

The Syriac Peshitta Bible
with English Translation

Genesis

English Translation by

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gorgias press

To Stephen Pisano

Magister in sacra pagina
in gratitude

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Chapter 1

I

- 1 In the beginning¹ God created the heavens and the earth.
- 2 The earth was a formless void² and darkness was over the surface of the abyss and the wind³ of God hovered⁴ over the surface of the waters.
- 3 God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.
- 4 God saw that the light was good⁵ and God separated the light from the darkness.
- 5 God called the light “day”⁶ and the darkness he called “night.” There was evening and there was morning, the first day.⁷
- 6 Then God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters.”
- 7 God made the dome and he separated the waters under the dome from the waters above the dome. And so it was.
- 8 God called the dome “Sky.”⁸ There was evening and there was morning, the second day.

¹ There is an extensive scholarly conversation regarding the correct interpretation of the first word in the Hebrew Bible, בְּרֵאשִׁית. The Peshitta translator has imitated the Hebrew and I have followed the traditional translation in English, ‘In the beginning,’ so as not to give the impression that the Peshitta has a different reading.

² In these opening verses the Peshitta translator imported several Hebrew words into Syriac. See the Introduction: A Few Observations on the Nature of the Peshitta Translation of Genesis.

³ ‘wind’ or ‘spirit’. Ephrem argues the correct interpretation is ‘wind’ (see R. M. Tonneau, *Sancti Ephraem Syri in Genesim et in Exodum commentarii* (CSCO 152–153; Syr. 71–72; Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1955), 1,7. Targum Onkelos also seems to interpret the word as wind (see B. Grossfeld and M. Aberbach, *Targum Onkelos to the Book of Genesis: English Translation and Critical Notes* [New York: KTAV, 1982], 20).

⁴ The Peshitta imports the Hebrew word מְרַחֶפֶת.

⁵ ‘good’ or ‘pleasing’. The Peshitta often translates Hebrew טוב with ܡܚܒ.

⁶ ‘day’ or ‘daytime’.

⁷ ‘first day’: lit. ‘day one’.

⁸ ‘Sky’ or ‘Heavens’.

مِثْلَانِ: ١.

- ١ 1 حَبِئْتُهُ جَا أَلَهُ مُبِ مَعْلَا هُيَ أَوْخَا.
- 2 2 دَاوُخَا نَاهَا نَاهَا هَجَاهَا. سَعْفُجَا خَا أَقْد نَاهَا مَعْلَا. هُوَسَاهَا وَأَلَهُ مَعْلَا خَلَّافْد مَعْلَا.
- 3 3 دَاخَا أَلَهُ: نَاهَا نَاهَا: هُوَسَاهَا نَاهَا.
- 4 4 دَاوُخَا حَاهَا: هَجَاهَا: هَجَاهَا أَلَهُ جَاهَا نَاهَا حَاهَا.
- 5 5 دَاوُخَا حَاهَا: هَجَاهَا: هَجَاهَا مَاهَا كَلَاهَا: هُوَسَاهَا وَصَاهَا هُوَسَاهَا نَاهَا مَاهَا مَب.
- 6 6 دَاخَا نَاهَا: مَاهَا جَاهَا مَعْلَا: هُوَسَاهَا جَاهَا مَاهَا مَعْلَا حَاهَا.
- 7 7 دَاخَا أَلَهُ: مَاهَا: هَجَاهَا مَاهَا مَعْلَا وَحَاهَا مَاهَا: مَاهَا: هَجَاهَا مَعْلَا وَحَاهَا مَاهَا: هُوَسَاهَا مَاهَا.
- 8 8 دَاوُخَا كَاهَا مَعْلَا: هُوَسَاهَا وَصَاهَا هُوَسَاهَا نَاهَا مَاهَا وَبَاهَا.