

9/13/96

THE SIX DAYS OF CREATION
GENESIS 1

NEED: TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD AS CREATOR

PROPOSITION: GOD'S CREATION OF THE EARTH IS REVEALED TO US
AS THE PRODUCT OF THE SIXTH DAY WORK WEEK.

OBJECTIVE: TO LEAD ALL THE PEOPLE TO HONOR GOD AS THEm
CREATOR

INTRODUCTION:

The drama of creation is presented graphically in this chapter. The sovereign God is revealed as creating the heavens and the earth in six days, and then taking the seventh day for rest and for celebration. The whole chapter presents creation from an earthly perspective. It is viewed through the eyes of a human being standing on the earth. It is viewed from the perspective of the earth itself

The presentation of the creation revelation is designed to lead men to acknowledge God as their Creator. It is not designed to answer all of their questions about "how" the creation took place but it is designed to tell us "who" did the work of creation. The Creator is Elohim, the God of Israel, and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The problems that modern man has with this chapter differ from those of the ancient students of Scripture. In the ancient day the problem seems to have been why it took God seven days to create the universe. Was He not able to do it in one day if He is the all powerful God? The

problem of modern man with this chapter is its simplicity and brevity. We have been impressed with the discoveries of science and have concluded that they conflict with creation that takes place in seven days. Surely, we conclude God must have worked through a longer process than just seven days of creation. It is not my purpose to try to resolve all of the apparent conflicts between this simple chapter and the conclusions of modern science. It is rather my purpose to help you understand that this chapter answers once and for all the question about who created the universe, why He created the universe and what our relationship is to be to the Creator of the universe. This chapter in its simplicity sets forth profound and every lasting truth about our God and the world in which we live.

I. GOD WORKED IN CREATION BY HIS SPIRIT THROUGH HIS WORD.

The most apparent thing to us as we begin to read this chapter is the presence of the Spirit of God and the power of the Word of God. Both the Spirit of God and the Word of God were important agents in the creative act of God

1. The Spirit of God.

"Now the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." This descriptive statement gives us insight into the condition of the substance that would become the earth before God began the establishment of order and life on the earth. This verse does not speak to the whole universe but rather focuses upon the earth. The earth was seen as being "formless and empty" and dark. But in the midst of that formless uninhabited darkness the Spirit of God is present and already at work. The Spirit of

God is described as hovering over the mass of the earth like a bird hovering over its nest. He is there to bring about the will of Elohim upon the mass itself. We must always be mindful that the Spirit of God was the expression of the presence and power of God in the creation.

2. The Word of God.

The refrain that occurs again and again is, "And God said." These words introduce every step in the six day order of creation. Each step is initiated by God speaking.

God said, "Let there be light." Whenever God spoke, whatever God spoke, was done. On day one when God said, "Let there be light, there was light."

When we come to the New Testament we discover that Jesus was the Word of God in the creation. We are told that the word "was in the beginning with God, and was God." We are also told that without Him, "Not anything was made that was made." So we have present in the creation itself God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

As you look upon the universe around you and particularly to that which fills up the earth on which you and I live, we must remember that it is here by the will of God and through the power of God as expressed through His Spirit and His Word. The Spirit and the Word of God brought into being everything that is. We should always stand in awe and in wonderment at the power and glory of the Spirit of God and the Word of God.

II. GOD WORKED IN AN ORDERLY FASHION.

As you read Genesis 1 there is an obvious development of order in the chapter. There is a design that emerges as you read the chapter.

This becomes apparent when you lay the days side by side. Day one and day four have a relationship to each other. On day one God creates light and establishes day and night. On day four God puts the sun and the moon and the stars in their place. He puts them in their place as the light holders for the earth.

Day two and day five have a relationship. On day two God separated the waters. The impact seems to be that on day two God separated the waters above from the waters beneath. This involved the separation of the sky from the waters that covered the earth. On day five God filled the waters with living creatures and created birds to fly through the sky. He created all of those creatures that were to fill these two portions of the earth.

There is a relationship between day three and day six. On day three God caused the land to produce vegetation with seed bearing plants and trees. He saw that the land was covered with all kinds of vegetation.

On day six God created the animals that were to live on the earth. He said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds. Livestock, creatures that move along the ground and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And God gave these animals the permission to eat from

the vegetation that He had created on day three.

Also, on day six God created man in his own image and after His own likeness. He gave to the man dominion over all the beings that He created on both day five and day six.

As you read the record it is obvious that God moved from one form of life to another form of life in an orderly and progressive fashion. All of it was progressing toward the sixth day when God would create man, the masterpiece of His creation.

There have been many attempts to demonstrate that the order that is revealed in Genesis 1 corresponds to the order that the scientists have discovered in their study of creation. It is not my purpose tonight to deal with any correspondence that might be there. I would caution us from getting too excited about some apparent correspondence. I would warn you that scientists have a way of changing their mind and their conclusions quite often. They reach another level of understanding and change their earlier conclusions. If you lock Genesis 1 into the present understanding of the scientific community, what will you do when they change their mind and come up with different conclusions? It is better for us to be content to confidently affirm that God created this universe in an orderly fashion. He revealed Himself to be a God of order and design in creating the earth.

III. GOD APPROVED EVERYTHING HE MADE.

One of the interesting insights found in this first chapter of Genesis is in the statement, "And God

saw that it was good." This ordinarily occurred at the end of each day. God gave His own divine evaluation and expressed his satisfaction in what He had made.

When he had reached the conclusion of the creation at the close of the sixth day Moses wrote, "God saw all that He had made and it was very good. "

We are to learn to from this first that everything God made conformed to His purpose. "Good" is not used in the sense of moral goodness. Rather it is used in the sense of being useful, or accomplishing that which it was designed to accomplish. As God created each piece of the creation, He observed that it did fit the design that He had in mind and was useful for the purpose He had in mind. God saw that it was good.

Another lesson that we can learn from this is that the Creator is the Judge of His creation. A part of his relationship to that which He has made is that of judge. It is His prerogative to determine whether or not what He has made is good. Before the introduction of human sin without exception the Judge of all the earth declared that everything that He had made was good.

IV. GOD BLESSED THE IDGHER ORDERS OF CREATION.

Another insight into the relationship of God to His creation is found in this drama. It occurs first when God has created the great creatures that live in the sea and the birds that fly through the air. We read, "God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number."

It occurs again when God has completed the creation of the animals that live on the earth and man Himself on the sixth day. Again, it reads, "God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill up the earth and subdue it. "

So, what we have at the end of the sixth day is a freshly created earth with the blessing of God upon it. His blessing rest in a peculiar way upon the animals and the man that He has made. His blessing demonstrates itself in their fruitfulness and multiplication. This is a reminder to us of the consequences of what happens in the third chapter. At the conclusion of the third chapter after the sin of man the blessing has been lost and a curse is upon the created order and particularly upon the man that God has created. But what a revelation of God it is! The God who created has an inclination to bless. His first response toward His creation is to bless His creation.

This touches on a basic theme of Scripture. The God whose inclination is to bless, but who had the curse His creation because of human sin, went about establishing a way to restore the blessing and to remove the curse. This is the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Through the cross of Jesus Christ, God the eternal creator found a way to remove the curse and restore the blessing.

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V. GOD MADE AS HIS MASTERPIECE.

What ever else we are here to learn from Genesis I, we are to learn that man is the masterpiece of the creator. It is only of man that God says, "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness." It is only to man that he says, "Rule and have dominion."

That man is considered to be the masterpiece is made evident by the fact that he was created last. He is the crowning work of the creative activity of God.

That man is designed to be the masterpiece is made evident by the fact that he is made in the image of God. We will explore the significance of this more fully in our next message from Genesis. That man is intended to be the masterpiece is made clear by the position that he is given in relationship to the rest of creation. He was made the ruler over the rest of creation. He occupies this unique place as he lives under the rule of God in his own life.

Now, what conclusions are we draw from this chapter? We are to draw an obvious conclusion that our God is the Creator of the heaven and the earth. He occupies a position that is unique to himself

We are also to draw the conclusion that as the creator God deserves to be honored and worshiped. That His creation would not give him the honor that belongs to Him as the sovereign Creator is unthinkable. Yet, when we look at human history we discover that His creature man has failed to give him His honor as Creator. The tragic consequence of the modern scientific mind set is that it is that it not only fails to give God the honor that is rightfully His as Creator, it seeks to turn those away from Him who would give Him His honor as Creator. There is a scientific community that has as a basic part of its agenda to replace God with man and to give to some evolutionary process the honor that belongs to the Creator Himself

Another conclusion that one draws from this chapter is that man will best understand who he is when he knows who his Creator is. There needs to be restored to the mind of modern man an understanding that he is God's masterpiece created in God's image.

May God help us to be faithful in honoring our Creator.