

# Confessions - Book XI - Chapter Iii

by St. Augustine

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## Transcript

5. Let me hear and understand how in the beginning thou madest heaven and earth.[419] Moses wrote of this; he wrote and passed on--moving from thee to thee--and he is now no longer before me. If he were, I would lay hold on him and ask him and entreat him solemnly that in thy name he would open out these things to me, and I would lend my bodily ears to the sounds that came forth out of his mouth. If, however, he spoke in the Hebrew language, the sounds would beat on my senses in vain, and nothing would touch my mind; but if he spoke in Latin, I would understand what he said. But how should I then know whether what he said was true? If I knew even this much, would it be that I knew it from him? Indeed, within me, deep inside the chambers of my thought, Truth itself--neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin, nor barbarian, without any organs of voice and tongue, without the sound of syllables--would say, \"He speaks the truth,\" and I should be assured by this. Then I would confidently say to that man of thine, \"You speak the truth.\"[420] However, since I cannot inquire of Moses, I beseech thee, O Truth, from whose fullness he spoke truth; I beseech thee, my God, forgive my sins, and as thou gavest thy servant the gift to speak these things, grant me also the gift to understand them.

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