



Genesis 1:3-25: Off to a Good Start

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?*

– Psalm 8:3-4 ESV

- **Genesis 1-2: The Creation Story**
 - *In the beginning, God created...*
 - Ch. 1:3-31 describe **what** God did
 - Nine verses start with the conjunctive verb: *...and God said...*
 - Could be translated “and so” or “then”
 - They describe the **sequence** of creation
 - Day 1: Light (vs 3-5)
 - Day 2: The expanse/atmosphere – vs 6-8
 - Day 3: The land, seas, and plants – vs 9-13
 - Day 4: Luminaries (sun, moon, stars) – vs 14-19
 - Day 5: Birds and fish – vs 20-23
 - Day 6: Land animals and humans – vs 24-31

- **Creation: a foundational doctrine of Christianity**

What is the work of creation?

The work of creation is, God’s making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

– The Westminster Shorter Catechism – 1648

Creation

A biblical doctrine
Based on interpretation of the biblical text
Factual
Unchanging
Foundational

Creationism

An apologetic discipline
Influenced by scientific advancements
Theoretical
Open to reevaluation
Peripheral

“Our commitment to doctrine must be strong, but we hold to any particular apologetic approach much more loosely.” – Kenneth D. Keathley and Mark F. Rooker, *40 Questions About Creation and Evolution*

- Three views
 - o Theistic Evolution
 - God is providentially guiding the evolutionary process
 - Can be very close to deism
 - God was involved in creation, but not intimately
 - He created the building blocks and natural laws with the eventual emergence of life in mind
 - Follows the basic tenets of naturalistic evolution
 - o The Gap Theory
 - Based on Genesis 1:1-2
 - There is a supposed “gap” between the two verses

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.

- What happened in the gap?
 - God created the “original” earth
 - Satan was put in charge of it
 - But Satan rebelled (Isaiah 14:12-14; Exekiel 28:12-18)
 - God cast Satan out of heaven and destroyed the earth

“...as a result of which the earth became the formless, desolate mass we discover it to be in Genesis 1:2....The earth continued like this for indeterminate ages in which the various rock strata developed. It was only at the end of this period that God intervened to bring new order out of the prevailing chaos.” – James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis, Volume 1, Creation and Fall*

“The unknown interval between the first two verses of Genesis 1, is wide enough to embrace all the prehistoric ages which may have elapsed; but all that took place from Genesis 1:3 onward transpired less than six thousand years ago.” – A. W. Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis*

- o Six-Day Creationism
 - There are several versions of this view
 1. Old-earth Creationism
 - They hold to the day-age theory
 - Based on their interpretation of the Hebrew word for “day” – *yom*
 - They cite two primary passages

*For you, a thousand years are as a passing day (yom),
as brief as a few night hours. – Psalm 90:4 NLT*

*A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and
a thousand years is like a day.– 2 Peter 3:8 NLT*

- They place the creation of the universe at approximately 13.7 billion years ago
- The creation of Adam and Eve took place anywhere from 30,000-70,000 years ago
- They reject the theory of evolution
- They embrace the historicity of Genesis

2. Young-earth Creationism

- They hold to a literal 24-hour day interpretation
- Place the age of the earth at 6,000-10,000 years
- God created the world with “appearance” of age
- Explain the geological strata with the flood account

- What about the Israelites?
 - How did they interpret the creation account?
 - Most likely, **literally** and not **figuratively**
 - They didn’t worry about the age of the earth
 - They didn’t theorize about God’s methodology

“This is a word from God addressed to a group of people who are surrounded by nations whose cosmology is informed by polytheism and mythology that flows out of that polytheism. Much in Gen. 1 is patently anti-pagan....The writer’s concerns, then, were theological and historical – what happened, and why, and so what.” – Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*

- So what did God say?
 - What did they **hear** when the text was read?
 - How did they **understand** it?

“Ultimately, the Jewish nation would understand a selected portion of world history and the inaugural background of Israel as a basis by which they would live in their new beginnings under Joshua’s leadership in the land that had previously been promised to Abraham, their original patriarchal forefather.” – John MacArthur, *Genesis 1-11: Creation, Sin, and the Nature of God*

- **The Six Days of Creation**

And God said...

- God spoke or commanded that His will be done

- He simply declared and it was so
- He completes what He began “in the beginning” (vs 1-2)
- There is an orderly plan involved – a logical sequence
- What was once “formless and void” is now **formed** and **filled**

Formed	Filled
Day 1: Light and dark	Day 4: Lights of day and night
Day 2: Sea and sky	Day 5: Creatures of water and air
Day 3: Fertile earth	Day 6: Creatures of the land

Day 1: God invades time with the light of His glory

*The earth was without form and void, and **darkness** was over the face of the deep – Genesis 1:2 ESV.*

- The Jews related darkness to evil and the unknown
- Light was inherently good
- But this light didn’t come from any physical source
- How would this have impacted the Israelites?
- They had spent more than 400 years in Egypt, where they had probably worshiped Ra, the sun god
- And those four centuries had been marked by darkness rather than light

“Ra is the sun god of ancient Egypt. He is one of the oldest deities in the Egyptian pantheon...Ra is the Egyptian word for ‘sun’. As a solar deity, Ra embodied the power of the sun but was also thought to be the sun itself...He was also associated with the creator god Atum and the two deities’ names are used interchangeably in some versions of the creation myths.” – Joshua J. Mark, “Ra (Egyptian God)”, *World History Encyclopedia*

“For the first three days light shone from a source other than the sun. Thus we observe that the Bible begins with light but no sun and ends the same way.” – R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*

- Man was not intended to live in darkness
- He was not meant to live without the light of God

*Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “**I am the light of the world.** Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” – John 8:12 ESV*

*“And this is the judgment: **the light has come into the world**, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.” – John 3:19 ESV*

*“I have come into the world **as light**, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in **darkness.** – John 12:46 ESV*

Day 2: God prepares the atmosphere

- He was ordering the creation for man's arrival
- The "deep" was being divided

"...on the second day, God separated the primeval deep into two deeps with a space between. The waters below the space retained the elemental earth materials which would be utilized on the following day to form the land and its plant cover...

"The waters above the firmament had apparently been transformed into the vapor state in order to be separated from the heavier materials and elevated above the atmosphere, where it could serve as a thermal blanket for the earth's inhabitants." – Dr, Henry Morris, *So Noted!: The Genesis Commentary*

Day 3: God creates a habitable environment for man

- Man couldn't live in the water or the sky
- The seas and oceans were feared by the Jews
- The "heavens" were reserved for deity
- God had created a land just for them

"And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." – Genesis 17:8 ESV

- The Israelites understood the value of land
- Not only was the land to be **inhabitable**, but it was also to be **life-sustainable**
- God created plant life that would ultimately sustain animal and human life
- He was preparing a means by which mankind could fulfill His mandate to "be fruitful and multiply"

Day 4: God creates a hospitable environment for man

- The sun provided a temperature conducive to life
- The moon controlled the tides of the seas
- The sun, moon, and stars are not gods, they are the creations of an omnipotent God

"The slant of the earth, tilted at an angle of 23°, gives us our seasons. If it was not tilted exactly at 23° we would not only lose our seasons but life itself...If our moon were closer, our tides would daily inundate whole continents." – R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginnings and Blessing*

Day 5: God creates aquatic and avian life

- They are commanded to "be fruitful and multiply"
- They are programmed to re-create and produce more of their kind
- They are to fill their respective habitats with life

Day 6: God creates terrestrial life

- These are land-dwellers
- Domesticated animals, small creatures, and game
- They too are commanded to “be fruitful and multiply”
- For the sixth time, “God saw that it was good”
- Everything was as it should be, but God’s creation was incomplete
- Something was missing
- And the Israelites would not have missed this omission

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?*

*Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.
You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

*O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth! – Psalm 8:3-9 ESV*

- **Discussion questions**

In what ways do all the initial phases of God’s creation point toward the significance of mankind? Why is this significant?

If Genesis 1:3-25 is a set-up to God’s creation of man, how do you think He intended it to impact the Israelites? How should it impact us?

Go back and look at Psalm 8:3-9. Why was David struck by the majesty of God while reflecting on the creation of man?



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FALL SERIES 2022 – WEEK 3 HOMEWORK

WEEK 3 – Made in His Image

In this lesson, we will cover the creation of Adam and Eve, focusing our attention on the unique status they enjoyed as the only creatures made in the image of God. The emphasis will be on the fellowship they enjoyed with the Father and mandate God gave to them as his vice-regents and the stewards of all that He had made. One of the things we will highlight is the holiness of the seventh day. This is the only day in the narrative where the phrase, “and there was evening and morning, the _____ day” does not exist. It seems that the Sabbath “rest” was to have continued. God’s work was complete, and He had deemed His creation to be “very good.” There was nothing more to do. Man could work and rest in the beauty of God’s garden – forever.

- Read Genesis 1:26-2:25. Write down any thoughts that jump out at you from these verses.

- Now read pages 21-46 of Ken’s Devotional™ on Genesis.

- Read the following quote from Ken’s Devotional™ on Genesis.
“God had created the land on which man would exist. He had prepared the oxygen-rich “heaven” or lower atmosphere that would be necessary for man’s survival. There was the sun and moon to determine the days and seasons of man’s life. The sun’s distance from the earth was perfectly planned so that the ambient temperature on earth would be conducive to human life. And God had even created a protective barrier in the upper atmosphere that would prevent the harmful rays of the sun from doing irreparable damage to His creation. And to top it all off, God had provided an abundant source of food and nourishment in the form of fruit-bearing trees and vegetation.”

Why do you think this is an important point to consider when considering God’s creation of man? How does God’s preparation for his arrival illustrate the value of humanity?

- Look closely at verses 26-27. What do you think it means when it says that man was made in God's likeness? How do you bear His likeness?

What does it mean to be made in His image? In what ways do you bear His image?

None of this was said about any other creature created by God. Why is that significant?

- Summarize what God told Adam and Eve in verses 28-30.

Why do you think God summarized His creation as "very good" after having made the first man and woman? What does that say about humanity's value to God?

- Look at verses 1-3 of chapter 2. What is the significance of God "resting" on the seventh day? If God is all-powerful, why did He cease from working on that day and then deem it holy?

In preparation for next week's lesson, read Hebrews 4:1-13. What parallels is the author attempting to make with the creation account and what do you think he means?

- Read Genesis 4:4-14. How does Moses' description of the garden convey an atmosphere of peace, joy, and contentment?
- Now read verse 15-26. List the many privileges and responsibilities that God gave Adam and Eve.

What was the one prohibition He gave them?