

**Peace** be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace. He wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to present the second program in our series *The Way of Righteousness*.

In these programs we will be telling **the stories of God's prophets**, one by one. We also plan to explore the Holy Scriptures that the prophets wrote; these declare the way of righteousness that God has decreed so that people might be counted as righteous before Him.

In our first program, we discussed the Writings of the Prophets. We learned that there are many prophets who wrote the Holy Scriptures, but that there is only one Author. He is God. We also left you with an important thought. That thought was this: **God has spoken!** God has spoken to mankind through the prophets and He wants each of us to listen to Him. God wants to speak to us through the Writings of the Prophets. God never changes, nor does His Word. In every generation, God has protected His Word "*The Scripture cannot be broken.*" "*The world will pass away...but the Word of the Lord endures forever!*" That is what the Scriptures say.

Today we are going to explore **the first section in the Holy Scriptures**. It is called the *Torah*, or *Pentateuch*. God planted this book in the mind of a man named Moses or *Musa* in Arabic. God told Moses what to write and Moses wrote it down. About three thousand five hundred years have passed since Moses' time. The Torah consists of five books, or **five parts**. The first book is known as *Genesis*, which means the Beginning because it tells us what happened in the beginning.

It is important for us to know the first book of the Torah very well, because it is **the foundation that God laid**, so that we might understand what He says in the other books of the prophets that follow. As we study this book, we will deepen our knowledge of many important truths. We will learn about God and what He is like. We will study the angels and Satan, the heavens and the earth, animals and man. We will see how sin entered the world and brought with it great destruction and sorrow. However, we will also examine carefully the way of salvation which the Lord God has provided so that sinners can return to God and have a wonderful relationship with Him. In the first stories, we will see the first people, the first sin, and the first murderer. We will read about the first false religions, the

first prophets, and the first nations. We will reflect on the story of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the flood, God's prophet Abraham and why he was called *the friend of God*. We will see Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob and Joseph and his wicked brothers. The first book of the Torah contains all this and much more.

Now therefore, we ask you to listen carefully, because the time for us to begin our study of the Scriptures of the Prophets has arrived. In the first book of the Torah, chapter one, verse one, we read: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" This is where we must begin our lesson in the Holy Scriptures, because it is here that God Himself begins His Book: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*"

In this verse there is something we must consider. What existed before God created the heavens and the earth? What was there before the world existed? The Scriptures show us that nothing existed except God. That is why it says, "*In the beginning...God.*" Everything that we can see and touch has a beginning. Thus, long, long ago, there was a time when there was no sky or earth, no ocean or trees. In the beginning, before God created the heavens and the earth, there was no sun, no moon, no stars. In the beginning, there were no men nor angels. There was a time when there was nothing as we know it today--nothing except **God**.

That is why we read in the first verse of the first book of the Holy Scriptures, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" The Scriptures do **not** say, "In the beginning God **and** the angels" or "In the beginning God **and** men." No. The Scriptures tell us, "*In the beginning God.*" In the beginning, when nothing yet existed, before any angels or people existed...there was only One who was living. That One is **God!**

In our world some say, "I cannot see God, therefore there is no God." To those people who deny that God exists, we would like to ask a few questions. Have you ever seen an atom? Or the oxygen you breathe? Have you ever seen the wind? You cannot see the wind, yet you know that the wind exists because you can see what it does. You can see the trees that move in the wind, but the wind itself no one can see. You cannot hold the wind in your hand, but you can feel its cooling breeze. That is how it is with God. We cannot see God, because God is invisible to human eyes. However, **we know that God exists because we see what God created.** The Scripture says: "*God's invisible qualities-his eternal power and divine nature-have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*"

Another thing we can learn from the first verse of the Torah is this: **God has no beginning.** God was not created in the beginning. God is the Lord of Eternity. Everything

that we know and see here in the world had a beginning. But God had no beginning. He has no origin. He has no equal. Only He existed in the beginning. No one gave birth to Him. No one created Him, and He did not create Himself. That is why we read in the Holy Scriptures "*In the beginning God.*" Only He has no beginning. He is the One who has always existed and lives forever. The Lord, meaning *The Eternal One* is His name. What He is like today, He was like yesterday. What He was yesterday, He will be forever. **God never changes.**

There is something else that we can learn from the verse that says, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" It is this. **God is great!** God who created everything is greater than everything and everyone. He is the Lord of Creation. Truly, with our whole heart we can declare: "*Allahu Akbar!*" which means *God is greater!* God is great! He has no equal. He is greater than everything in the world-ocean, wind, sun and stars! He is wiser and more powerful than all spirits and people. He is worthy of glory forever! Just as the one who builds a house is more important than the house, so God is superior to everything, because He created everything. God is great! He lives by His own power. He doesn't depend on anything. He is not dependent on anyone. God is greater than everything. He needs nothing. He needs no one. He is the Great One!

We humans have many needs. Every day we must breathe and sleep, drink and eat. We need the sun and rain, food and water, clothes and housing, father and mother, friends and money and so much more. How many are our needs! However, the Lord who created everything, needs nothing! He does not hunger. He does not thirst. He never gets tired. He does not have a body like man. He has no limits. He has no end. He is the Eternal God.

### **He is the All-Powerful One.**

Now, here is an important question. If God is not like a man and does not have a body like us, what is God like? The Scripture responds to that question with a clear answer. It says,

**"God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."** What is God like?

**God is spirit.** Man is body and spirit, but God is only spirit. The Spirit of God has no limit. He is everywhere. God is above everything and everyone. He fills everything. He sees everything. Night and day are the same to God. If you hide in your room, God is there and He sees you. **God knows everything.** He knows your thoughts and the intentions of your heart. God is great!

So what is God like? Perhaps we can summarize what we have studied today in this way:

**God is not like anyone.** God is God and He has no equal. In future lessons of this program *The Way of Righteousness* we will increase our understanding of the character of

God. In the Holy Scriptures, God has hundreds and hundreds of names. He is The Lord. The Most High. The Almighty. The Creator. The Author of Life. The Light. The Righteous One. The Holy One. The Compassionate One. The God of Love. He is the living and true God!

In truth, God, who created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, is **the Great One**. Of Him, the Scriptures say:

*"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!...For from him and through him and to him are all things."*

*"God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honour and might forever. Amen!"*

In another chapter, God's prophet, Moses, praises God in a beautiful song saying, *"Great and marvellous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy."* God is infinitely great! That is what the first verse of God's Word teaches us when it says, *"In the beginning God!"*

And so friends, may we keep in our minds the truth that we have heard today: *"In the beginning God."* Only God existed in the beginning-and, therefore, **only God** can reveal to us the truth about what happened in the beginning. **Only God** can reveal to us the truth about what will happen in the hereafter. And **only God** can reveal to us the truth about Himself.

Yes, we know that some people say, "No one can know God or what will happen in the hereafter!" Nevertheless, the Writings of the Prophets tell us that **we can know God**, and that **we can know where we will spend eternity**. For the Word of God says,

*"I write these things to you...so that you may know that you have eternal life!"* and so that you *"may know him who is true...the true God and eternal life!"*

*"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him, but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."*

To you who are listening, **do you know God personally?** Or is He, for you, simply the great Creator who is far off and unknowable? Dear friend, God wants you to know Him and to live with Him forever! The Scriptures of the Prophets teach us how we can have a

wonderful and close relationship with God. However, we must open our ears, and our minds, and our hearts to what God is saying to us. Listen to what God says in His holy Word: *"Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other!"*

We've come to the end of our time together today. Thank you for spending time with us today. In our next program, God willing, we will look into a fascinating topic: the angels and Satan. Do you know the true story about where they come from? God bless you as you consider the verse in the Holy Scriptures that says:

*"God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."*

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*"The Way of Righteousness" PO Box 4766, Greenville, SC 29608, USA*

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