

# 24-1117p Transcript

## 24-1117p - *Before The Beginning*, Scott Reynolds

**Bible Reader:** Scott Reynolds

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## Before The Beginning

Transcript (0:04 - 19:23)

### Scripture Reading

**Scripture Reader, Scott Reynolds**

**Nehemiah 9:6:**

(0:04) This evening's scripture is from Nehemiah, chapter 9, verse 6. (0:11) You alone are the Lord. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, (0:20) the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them. (0:25) And you preserve them all. The host of heaven worships you. (0:31)

### Transcript

**Preacher:** Scott Reynolds

(0:31) Good to see everybody. (0:34) This morning we talked about God, and specifically how God as he relates to Genesis chapter 1, verse 1. (0:45) In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and we talked pretty much about God.

(0:53) We noted the obvious, that the heavens and earth have a beginning, (0:58) and that prior to that, they didn't exist. (1:02) In contrast, we noted that God is self-existent. (1:08) There's the Hebrew tetragrammaton, YHWH, four letters.

(1:16) That's what tetragrammaton means, the four letters. (1:20) YHWH or JHWH, which is pronounced commonly today as Yahweh and Jehovah. (1:32) We actually don't know how that word is pronounced, God's name.

(1:37) That's been lost to us. (1:40) But the name itself means the word to be or to exist. (1:48) And so the name itself, God's name, I am, means I exist.

(1:57) We saw that in Exodus chapter 3, verses 13 and 14. (2:02) God is eternal, from everlasting, with no beginning, to everlasting, no end. (2:09) Psalm 90, verse 2. (2:11) We saw God is spirit, Jesus said in his prayer to his father, John 4, 24.

(2:19) God's not under the constraints of his creation. (2:22) He created everything that exists, himself excluded since he has always been existent. (2:35) Jesus, he created the physical, natural realm and also the spiritual realm.

(2:41) The spiritual realm did not exist before he created that. (2:45) Jesus, the word, is eternal, we saw. (2:49) He existed before the creation of the world, Jesus said in his prayer on John 17, 5. (2:57) Jesus is the creator.

(2:59) We found out in John 1, verses 1-3 and Psalm 33, 6-9. (3:05) The winds and the waves obey his command. (3:08) He spoke and it happened.

(3:12) That is what Psalm 33, 6-9, verses 6 and 9 say. (3:20) The winds and waves obey his command is from Luke chapter 8, 22-25. (3:27) The Holy Spirit was present and active at the creation.

(3:31) Also, we saw in Genesis 1, 2 and in Psalm 104, verse 30. (3:37) There was one God and three persons. (3:40) All three were involved in the creation and we saw that in Genesis.

(3:45) Isn't that phenomenal? (3:48) In the very first book of his Bible, the very first three verses of the first chapter, (4:03) each person of the Godhead is seen. (4:06) The Father, the Holy Spirit and Jesus, the one who speaks. (4:10) God made plans for creation and redemption and we saw that in there's like four or five scriptures that are listed.

(4:21) And that's as far as we got this morning. (4:24) I'd like to pick up then with continuing with Genesis 1, verse 1. (4:30) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (4:35) Notice the word for heavens is plural.

(4:41) And that is more than one heaven. (4:44) So what could that mean? (4:45) I asked my AI assistant, Grok, XAI. (4:53) Yep, I've switched AI assistants.

(4:56) Don't use chat GPT anymore. (4:59) Grok is an AI developed by Elon Musk. (5:04) He is partial to the letter X, so it's XAI.

(5:08) He purchased the social media platform Twitter and renamed it X. (5:14) Their AI offering, Grok, is spelled G-R-O-K, much like caveman, I imagine. (5:24) And it's available through X. (5:26) Anyway, I asked Grok, was there any explanation for why the plural word heavens was used in Genesis 1, 1? (5:37) And Grok answered, the use of heavens in the plural form in the opening verses of Genesis in the Bible is a subject that has intrigued theologians, scholars, and linguists for centuries. (5:50) Grok mentioned several perspectives on why this term might be plural.

(5:53) But I'm only going to mention one that it listed. (5:58) And the explanation that I'm partial to and most aware of is labeled theological implications. (6:05) And it says, some interpret the plural use as possibly hinting at different functions or aspects of the heavens.

(6:16) The heaven where God resides, often called the third heaven in later Jewish and Christian thought. (6:22) The visible heavens where the sun, moon, and stars reside, which could be seen as a physical, observable universe. (6:32) And the atmospheric heavens where weather phenomena occur.

(6:37) So those are the three heavens. (6:40) And Paul does mention the third heaven in 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verses 1 through 5. (6:46) I'm reading from the NIV. (6:49) Paul says, I must go on boasting.

(6:52) Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. (6:58) I know a man in Christ who 14 years ago was caught up to the third heaven. (7:06) Whether it was in the body or out of the body, I do not know.

(7:10) God knows. (7:11) And I know that this man, whether in the body or apart from the body, I do not know, but God knows, (7:17) was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell. (7:26) I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself except about my weaknesses.

(7:32) And Paul, explaining about his visions and revelations, mentions the third heaven. (7:44) So when God created the heavens, could that also refer to all the heavens, including the third heaven? (7:52) Is heaven where God is a created place? (7:57) And what could the significance of that be? (8:00) It appears that the third heaven is a created place. (8:08) Nehemiah chapter 9, verse 6. (8:12) You alone are the Lord.

You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens. (8:17) That would be the third heaven. (8:19) With all their hosts, and so everything that's in them, any spiritual thing that's in the third heaven, was created.

(8:27) The earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them. (8:33) And you preserve them all. The host of heaven worships you.

(8:39) So clearly, here the heaven of heavens is referring to the third heaven, (8:44) where God is because it is also the place where all their hosts are, (8:50) and the host of heaven worships you. (8:52) So prior to creation, there's another passage, by the way, Colossians 1.16. (9:04) For by him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, (9:11) whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities, (9:19) not planets and asteroids and suns and moons, (9:27) but thrones or powers, rulers or authorities. (9:31) All things were created by him and for him.

(9:36) So that also points to the heaven of heavens being created. (9:44) In Nehemiah 9.6, that's what he said, heaven. (9:48) Anyway, I have it right there, look at that.

(9:51) And Colossians 1.16. (10:02) So prior to creation, the creation of the heavens and the earth, there was no heaven. (10:09) So John and Lennon's song, Imagine, actually comes true. (10:13) Imagine there's no heaven, not for the reason why he wanted it, (10:19) but prior to creation, there was no heaven.

(10:22) So what was there then prior to creation? (10:29) God. (10:32) Only God. (10:35) There was no physical realm, no spiritual realm, no time.

(10:40) We saw this morning that time itself was created. (10:44) The construction, the construct of time is a created thing. (10:50) Prior to the creation, it didn't exist.

(10:56) So before God creates, it's him. (11:04) So all of these are created. (11:06) So what would it be like without time? (11:13) Like in Peter Pan where the crocodile swallows the clock, (11:17) and as it moves around, you can hear the tick, tick, tick.

(11:23) Time goes on. (11:25) Time marks the sequence of events. (11:28) God's plan was brought to fruition.

(11:32) Remember what it says? (11:34) What Paul says, in the fullness of time. (11:37) So God understands and utilizes time, though he himself is not constrained by it. (11:43) Galatians 4, verses 4 and 5. (11:47) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, (11:53) born under the law to redeem those who were under the law, (11:56) that we might receive the adoption as sons.

(12:01) So God used time in his plan. (12:05) He created it and made use of it. (12:09) So at some point, fruition, by the way, I looked it up, is a noun, (12:14) and it's the point at which a plan or a project is realized when it becomes real.

(12:23) And it's also the state or action of producing fruit, fruition, producing fruit. (12:34) God has asked us to be fruit producers. (12:38) At some point, the Godhead decides the plan, creation and redemption, (12:45) and when there's no time, I don't know how that works.

(12:50) That's beyond us. (12:54) I cannot conceive. (12:57) You know, I said Albert Einstein, but before I switched to Brock, (13:02) I still had chat GPT, and I asked about the quote that is attributed to Albert Einstein, (13:13) and he said, without time, everything would happen all at once, (13:19) because time puts things in sequence.

(13:22) It allows things to play out. (13:25) Well, without time, you don't have that. (13:28) Well, how does that end? (13:30) Obviously, that's something that God can use, (13:36) and you get a hint of that when Jesus himself said, (13:41) and I mentioned it before, when he mentioned that before Abraham was, I am.

(13:49) So Jesus was thinking present tense prior to Abraham. (13:56) Before Abraham was, I am. (13:59) He existed.

(14:01) And how that works, I don't know. (14:04) But at some point, God decides the plan, creation and redemption, (14:08) and the creation of a spiritual realm and the creation of a natural realm. (14:15) It appears from Scripture that the spiritual realm was created first (14:20) and existed for a while before the creation of the natural realm, (14:26) and you don't get that in Genesis 1. (14:30) It almost appears that the heavens are part of the natural realm, and they're not.

(14:38) Two of them are. (14:40) The space of the universe is called a heaven, is physical, (14:47) and our atmosphere is physical, but the third heaven is not. (14:51) It's spiritual.

(14:53) So when God created the heavens, that was prior to the physical. (15:01) I imagine, and here's why. (15:05) Well, we'll get to that actually.

(15:08) So the Bible doesn't explicitly recount the creation of angels, (15:13) but we know that they are created, and we've already mentioned the two verses that tell us that, (15:19) Nehemiah 9.6 and Colossians 1.16. (15:24) But the angels evidently observe and witness the creation of the natural realm. (15:32) And that's taken from Job 38, verses 4 through 7, (15:41) when God is questioning Job after all that's gone on in the book of Job to that point. (15:49) And God asks Job, (15:51) Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? (15:55) Tell me if you have understanding.

(15:57) Who determined its measurements? Surely you know. (16:01) Or who stretched the line upon it? (16:05) To what were the foundations fastened? (16:09) Or who laid its cornerstone? (16:12) When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. (16:20) And what was happening when God was doing all that work? (16:24) The morning stars were singing, and the angels.

(16:28) This says, Son of God, the new King James, the NIV, says angels, puts angels. (16:34) All the angels shouted for joy. (16:38) But sons of God in Job chapter 1, when Satan presents himself to God, (16:48) the other angels that were doing that were called sons of God in chapter 1 of Job.

(16:54) So that is the morning stars we know are angels, (17:02) in the sense that we know now that Jesus was the angel of the Lord. (17:09) And in this passage where God questions Job, (17:13) it's mentioned that when God laid the foundations, the morning stars sang together, (17:18) and all the angels in the NIV said, shouted for joy. (17:21) And this suggests that the angels were already in existence to witness (17:26) and celebrate the creation of the natural world.

(17:33) So what about the angels? (17:35) And I asked Brock, what about the angels? (17:38) And he says, the Bible doesn't provide extensive details about the creation of angels or their existence. (17:45) It talks about the creation, we've just done that, and the role of creation, (17:49) and we just did that again. (17:54) And in Job 1, verses 6 through 7 is where it says, (17:59) Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, (18:03) and that's the sons of God.

(18:06) And Satan also came among them, and the Lord said to Satan, (18:10) From where do you come? (18:11) So Satan answered the Lord and said, (18:14) From going to and fro on the earth and from walking back and forth on it. (18:19) So this presentation of the sons of God before God, (18:26) they're having a conversation, and Satan is one of those that's doing that. (18:31) Of course, by this time, he's a fallen angel in Job, (18:35) because he accuses Job of wrong motives for following God.

(18:46) And so we know that he's in a fallen state at that point. (18:52) The concept of angels being present before the world's creation aligns with the notion (18:57) of them as eternal beings in relation to the temporal creation of it. (19:03) Temporal, again, is related to time.

(19:08) They are often portrayed as God's messengers and servants existing to fulfill His will (19:15) before, during, and after creation. (19:20) And that's my lesson. (19:21) Let's extend the invitation.