

GENESIS

(BERE'SHEET)¹

CHAPTER 1:1 At *the* first² of ELOHIM³ creating the skies and the land—**2** and the land was⁴ desolation and emptiness; and darkness *was* over *the* face^p of *the* deep, and the spirit⁵ of ELOHIM was hovering⁶ over the face^p of the waters—**3** and ELOHIM said, “Let there be light”; and it was light. **4** And ELOHIM saw the light, that *it was* good; and ELOHIM separated between the light and between the darkness.⁷ **5** And ELOHIM called to the light “day,”⁸ and to the darkness he called “night.” And it was evening and it was morning—day one.⁹

6 And ELOHIM said, “Let there be an expanse in the middle of the waters, and let there be a separating between waters to waters.” **7** And ELOHIM made¹⁰ the expanse, and he separated between the waters that *were* from under the expanse, and between the waters that *were* from upon the expanse. And it was thus. **8** And ELOHIM called to the expanse “skies.” And it was evening and it was morning, a second day.

¹ The books of the Hebrew Bible are named from their opening words: here *Bere'sheet*, meaning “At *the* first of . . .”

² Lit “At *the* head of,” Heb *Bere'sheet* in this grammatical construction is a temporal phrase meaning, “When at first . . .,” see Jer 26:1 where the same form occurs. It presents the “state of things” when the creative activity begins.

³ ELOHIM is a plural noun, but often functions as a collective singular, taking a singular verb. It is related to the Hebrew terms: *'eloah* and *'el*, meaning God, god, power, or mighty one, and can refer to judges and leaders, heavenly beings, the gods of the nations, or the one God of Israel.

⁴ Or “became.”

⁵ Heb *ruach*, lit “wind,” see Gen 7:1.

⁶ I.e., “fluttering,” or “shaking,” see Deut 32:11; Jer 23:9, the only two other places this verb is used, always in an intensive form (Piel).

⁷ I.e., separated the light from the darkness.

⁸ DSS “daytime.”

⁹ These paragraph breaks, as well as the smaller “white space” divisions (see Gen 3:16-17), are taken from the Hebrew text and are reproduced precisely throughout this translation, as explained in the Introduction.

¹⁰ Or “did.”

9 And ELOHIM said, “Let the waters under the skies be gathered toward one place,¹¹ and let the dry *land* be seen.” And it was thus. **10** And ELOHIM called to the dry *land* “land,” and to the collection of the waters he called “seas.” And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **11** And ELOHIM said, “Let the land sprout^c *the* sprout, a plant seeding seed, a fruit tree making¹² fruit, according to its type, its seed, within it, upon the land.” And it was thus. **12** And the land made *the* sprout go out^c, a plant seeding seed according to its type, and a tree making¹³ fruit, its seed, within it, according to its type. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **13** And it was evening and it was morning, a third day.

14 And ELOHIM said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the skies, to separate between the day and between the night; and they will be¹⁴ for signs, and for appointed times,¹⁵ and for days and years,¹⁶ **15** and they will be for lights in the expanse of the skies, to make light^c upon the land.” And it was thus. **16** And ELOHIM made¹⁷ the two large lights—the large light for rule of the day, and the small light for rule of the night—and the stars. **17** And ELOHIM gave them in the expanse of the skies, to make light^c upon the land, **18** and to rule in the day and in the night, and to separate between the light and between the darkness. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **19** And it was evening and it was morning, a fourth day.

20 And ELOHIM said, “Let the waters swarm a swarm of living life-breathers^s,¹⁸ and let *the* flyer fly upon the land, upon the face^p of the expanse of the skies.” **21** And ELOHIM created the large *water*-beasts,¹⁹ and every

¹¹ DSS “one gathering,” producing alliteration with the verb “gathered.”

¹² Or “doing.”

¹³ Or “doing.”

¹⁴ DSS “and they were”; this reading seems to support the possibility of the direct quotation ending after “. . . between the night,” as some translators have suggested.

¹⁵ Heb *mo'adim*, “appointed times,” whether astronomical, divine, or human.

¹⁶ DSS “for years.”

¹⁷ Or “did.”

¹⁸ Heb *nephesh chayyah*, refers to breathing life of all types; the same term is used in 1:24 for land animals and in 2:7 for humans.

¹⁹ Heb *tanin*, refers to any fierce monster-like creature, usually in the sea or rivers. See Gen 1:21; Exo 7:9; Psa 91:13; Isa 27:1; Ezk 29:3

living^d life-breather that moves about, *with* which the waters swarm, according to their type, and every winged flyer, according to its type. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **22** And ELOHIM blessed them saying, “Bear fruit and be abundant and fill the waters in the seas, and let the flyer²⁰ be abundant in the land.” **23** And it was evening and it was morning, a fifth day.

24 And ELOHIM said, “Let the land make a living life-breather go out^c according to its type: animal, and moving thing, and living thing of land according to its type.” And it was thus. **25** And ELOHIM made²¹ the living thing of the land, according to its type, and the animal according to its type, and every moving thing of the soil according to its type. And ELOHIM saw that *it was* good. **26** And ELOHIM said, “Let us make²² soil-creature²³ in our image, according to our likeness, and let them govern in²⁴ the fish of the sea, and with the flyer of the skies, and in the animals^s, and in all the land,²⁵ and in every moving thing that moves about upon the land.” **27** And ELOHIM created the soil-creature in his image: in the image of ELOHIM he created him, a male and a female he created them. **28** And ELOHIM blessed them and ELOHIM said to them, “Bear fruit and be abundant and fill the land; and subdue, and govern in the fish of the sea, and in the flyer of the skies, and in every living thing that moves about upon the land.” **29** And ELOHIM said, “Look!—I have given to you^p every plant seeding seed that *is* upon the face^p of all the land, and every tree^d, in which *there is* fruit of a tree, seeding seed; to you^p it will be for an eatable *thing*. **30** And to every living thing of the land, and to every flyer of the skies, and to every moving about thing on the land, that in it *is* living life-breath²⁶—every green plant *is* for an eatable *thing*.” And it was thus. **31** And ELOHIM saw all that he had made,²⁷ and look!—*it was* exceedingly good. And it was evening and it was morning, the sixth day.

²⁰ DSS “the flying thing will be abundant.”

²¹ Or “did.”

²² Or “do.”

²³ Heb *'adam*, from *'adamah*, “soil,” or “red soil.”

²⁴ I.e., in regard to, here and v. 28.

²⁵ Syriac “over all the animals of the land.”

²⁶ Heb *nephesh chayyah*, used of humans in Gen 2:7.

²⁷ Or “done.”

CHAPTER 2:1 And the skies and the land and all their company²⁸ were finished. **2** And ELOHIM finished on the seventh day his work that he did, and he ceased²⁹ on the seventh day³⁰ from all his work that he did. **3** And ELOHIM blessed the seventh day, and he set it apart, because on it he ceased from all his work that ELOHIM created to do.

²⁸ Or “army,” Heb *tzava*’, refers to a gathering or mustering.

²⁹ Heb *shavat*, or “rested,” in the sense of halting.

³⁰ LXX, Syriac, and SP read “sixth day” here.