

THE CREATION WEEK – PART 1

Genesis 1:6-19

INTRODUCTION

- "Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start."
- If we wish to know about God, we should start at the very beginning – Genesis
- The creation account in Genesis is unique, in comparison to the creation stories of the ancient near east
- In those myths, one of the gods triumphed over a fierce and powerful beast that represented disorder, then fashioned the ordered world that people knew, and finally was proclaimed by the other gods to be the divine "king" over the world he had created—a position ever subject to the challenge of disorder
- But in the true account of Genesis, the one true God, eternally existing, did not have to overcome a mighty cosmic champion of chaos, but simply by a series of his royal creation decrees called into being the ordered world, the visible kingdom that his decrees continue to uphold and govern
- As we have seen previously, the six days of creation are normal 24 hour days
 - ✓ When used with a number, the Hebrew word day (yom) always and without exception means 24 hours
 - ✓ The Sabbath law given by Moses is based on the 6 days of creation with God resting on the seventh day; this law would be meaningless if the days were anything but 24-hour days (Exodus 20:11)
 - ✓ The fourth day mentions "days, years, signs, seasons, showing the normal system of time in operation

- ✓ Furthermore, we have more proof that these are 24 hour days by the fact that they each have an evening and morning
- Note that in these days, the evening is first – the Biblical day begins with evening, rather than morning (Leviticus 23:32)
- The first day of creation began with darkness, then it was followed by light
- Each of the six days follows a specific pattern:
 - ✓ Introduction: “And God said...”
 - ✓ Fiat (command): “Let there be...”
 - ✓ Fulfillment: “...and there was...”
 - ✓ Description: “...and God made...”
 - ✓ Naming or Blessing: “...And God called” or “And God blessed”
 - ✓ Evaluation: “...and God saw that it was good”
 - ✓ Terminus (conclusion): “...and the evening and the morning were the first day”

I. DAY ONE – HEAVEN, EARTH, LIGHT (1-5)

- A. The creation of the heaven and the earth
- B. The creation of light

II. DAY TWO – THE FIRMAMENT (6-8)

- A. The firmament
 1. This word (*raqiya*) means “expanse” and has the idea of “stretched out”
 2. It is called “Heaven”, and can be understood as what we call “space”
 3. It is not a “vaulted dome” in the sky, nor is it the earth’s atmosphere

4. On day one, God created the universe, on day two, God stretched out the expanse of space which would contain all the heavenly bodies
5. The sun, moon and stars are “set in the firmament of the heaven” (vv.16-17), which confirms the firmament as being the equivalent of space

B. The dividing of the waters

1. With the creation of the firmament, God separated waters to be both above and below it
2. Clearly the waters under the firmament are the waters on the earth
3. But the waters above the firmament are less clear
4. Creationists such as Henry Morris posited that the waters above were a vapour canopy above the earth’s atmosphere
 - a. This is said to have produced a greenhouse effect on earth, giving the planet a favourable environment globally for abundant animal and plant growth
 - b. The water canopy is then said to have fallen to the earth during the flood
5. However there are problems with the canopy theory
 - a. Computer models indicate that a canopy of any significance would have trapped so much heat from the sun that life would have become unbearable
 - b. If the firmament is space, then the waters above the firmament must be beyond space
 - c. In Psalm 148:4, there are described “waters that be above the heavens” still located there long after Noah’s flood
 - d. The book of Revelation describes a “sea of glass” in heaven (Revelation 4:6; 15:2)

- e. It is not clear what precisely the waters above the firmament are, but it would seem to indicate they are waters at the edge of our universe, possibly even in the third heaven where God dwells

III. DAY THREE – DRY LAND, SEAS, PLANT LIFE (9-13)

A. The gathering of waters and appearance of land

1. Prior to this, the entire earth was covered in water
2. God apparently raised up parts of the earth so that the higher ground emerged from the waters, creating dry land
3. The earth would later undergo great topographic change during Noah's flood (Genesis 7)
4. God set bounds for the oceans (Job 38:4-11)
5. God named the Earth and Seas, demonstrating his authority over them and his purposes for them
6. By this stage in the creation, the angelic beings were created
 - a. Though they are not mentioned in Genesis 1, Job 38:7 indicates that they were present and rejoiced when God established the dry land and set the bounds for the seas
 - b. We know they were created during the creation week, as all created things both in heaven and earth were created in those six days (Exodus 20:11)

B. The creation of plant life

1. God classifies plant life in a threefold division: grass, herbs and trees
2. *"The three are intended to cover all types of plants and these are the most obvious comprehensive categories. The term 'grass' is intended to include all spreading ground covering vegetation; 'herbs' includes all bushes and shrubs; 'trees'*

- includes all large woody plants, including fruit-bearing trees.”*
(Henry Morris)
3. Plant life was given the capacity to reproduce – “whose seed was in itself”
 4. Here we see that the creation was made mature, with an “apparent age” – trees fully grown, bearing fruit
 5. Nature produces “after its kind”, a scientific law that refutes the myth of evolution
 - a. A kind of plant or animal life may produce many varieties within its own kind, but it never produces a different kind of life.
 - b. This phrase occurs ten times in Genesis 1 in relation to both inanimate life (vegetation) and animate life (animal kingdom)
 - c. *“Implanted in each created organism was a ‘seed,’ programmed to enable the continuing replication of that type of organism. The modern understanding of the extreme complexities of the so-called DNA molecule and the genetic code contained in it has reinforced the Biblical teaching of the stability of kinds. Each type of organism has its own unique structure of the DNA and can only specify the reproduction of that same kind”* (Henry Morris)
 6. Contrary to the theory of evolution that claims life emerged from the waters in a sort of “primordial soup”, God shows us that life began on the dry ground

IV. DAY FOUR – SUN, MOON, STARS (14-19)

- A. The creation of lights in the heavens
 1. On the first day, God said, “Let there be light,” but on the fourth day God says, “Let there be lights.”
 2. God formed the great heavenly bodies to give light upon the earth

B. The purpose of the lights

1. All of the stars and planets were created in relation to the earth and mankind
2. Contrary to pagan astrology which says man is in subjection to the power and influences of the hosts of heaven, all these things were made for us, not us for them (Jeremiah 10:1-2)
3. They are for signs
 - a. Astrologers under the influence of Satan have perverted the significance of the stars for evil (Isaiah 47:13)
 - b. The term “sign” is used later in reference to the plagues upon the Egyptians, signs that God’s power and wisdom was far greater than their gods (Deuteronomy 29:2-3)
 - c. This is surely the greatest “sign” that the sun, moon and stars can convey – that God is glorious, majestic and powerful (Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:19-20)
 - d. They provided a sign of the first coming of Christ (Matthew 2:1-2)
 - e. They will provide signs of the return of Christ (Joel 2:30-31; Matthew 24:29-30)
4. They are for seasons, days, and years
 - a. God created the days and the seasons to regulate man’s earthly existence
 - b. The sun and moon affect vegetative growth on earth (Deuteronomy 33:14)
5. As in v.4, God “divide(s) the light from the darkness” (v.18)
 - a. Morally and spiritually, God intends there to be a separation between light and darkness, good and evil

- b. God has shown us what is good and what is evil through the law and through conscience (Romans 2:15; 3:20) – he alone makes this division for us, and we cannot know the difference apart from his revelation
6. The sun, moon and stars “rule” over the day and night
- a. This shows God’s perfect order – everything is created for a purpose (cf. Proverbs 16:4)
 - b. This shows God’s designated authority – God has ordained authorities and hierarchies in the natural realm, the angelic realm, and in human society (state, family and church)
 - c. The perfect, unwavering rulership of the sun and moon should be patterns for all other rulers to follow
 - d. God is the ultimate, sovereign ruler over all other rulers, including the sun (see Joshua 10)
7. God seems to be deliberately challenging any notion of deifying or worshipping the sun and moon
- a. They are created on the fourth day, not the first day
 - b. There was light before the sun
 - c. The names “sun” and “moon” are not used – the Hebrew terms are also the names of pagan gods
- C. He made the stars also
- 1. It seems the greatest understatement to describe the creation of all the stars in the universe with such brevity!
 - 2. We have no idea how many stars there are – in the *observable* universe, there is estimated to be about 10 billion *galaxies*, and each galaxy has, on average, about 100 billion stars, which equates to 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 (that’s 1 billion trillion), or 10 to the power 21

3. Though we don't know the number of the stars, God does – “He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.” (Psalm 147:4)
4. The sun, which is the “star” of our solar system, is comprised of plasma, a superheated type of matter, created by nuclear fusion
5. The energy produced by the sun in one second is about 3.8×10^{26} joules, which is about 650,000 times as much energy the earth consumes in an entire year

CONCLUSION

1. The heavens declare the glory of God, but do I?
2. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)
3. As God set the course of the sun and the moon, so he sets the course of our lives
4. But whereas the sun and moon obey their Lord, how often to we deviate from the path he sets for us!
5. “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)