



The Creation of the Universe and Mankind Genesis 1-2

Introduction

Genesis is a book of invaluable, factual history along with some unexplained mysteries. For that reason, there is a vital need for every seeker of God to reaffirm his or her belief system on: (1) the absolute validity of one, true, eternal God and His instructional, infallible Word; and (2) the universal supremacy of God as the infinitely powerful sovereign ruler who reigns with unrivaled majesty and unchallenged authority. Thus, we trust God's Word as written and know that He has harmonized all of the unexplained passages.

OUTLINE of GENESIS 1 and 2

- I. Beginning of History - Genesis 1:1-2**
- II. Six Days of Creation - Genesis 1:3-31**
- III. Day of Rest - Genesis 2:1-3**
- IV. Forming of Man and Eden - Genesis 2:4-14**
- V. God's Clear Commands - Genesis 2:15-17**
- VI. Forming of Woman - Genesis 2:18-23**
- VII. Pattern for Marriage - Genesis 2:24-25**

I. Beginning of History - Genesis 1:1-2

A. Time Entered Eternity - Genesis 1:1

"In the beginning God created the heavens and earth." This awesome truth evokes a response of humble adoration and endless praise. Our Majestic Glorious Almighty God with His indescribable power, created our universe with time and space out of the infinite nothingness of eternity past. This magnificent verse is a topic sentence introducing the entire creation account. It describes in part what God did on the first day of creation (Genesis 1:1-5). The Hebrew "Elohim," used for God in Genesis 1:1 is in the plural tense, implying the work of our Triune God. It embraces the creative will of the Father, enacted by the Son (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2), accompanied by the hovering Presence of the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:2).

B. All Was Created Out of Nothing - Genesis 1:2

"The earth was without form, and void (empty); and darkness was on the deep." Initially, the universe was created "ex nihilo" (out of nothing), and was disorganized, unproductive and uninhabited. As His Spirit brooded over the earth's chaotic condition, God began organizing the universe with heavenly bodies, galaxies and the earth.

C. Gap Theory

In order to reconcile Scripture with modern scientific discovery, many geologists, archeologists and liberal theologians have postulated the "Gap Theory" which advocates an indefinite time gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. They explain this is why the earth was *"without form and void"* at the outset and allowed for a satanically controlled, rebellious, prehistoric man on the earth. However, because of the structure of the Hebrew language, most evangelical and Hebrew scholars believe there was no creative gap and that this was God's first move to prepare the earth for habitation.

D. The Age of the Earth and Man

There is very little in the Bible to indicate how long ago God created the earth and mankind. Many scientists point to sedimentary strata, fossils and the decay of radioactive minerals to calculate the age of the earth. Using carbon 14 dating and nuclear physics, they speculate that the earth is between three hundred thousands and several billion years old. After finding the remains of prehistoric men in England, Java and Peking, scientists speculate that man lived from 200,000 to 500,000 years ago and that Neanderthal man lived 50,000 to 100,000 years ago. Nothing in Scripture validates these speculations. Most Bible scholars place the age of man between 10,000 and 30,000 years by either: (1) analyzing the genealogy gaps in Genesis 5 and 11 or (2) interpreting a "day" as an indefinite time period. It is important that we allow our sovereign God to harmonize the mysteries and tensions of antiquity before Adam. This study of Genesis will use the literal, historical method of interpreting the Bible.

II. Six Days of Creation - Genesis 1:3-31

A. Six Days or Six Geological Ages?

After forming the entire universe, God began fashioning the heavenly bodies around the earth, the earth's physical structure itself and all living things including mankind. The term "day" ("yom" in Hebrew) is used in two ways in the Bible: (1) to designate a literal "24-hour day": *"For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and made it holy"* (Exodus 20:10-11). (2) to describe each day as an indefinite period of time or "day-age": *"with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"* (Peter 3:8).

Proponents of the “day-age” theory believe that each day of creation was a geological period. This allows them to conform the Biblical creation account to modern scientific discoveries and theories. Whether we are convinced of the “24-hour day” theory or the “day-age” theory, we need to remember that Scripture is sufficient, but not always exhaustive. It does not share every detail of God’s operation in the physical and actively alive world. In our study of the creation we will interpret God’s word “yom” as a literal “24-hour” day.

1. The First Day, light and darkness
- 1:3-4

After He formed the universe on the first day, God created “*light*”. He divided the light from the darkness and called the light “*Day*” and the darkness “*Night*”. The light was not the sun which was created later (verses 14-16). It may have been the “*shekinah*”, a non-Biblical term that expresses the light, presence and glory of God (Exodus 13:21; Revelation 22:5). Darkness is the absence of light, not a creation. It often connotes evil in Scripture. These events comprised the morning and evening of the first day.

2. The Second Day, “*firmament*” -
1:6-8

On the second day God separated the heavenly expanse (firmament) from the earth and ordered some of the waters to remain on earth and some above the earth in the atmosphere (Psalm 33:7). Moses called the firmament “*Heaven*” to describe everything above the earth from the atmosphere to the stellar heavens.

3. The Third Day, “*land*,” “*seas*,”
“*grass*,” “*plants*” and “*trees*” -
1:9-13

On the third day, God created beauty as well as order and purpose for mankind’s benefit. He called the land “*Earth*” and the waters “*Seas*” and saw that “*it was good*” (Psalm 104:31). Next, God started making the uninhabitable earth productive with life. He created vegetation that provided food for man and animals. Note the phrase “*according to its kind*” describing seeds and fruits. This is the principle of reproduction that applies to all life and provides for maintaining the individual characteristics of each kind. “*And God saw that it was good.*”

4. The Fourth Day, “*greater light*,”
“*lesser light*” and “*stars*” -
1:14-19

God had created light before (1:3), but here He began and finished the creation of the sun, moon and stars. The earlier light may have been similar to the sun but

there is no reason to conclude that it was identical to it. The purposes of the “*lights in the firmament of the heavens*” were to: (1) distinguish day from night; (2) provide signs that relate to faith, weather; prophesy, and judgment (Matthew 24:29); (3) distinguish the seasons; and (4) provide heat and light energy (Psalm 19:1-6; Matthew 16:1-3, 24:29 Luke 21:25). “*And God saw that it was good*”.

5. The Fifth Day, “*sea creatures*” and
“*winged birds*” - 1:20-23

On this day, God created fish and every other kind of sea creature from the largest to the smallest. He also made birds to fly across the face of the heavens. The waters were teeming with marine life and the birds were swarming over the face of the earth. “*And God saw that it was good.*” And He blessed them and said, “*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters and the earth.*” The blessing meant that they had received life-giving divine power by which they themselves would be capable of reproducing the life they had received.

6. Sixth Day, “*cattle*,” “*creeping things*,” “*beasts*” and “*man*” -
1:24-31

On the sixth day, God continued creating nobler and higher forms of animal life.

a. Domestic Animals, Beasts,
Creeping Things -
verses 24-25

He made domestic animals (cattle), short-legged animals (creeping things) and wild animals (beasts). Each was made “*according to its kind*. And God saw that it was good.”

b. Mankind - verses 26-31

God directed that man be made in His own image and likeness. The emphasized uniqueness of human beings included godly qualities of intellect, emotions, self-determining will, moral integrity, responsibility, a functioning conscience and God-consciousness. As the crown and climax of His creation, mankind was given dominion over all forms of life on earth. In effect, God charged humanity with helping Him regulate nature. God blessed His creation, male and female, and told them to populate and subdue the earth, and rule over the animal kingdom. He reminded them to oversee the seeds of every herb and fruit tree as their food and care for green herbs for all living creatures. “*Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.*” These verses are a general record of human creation. A more detailed account follows in 2:4-7, 18-23.

B. The Power of God's Words

Note that creation was accomplished by the sheer majestic power of God's voice. He started without materials - no recipe, no blueprint, no instructions - and simply said *"Let there be . . ."* and it happened.

- *"The voice of the Lord is powerful. The voice of the Lord is majestic"* (Psalm 29:4).
- *"By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host. . . For he spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast"* (Psalm 33:6, 15).
- *"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible"* (Hebrews 11:3).

There is no need to struggle with evolutionists, the gap theory, day-age theory or modern scientific declarations about creation. We are imperfect human beings with finite minds trying to rationalize everything into systematic order. God is perfect, infinitely intelligent and sovereign. He can harmonize and resolve everything in the Bible that is problematic or inconsistent to us. We must let God be God. He expressed His will and with His awesome strength and divine power He brought the universe and mankind into being.

III. Day of Rest - Genesis 2:1-3

Chapter 1 gave an overall description of the creation of the universe, man and woman. After God completed His work (1:1-31), He rested on the seventh day. He did not rest because of weariness, but to establish a pattern for man's need for rest in his weekly work cycle. He also blessed the day and sanctified it as a memorial to His creative work. In the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-11), Moses' Sabbath ordinance was based on the creation week. It required setting the seventh day apart for physical rest and it became a special day of worship for man, carried over into the Mosaic law. However, God's rest and the rest commanded in the fourth commandment were merely a shadow of good things to come, namely, the spiritual, redemptive rest for all those who exercise faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. See Hebrews 4:1-10.

IV. Forming of Man and Eden - Genesis 2:4-14

Genesis 2 gives a more detailed account of how God made Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden.

A. The Forming of Man - Genesis 2:4-7

Using moist dirt, God formed man into an adult body and *"breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being"* (soul). The man was given

a unified body-spirit-soul with a heart (Proverbs 4:23), an active conscience (Proverbs 20:27) and an awakening spirit (Job 32:8). His soul was the subject or bearer of life; his spirit animated his flesh and produced his soul; His flesh was the environment of life; and His heart the organ of his life. Man's value is not in the material content of his body, but in the immaterial quality of life that forms his spirit and soul. This spiritual element enables him to have fellowship with God.

B. Man's Moral Accountability to God

God created man as a morally responsible being. If man evolved, as the evolutionists claim, he would be only an animal, without moral responsibility and accountability. Scripture presents man as a moral creature with accountability to God for his actions. Man also is a soul and thus eternal. Moreover, man is made in the image of God, hardly a statement of one who is the product of any form of evolution.

C. The Forming of the Garden

1. Special Trees - 2:8-9

God established a magnificently luxuriant garden for fellowship with man and woman. The garden reflected the glory of God's presence in His resplendent perfection. The lush trees were good for food and included *"the tree of life"* and *"the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"*. The tree of life may have been God's power to sustain human life. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil provided man the opportunity to choose between being his own god or submitting to the majesty and authority of the one and only true, living God.

2. The Rivers and the Location - 2:10-14

The four rivers of Eden were the Euphrates, the Hiddekel (Tigris), the Pishon and the Gihon. The first two rivers exist in Iraq today and run parallel through the Mesopotamian Valley before joining and emptying into the Persian Gulf. The latter two were located further to the east.

It is difficult to pinpoint the location of the Garden because it was probably altered by the great flood of Noah's day. Scripture seems to indicate that the general location of the Garden was in or near the Promised Land (Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 36:35) which suggests the area of Iraq.

V. God's Clear Commands - Genesis 2:15-17

After God put the man in the garden He gave him one, precisely clear command: *"Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but the tree of the knowledge of*

good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." God gave the man the freedom of choice. In effect, He said, "Obey me and live forever or disobey Me and suffer the consequences of a struggling life and death."

Application

God's command clearly applies to us today. Do you know, trust and obey God's Word concerning obedience, sin and the consequences of disobedience? Are you working out your salvation with fear and trembling allowing God to work in you for His own good pleasure (Philippians 2:12a-13)?

VI. Forming of Woman - Genesis 2:18-23

A. Man's Incompleteness and Need - Genesis 2:18-22

God saw that Adam was lonely, incomplete, and inadequate. He needed someone to complement him and work alongside him in filling, subduing, and taking dominion over the earth. God brought every beast of the field and bird of the air to Adam to give them a name. But no adequate helper was found for Adam, so God created another human being to be his helper, his equal and his wife.

B. Mankind's Completeness - Genesis 2:21-23

Using miraculous divine "surgery", God took one of Adam's ribs and graciously fashioned a woman in the likeness of Adam, except for gender. Adam rejoiced and called her Woman because she was "*bone of my bones*" and "*flesh of my flesh*". Moses wrote, "man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

VII. Pattern for Marriage - Genesis 2:24-25

The man and woman had no guilt or knowledge of evil before the Fall. They were naked, shameless and innocent. They were joyously gratified with their union with God and their dwelling place.

God had instituted the core requirements and pattern for a godly marriage:

- One man and one woman (monogamous and heterosexual),
- Both mutually complete each other physically and spiritually in Christ.
- Husband to love, cleave to, support and be head of the wife.
- Woman to love, cleave to, and complement the husband, and bear children (though not essential to be a complete person).

Application

Do you accept the fact that God has chosen not to make all Biblical mysteries clear to us (Deuteronomy 29:29)? How do you control your tendency to be argumentative, disrespectful or uncharitable in your discussions with others about the mysteries of the Bible? How do you react to things that you don't understand?

"No subject of contemplation will tend to humble the mind, than thoughts of God . . . Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of the Deity" (C.H. Spurgeon).

QUESTIONS

All questions are based on the New King James Version of the Bible.

DAY ONE: Read Notes and References.

1. In Genesis 1:1 what does the Hebrew word for God, Elohim, imply?
2. What does the phrase “*according to its kind*” mean?
3. Describe God’s “*likeness*” and “*image*” as applied to the creation of mankind?
4. Why did Adam need a helper?
5. What are the basic responsibilities of the husband and wife in a marriage?

DAY TWO: Read Genesis 3:1-7; Isaiah 14:14 and 1 John 2:15.

6. a. Whom do you suspect the serpent is when he uses his cunning craftiness to challenge the woman about God’s authority?

b. After planting the seed of doubt, what did the serpent say in blatant denial of God’s words?
7. What three things enhanced the woman’s response to the serpent’s temptation?
8. After the man and woman ate the prohibited fruit, why were they ill at ease with one another and with God?
9. Name some of the temptations the world puts in front of you concerning the doubting of God's Word?

DAY THREE: Read Genesis 3:8-13 and 1 John 1:9.

10. Why did the man’s and woman’s moral innocence change after they ate the forbidden fruit?
11. a. Instead of confessing their wrongdoing outright, what did each of them do?

b. ♥(Heart Question) Have you ever reacted to wrongdoing in a similar way? If so, tell how.

DAY FOUR: Read Genesis 3:14-24; Galatians 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 2:14 and 1 John 3:8.

12. a. ? (Thought Question) In the Lord’s curse on the serpent, who is “*your seed*” and who is “*her Seed*”?
b. What do you think is the meaning of “*bruise your head*” and “*bruise His heel*”.

13. What was God's judgment on the woman?

14. Explain God's judgment on the man in your own words.

DAY FIVE: Read Genesis 4:1-15 and 1 John 3:12.

15. Why did God respect Abel and his offering but not Cain and his offering?

16. a. Do you think it was Cain's anger with God or jealousy of his brother that motivated him to kill his brother? Explain.

b. What was Cain's punishment?

DAY SIX: Read Genesis 4:16-26, 2:24 and Matthew 19:4-5

17. a. Even though Cain rebelled and was expelled from God's presence, his descendants helped develop some good steps in the progress of civilization. Name four.

b. What does this tell us about God's grace?

18. Did Lamech violate God's desire for husband and wife? If so, how?

19. What is the meaning of Eve's statement, "*For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel*"?

20. a. Who were Seth and Enosh?

b. What are they remembered for?

c. What would you like to be remembered for?