

Sunday, June 19, 2022 pm

JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE (5) (Continued)

In the Beginning

Genesis 1

Last week, we began examining Genesis 1 as part of our ongoing monthly study – Journey through the Bible. With the first 4 lessons in this study being introductory, with last week’s lesson we began to examine the text beginning with Genesis 1. We discussed the book of Genesis as being authored by Moses, how “In the beginning” is a reference to the beginning of everything. We also noticed that God is the one who spoke this world into existence. In that lesson we made a concise case for the existence of God and how He is creator. We also talked about His power as He spoke and the universe came into existence. Today we continue our examination of the first few verses of Genesis 1.

I. Created –

- a. The word for **create** is from the Hebrew, בָּרָא (bā-rā’) and is defined as, to shape or create. The word is always used of divine activity – God working and is found about 50 times in the Old Testament. In our text, it describes God creating the world out of nothing. This act is confirmed by various other texts about creation -Psalm 33:6, Hebrews 11:3. Before God spoke there was nothing. He spoke everything into existence. The word in the Old Testament is always attributed to God.
- b. The heavens and the earth – the expanse of the universe. NOTE:¹ It is observed that the expression, “the heavens and the earth” is intended as a **merism**, (a literary device where two contrasting parts of the whole refer to the whole).² If that is the case, the description would be the earth and everything else (that is not the earth – hence heaven). Together, they would be the universe.
- c. Some thoughts on Genesis 1:1
 - i. IN Genesis 1:1 you have the 5 building blocks of the universe – Time (beginning), Force (God), Action (Created), Heavens (space), Earth (matter).
 - ii. Mike Willis in his newly released commentary on Genesis observes several things logically established by Genesis 1:1.
 1. It denies atheism and humanism
 2. It denies polytheism – while God is triune and the word for *God* (elohim) is a plurality (as we noted last week), the is clearly a oneness (complete unity) associated with the Biblical God. If you study paganistic systems, including their creation accounts, you find this their gods are not united.
 3. It denies materialism – the naturalistic belief that matter is eternal and nothing operates outside of a materialistic view
 4. It denies pantheism – the worldview that states God IS the world or in everything in the world. Genesis 1:1 shows God created it implying clearly that the natural universe is NOT Him
 5. It denies fatalism – the doctrine that controls everyone and everything thus removing any freewill. We find that in the creation God gave man freewill.
 - iii. Genesis 1:1 also ASSUMES the existence of God. As we noted in our last lesson, the Bible, including the creation account, is written with the assumption that God was already there, OUTSIDE of His creation.

II. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep (1:2)

- a. There was SOME chaos after the initial creation. How long it lasted we are not told.

¹ Willis, Mike. The Book of Genesis 1, Truth Publications, Athens, AL. © 2021. Pg. 124.
Merism, ² Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merism> , 6/10/2022.

- i. **Without form** – indicates the idea of “formless”. It was there but it was not shaped yet. Ultimately, the cosmos had not yet been shaped.
 - ii. **Void** – a word that means empty and implies that there was nothing on the created planet. We know this as we continue to read Genesis 1 and God proceeds to organize and create ON the planet and in the universe.
- b. Some want to use this to say that after God created the universe, He let it set for a prolonged period of time. They argue that this explains the age of the earth being billions (the latest is ~4.53 billion) and the universe being billions more (as of now about 13:7 billion. Expect it to change – TT.). Some argue that during this time there were forms of life, some even advocating pre-adamic forms of man’s ancestors. For some reason, not given, God destroyed the world and started over.
- c. There are many problems with the gap theory.
 - i. First, It is NOT stated or implied, and thus reads into the Biblical text what is not there. You have to go elsewhere to invent this belief. In other words, you need help to read a gap into this text.
 - ii. Second, the dating of the earth by naturalists is constantly changing because science is constantly being refined. BUT a major issue they will not address in their dating methods is the assumption that the ways things have developed has been constant (the way things are now is the way they have always been) throughout all of geologic history. IOW, they fail to take into account the impact that major disasters can have, such as a worldwide catastrophic flood, volcanoes, etc., AND the inconsistency of the results of the methods they use AND the fossil records.
 - iii. Third, Exodus 20:11 notes that in 6 days God made the heavens and the earth. The word for “day” that is used in that text is “yom” (יֹמִי). It is the same word found in Genesis 1:5 (2x)ff. Consider the usage of this word in the Old Testament,
 - 1. EVERY time the word is used with a number (410 times) it is always an ordinary day.³
 - 2. Evening and morning, whether with the word day or not (together used ~60 times) it always refers to an ordinary day. (cf. Exodus 18:13-14 – Moses judged from morning to evening; Numbers 28:4 – a lamb offered in the morning and another in the evening; 1 Kings 17:6 – ravens fed Elijah both in the morning and evening; Psalm 55:17 - *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: And he shall hear my voice;*
 - 3. 52 times, night with day is used and is always a 24-hour day or some portion thereof. Genesis 8:22 – day and night will not cease as long as the earth remains; Exodus 13:21 – God provided light for Israel in the wilderness day and night; Psalm 1:2 – in His law he meditates day and night
 - iv. Fourth, another source noted 3 observations from the text of Genesis 1 that conflict with this belief⁴:
 - 1. Genesis 1:2 in Hebrew begins with the word, “And” which ties what is said in verse 2 to the creation statement of verse 1. Many versions, for some reason, leave this and out. The KJV rightly includes it. Hebrews word resources consider verse 2 to be an explanation of the creation of verse 1.
 - 2. Genesis 1:26 says man was created in God’s image and given dominion over ALL the earth and EVERY creature. The gap theory implies there were many generations, in fact most of time, where man did not have dominion over God’s creation.

³ <https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/how-old-earth/> A video lecture that accompanied this article. (7:09ff)

⁴ Jackson, Wayne; Article, [Genesis 1:1-2 - The Gap Theory : Christian Courier](#)

3. Genesis 1:31, "Then God saw everything that He had made, and it was very good." Was that which was created BEFORE the Genesis 1 account anything less than good? NOTICE also throughout Genesis 1 that there is NO death mentioned or implied. In fact, the concept is not introduced until Genesis 2:17 where God warned Adam to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil or he would die. We do not read of death until Genesis 3 and thereafter.
- v. If someone contends that after Genesis 1:1, when God recreated the world, He did so just as it is recorded in Genesis 1, I would ask: Why could He not have done it as recorded in Genesis 1 in the first place? If God is eternal and all powerful and can speak creation into existence, then ALL of Genesis 1 CAN be literal. And I believe it is.
- vi. So why this argument? This is an attempt to reconcile naturalistic evolution with the Genesis 1 Biblical account. When one does this, what does that do to his view of the rest of God's word, especially when it conflicts with modern day popular beliefs (such as gender identity, the leadership role of women, ecumenicalism, etc.)
- vii. To read a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 takes help and usually an extrabiblical agenda, and whether intended or not, it does great violence to interpreting the rest of scripture as well. Can we read into the text what we want any time we want to?
- viii. Furthermore, there is plenty of evidence that points towards a "young earth" with much of its current data being the results of natural catastrophic events.
- d. The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. We find here the Holy Spirit involved in creation as previously mentioned. He was doing His work as well.

III. Let there be light – Genesis 1:4

- a. The God said... - previously we addressed the word of God associated with creation.
- b. God creates lights in the midst of darkness. It is worthy of note, that in this creation, the natural light we depend upon has not yet been created (that will be day 4 – Genesis 1:14).
- c. We of course, know the spiritual significance of this statement as we understand that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all – 1 John 1:5, James 1:17 – He is the Father of lights, 1 Timothy 6:16 speaks of dwelling in unapproachable light. etc. We will address the subject of God's light in fuller detail as we deal with His holiness.
- d. And there was light – consider the power of God in this statement and all of creation – He speaks and it happens! No wonder we ought to give consideration to Him.
- e. God saw that the light was good – everything that God creates IS good!
- f. He divided the light from the darkness (and can and will do so spiritually as well).

IV. The evening and the morning were the first day.

- a. Here we are introduced to the concept of the literal day. When you read the text, what is your conclusion? What is the obvious interpretation BASED on what the text says? Clearly it is a 24 hour day as we know it. What else could "evening and morning" mean?
- b. This also complements Exodus 20:11 which we previously noted, where Moses establishes the Sabbath day occurring every 7 days (Where did the concept of a week come from?).
- c. That ought to settle it, and Christians ought to believe it "by faith" (cf. Hebrews 11:3) .

V. Days 2 – 6 – the other days of creation.

- a. In conclusion, we mention each day here.
- b. Day 2 (Gen 1:6-8) – the firmament (the expanse above the earth) and waters above and below it to be divided. Or "oceans and atmosphere" as described by some.
- c. Day 3 (Gen 1:9-13) - land and sea are divided, and plant life (notice this is described as being created BEFORE the sun was created)..
- d. Day 4 (Genesis 1:14-19) – Sun, moon and stars – the bodies in the heavens. The sun assigned for its purpose where the earth is concerned. NOTE that it is in the PERFECT location to sustain life on earth.

- e. Day 5 (Genesis 1:20-23) – sea creatures and birds in the air.
- f. Day 6 (Genesis 24-31) – land creatures, insects, and finally human beings created “in the image of God” (1:26-28)
- g. Some observations about these days:
 - i. The 6 days of creation fit nicely into 2 patterns. Days 1- 3 are preparatory, Days 4-6 find their use. Consider –
 - Day 1 – Day and night; Day 4 – Sun and moon to rule the day and night
 - Day 2 – Firmament separated from waters, Day 5 – fish and birds that dwell in the firmament and waters
 - Day 3 – Sea and land separated, Day 6 – land creatures, including man created to dwell on land.
 - ii. Kind – In this chapter we find a law of reproduction that to this day still holds. Note vs. 11 is the first mention of the word “kind” which will be found 10 times in Genesis 1.
 - iii. God saw that it was good – mentioned 7 times in chapter 1. What God creates is good. Furthermore, when he completed His creation, and after man we read in vs. 31, “And it was VERY good.

There are many lessons to consider as we notice the creation of God. As noted, in our next lesson we are going to examine why we need to take this chapter (AND the next several chapters - through 10) and accept them as literal historical events. We have show briefly in this lesson why we ought to believe in God, and accept His awesome power AND word. Consider, IF His word can materially create everything in this world, what does that say about how we ought to consider what He tells us spiritually. Will you accept what He says? Think about it!