

"MIGHTY CREATOR"

ELOHIM

אֱלֹהִים

Meaning

EI – Hebrew – Strong's #410 – God, god-like, mighty one (mighty men...hero); mighty things; strength, power.

him – Hebrew – a plural ending to signify more than one.

Pronunciation

el – o – heem'

Translation

God

Interesting Info

Elohim is used 2,250 times in the Old Testament (NASB), occurring 192 times in Genesis. It occurs most in the Psalms with 324 times.

Elohim Created the Heavens and the Earth

The first place the name *Elohim* occurs in the Bible is in Genesis 1:1. This is likely a very familiar passage to you, but as you read today, look at it with fresh eyes and an open mind. There is so much to learn about God in the first chapter of Genesis. You may want to mark "God" in your Bible (or print a copy of Genesis 1:1-31 from an online Bible).¹ This will help you easily pick out information regarding who Elohim is as your Mighty Creator. A suggested symbol for marking "God" is a yellow triangle outlined in purple (yellow for light; purple for royalty; triangle for the triune God).²

Read Genesis 1:1-31.

Based on Genesis 1:1, what do you infer about your Mighty Creator? Who is He? What characteristics does He have? *When* is He?

Word Study

create – Strong's #1254 – Hebrew: *bara* – to create, shape, form, fashion (always used with God as the subject).

Do you glean any additional information about the creation of the earth from Isaiah 45:18 and Hebrews 11:3?

Why is it important to understand Who created the earth and how it was created?

What is significant about understanding that the earth was created from nothing visible?

Don't we all at some point in our lives question where we came from and why we are here? It's important to understand how the earth came into being. It is the source of not just the beginning of the universe but our beginning as well. The truth of the earth's creation proves false any other theory of the earth's origin. Only God could create something out of nothing. And since it was Elohim who created the earth, it expresses His ownership and authority over the earth. Understanding that we are fashioned by a perfect Creator also gives meaning to life that doesn't exist with other theories of the beginning.

Apply: God's speaking (God's Word) brought something beautiful from nothing, order from chaos, and light from darkness. In what area of your life do you need God to speak something beautiful, order, or light? Explain.

In the beginning, Gods created...Because *El* exists in the plural (with *him* added to the end, the text could literally be translated "Gods created." How is this possible? Deuteronomy 6:4 tells us, "The Lord is our God [*Elohim*], the Lord is one!" Let's see how the Bible explains this concept.

Read Genesis 1:2-3.

First of all, how was the earth described?

Who is present? What is He/They doing?

In Genesis 1:2-3, we see the Spirit of God moving (hovering) over the surface of the waters. "Then God..." So we see two persons of the triune God. Where is the third? Did He (Jesus) come into existence first at His incarnation in the womb of Mary the virgin?

Read the following verses to find out when Jesus came into existence.

John 1:1-3, 10, 14

Hebrews 1:2

What does "God said...and there was (or and it was so)" suggest about the power and might of the word of God? (See also Psalm 33:6, 9.)

Elohim consists of God the Father, God the Spirit, and God the Son in one. From the Scriptures you looked at, you saw the Spirit of God moving, God the Father speaking, and God the Son, as the Word, preparing the worlds. Genesis 1:2 is the first written appearance of God the Spirit, and Genesis 1:3 is the first written appearance of Jesus as the Word of God ("God said..."). Note that the world was prepared by the whole triune God as one. It is the voice and breath of the Lord that brings about creation, blessing, and judgment. His voice alone resonates power.

Read Genesis 1:4-25.

How does God describe His creation?

Word Study

good – Strong's #2896 – Hebrew: *towb* – good, beautiful, pleasant, agreeable, excellent, valuable.

Apply: In what ways do you appreciate His creation? Give examples.

What are some of the purposes of God's creation according to the following passages?

Psalm 19:1

Psalm 50:6

Romans 1:20

Elohim created the earth as a perfect habitation for his final creation of man, but in doing so, He created something that points to him and declares His existence, His power, His nature, and His righteousness. The trees stretch their arms toward heaven and "sing for joy" (Psalm 96:12). The birds "lift up their voices among the branches" to praise the Elohim (Psalm 104:12). Even the beasts of the field know "in whose hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind" (Job 12:7-10). If the lesser created things praise the Lord, how much more should we? When Jesus rode in His triumphal entry, "the whole multitude began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice" (Luke 19:37). This irritated the Pharisees, and they told Jesus to rebuke His disciples. His response to them was, "I tell you, if these [disciples] become silent, the stones will cry out!" (Luke 19:40).

According to 1 Timothy 4:4, how are we to respond to God's creation?

In what way(s) are we not to respond to God's creation according to the following passages?

Deuteronomy 4:15-19

Romans 1:24-25

Our response to God's creation is a form of worship as long as we are worshipping the Creator and not the created. God has said that everything He has created is good and that nothing He created

is to be rejected. That includes people. Too often, even Christians reject people because they are different. They follow a different lifestyle or were created differently, so they make us uncomfortable. Yet was not Elohim their Creator as well? And did He not also refer to them as "good."

It's also easy to worship the creation. There was a certain children's show that I would not permit my children to watch because it gave creation greater importance than man. How many times do you see God's creation being exalted above man? It's okay to kill a baby in the womb while it's horrifying to kill an animal. It's perfectly honorable to build a mansion but you'd better not cut down a tree to do it. This is what happens when we worship the creation instead of the Creator. The creation becomes more important than the man for whom it was created.

Apply: We are commanded not to worship any of God's creation but only God Himself. Is there any part of His creation (including people) that you worship or prioritize ahead of God?

Elohim Created You

Read Genesis 1:26-31, 2:7.

How does God describe His creation of man?

What was man's original purpose according to Genesis 1:28?

What difference is there between God's creation of man in relation to everything else He created?

Word Study

image – Hebrew – Strong's #6754 – tselem – image, likeness, shade, phantom, resemblance, representative.

What does this imply about the importance of man? And the responsibility of man?

Man is the only part of creation made in the image of God and in His likeness. God formed man from the dust of the earth then breathed into his nostrils His own breath to give life. No human life has ever been given apart from the CPR of God.

What does this mean for us as His final and best creation? Made in the likeness and image of God is a great responsibility because we are to reflect His image to the rest of His creation.

In Our image..."This is the first clear indication of the triunity of God. The very name God, Elohim, is a plus form of El. The plural pronouns introduce a plurality of relationships in the Godhead. They suggest both communion and consultation among the members of the Trinity. They also signify perfect agreement and clear purpose...Our image...likeness...establishes a personal relationship between God and man that does not exist with any other aspect of creation. It is the very thing that makes humanity different from every other created animal...The image of God is personhood, and personhood can function only in the context of relationships...[Man] was designed to have a personal relationship with God."³

Apply: What does it mean to you to be created in the image of God? How does this (or *should* this) affect your life: how you view yourself; your decisions; etc.?

Look at the following verses and note any other reasons God had for creating man:

Isaiah 43:7

Ephesians 2:10

Revelation 4:11

Does God ever do anything He does not purpose and desire to do? See Psalm 115:3 for insight. What does this tell you about His creation of *you*?

Apply: God's first command to man and woman was to "be fruitful and multiply." How does this apply to the Christian?

Apply: What does it mean to you to know that you are not an accident but created for God's pleasure and purpose?

God created man for several reasons. God created *you* for several reasons. First and foremost, God created us because it was His good pleasure to do so. He *wanted* to create you and me. He created us to do good works that He has prepared for us to do. He created us to reflect His likeness to the world. And He created us to bring Him glory.

Read Genesis 1:31.

How does God describe His creation as a whole?

Word Study

very – Hebrew – Strong's #3966 – me'od – exceedingly, much, abundance.

What significance do you find that it was only after the creation of man that God classified His creation in this way?

Creation culminated with the creation of man. Man was God's best and final creation. Man completed creation. When the Creator finished everything He declared it "very good."

This brings about another question. Is God responsible for some people being created with disabilities? Or are we all made perfect and some develop a disability because of human error, environmental hazards, or other reason due to our sinful nature? Read the following verses and base your conclusion from the word of God:

Exodus 4:11

John 9:2-3

What about death? Who determines our number of days on earth? Read these verses for your answer.

1 Samuel 2:6

Psalm 139:16

God takes responsibility for the creation of the universe, the heavens and the earth, all the creatures, plants, animals, and humans on the earth. That includes those with disabilities. And in creating all these things, it is our proper response to give Him glory. He also determined just how many days we would live on earth before we were ever conceived. While we may not understand why some were created special and why some die at such a young age, we can trust our Elohim. He has a greater understanding and purpose than our minds could ever conceive.

Apply: Have you ever known a disabled person who showed forth the glory of God? Explain.

Elohim Cherishes You

Elohim did not simply fashion you and walk away. Sometimes we may feel that He has forgotten us. That He has walked away and left us on our own. But that is so far from the truth!

Read the following verses and note how God shows that He continually cares for us. Put your answers in first person (I, me).

Psalm 139:17-18

Isaiah 43:1-5

Isaiah 49:15-16

Zephaniah 3:17

John 3:16 (substitute "me" for "the world" when reading this verse)

This is just a small sampling of proof of God's love toward you. The whole Bible is actually full of His love for *you*. He thinks about you continually. He knows your name and has even inscribed it on the palm of His hand. He rejoices over you. He quiets you with His love. He is always present with you. But most of all, if you need proof of His love, He gave His one and only Son to pay your sin debt for you so you could spend eternity with Him. Now that's love.

Apply: Describe a time that God revealed His love to you.

¹ A literal translation is best when marking the text. Literal translations include: King James Version, New King James Version, New American Standard Bible, English Standard Version.

² This symbol is the one suggested by Kay Arthur of Precept Ministries, Chattanooga, TN. You can find out more about Kay, her method of Bible study, and her Bible studies at precept.org.

³ MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur Bible Commentary*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005. 11.