates the waters below [the life-giving water that would be used to sustain life on Earth] and the waters above.

b. Scripture mentions three ‘heavens:’

- The atmospheric heaven (**Jeremiah 4:25**).
- The sidereal/stellar heaven (**Isaiah 13:10**).
- The heaven of God’s throne (**Hebrews 9:24**).

c. The firmament and heaven referred to here is the atmosphere, the specially designed blanket of pressure and gases and water vapor that would uniquely sustain life, especially human life.

1c. Already energized and working, the gravitational field held the firmament in place.

B. The Two Bodies of Water

1. The expanse/firmament separated two waters.

a. The lower waters were and are the crucial element in sustaining _____ on Earth, especially human life.

b. The upper waters formed a protective canopy and rested lightly on the atmosphere.

1b. Dr. Morris says, “The concept of an antediluvian water canopy over the earth has appeared in many writings, both ancient and modern.” [Dr. Henry M. Morris: *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books 1976), 59.]

2b. Dr. Morris presents several purposes for this canopy, which served as a marvelous sustainer of vigorous life conditions on earth.

aa. Acting as global greenhouse, this canopy ...

- Maintained a uniformly pleasant and warm temperature around the world.
- With uniform temperatures, great air-mass movements would not form and windstorms would be unknown [remember, it did not rain until the Flood and there was no bow in the sky until after the Flood.]. This would cause the water canopy to be stable and not precipitate itself.
- Some object to this idea saying the weight of the canopy would cause debilitating pressure on humans at the earth's surface. Actually, modern scientific study of and use of hyperbaric pressure in the healing process of human bodies teach us that hyperbaric pressure is very effective in combating disease and in promoting good health generally. And so we see another purpose of the canopy.

C. Earth's Atmosphere

1. Earth is the only planet in the solar system with a _____ atmosphere able to sustain life.
2. The atmosphere is slightly over 300 miles high from Earth to the top and most of it is within 10 miles of the surface where 14.7 pounds per square inch of pressure is maintained.
 - a. At 10,000 feet it is 10 ppi.
3. The atmosphere is comprised of gases:
 - Nitrogen – 78%
 - Oxygen – 21%
 - Argon - .93%
 - Carbon Dioxide - .038%
3. The layers of the atmosphere ...
 - a. Troposphere – 4- 12 miles from the surface.
 - b. Stratosphere – 12-31 miles from the surface.
 - Ozone is formed here which heats the air and absorbs harmful radiation from the sun.
 - Air is dry and a thousand times thinner here than at the ground and jet airplanes fly here along with weather balloons.
 - c. Mesosphere – 31-53 miles.
 - 1c. The top of the mesosphere is called the mesopause where it is coldest 130 degrees below zero.
 - 2c. Hard to study – too high for jets and too low for satellites; meteors burn up here.
 - d. Thermosphere – 56 – to 310 and 620 miles high.
 - 1d. Although considered part of Earth's atmosphere, the air is so thin that most of it is thought of as outer space.
 - 2d. It is very hot with temperatures upwards of 2700 degrees F.
 - 3d. The space shuttle flew here and the ISS flies here.
 - 4d. Here, charged particles from space collide with atoms and molecules in the thermosphere exciting them to a higher energy level.
 - They shed this excess energy in the form of photons of light causing the Aurora Borealis and Aurora Australis.

e. Exosphere – extremely thin and where the atmosphere merges into space.