

Creation and Blessing: An Expository Study of the Book of Genesis

Wednesday, July 12, 2011

Handout #2

Purpose of the Book:

To reveal how the sin of man is met by the intervention and redemption of God.

Theme of the Book

Genesis shows how God sovereignly chose the nation of Israel as the means through which He would bless all the nations of the earth.

Key Words:

Genesis is the book of beginnings and the book of blessings.

Key Phrase:

“...and in you all the nations of the earth be blessed” (six times).

Key Verses:

Genesis 1:1: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Genesis 3:15: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.”

Genesis 12:1-3: “Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”

Key Lesson:

God created us for blessings and chose us to be a blessing to the world.

Nutshell Outline:

1. The Origin of the Universe: Four Great Events (Genesis 1-11)
 - A. Creation (Genesis 1-2)
 - B. Fall (Genesis 3-5)
 - C. Flood (Genesis 6-9)
 - D. Confusion of Tongues (Genesis 10-11)

2. The Origin of the Hebrew Nation: Four Great Men (Genesis 12-50)
 - A. Abraham ([Genesis 12-24](#))
 - B. Isaac ([Genesis 25-26](#))
 - C. Jacob ([Genesis 27-36](#))
 - D. Joseph ([Genesis 37-50](#))

The Symmetry of Genesis

Form	Fullness
Day 1: Light (1:3-5)	Day 4: Lights (1:14-19)
Day 2: Air (1:6-8)	Day 5: Birds (1:20-23)
Day 2: Water (1:6-8)	Day 5: Fish (1:20-23)
Day 3: Land (1:9-13)	Day 6: Animals (1:24-31)
Day 3: Plants (1:9-13)	Day 6: Man (1:24-31)

Summary: In three days God made the uninhabitable land productive, and in three more days He filled the uninhabited land with life.

The Parallels of the Six Days of Preparation

Preparation Phrase	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
“God said, ‘Let there be’”	1:3	1:6	1:9	1:14	1:20	1:24
“And it was so”	1:3	1:7	1:9	1:15	---	1:24
“God saw that it was good”	1:4	---	1:12	1:18	1:21	1:25
“God called”	1:5	1:8	1:10	---	---	---
“There was evening and there was morning, ___ day”	1:5	1:8	1:13	1:19	1:23	1:31

Overview

Chapter 1 of Genesis shows how God created the universe out of chaos. The beginning ushered in a time of blessing that lasted until the second chaos appeared with the fall in chapter 3. In the creation, God is the subject and His actions are lofty and inspiring. The world was always like it is today. The chaos of sin and the struggle to survive were not a part of the original plan.

Summary Message

Out of the darkened chaos, God sovereignly and majestically created the entire universe in six days, bringing about perfect order and abundant fullness for people to enjoy and to rule. God then blessed and sanctified the seventh day, which marked the completion of creation.

1. God transforms chaos into creation (Genesis 1:1-2)

a. God is the sovereign Creator of all that exists (Genesis 1:1)

It is important to note that nothing is created in Genesis 1:1. It is a summary of God's creative acts in the first chapter, beginning with verse 3. The essential message is that God created everything that exists. He is absolutely sovereign over all matter. Such sovereignty demands our allegiance. When we acknowledge the Creator, it naturally leads to our submission to Him.

b. The chaos necessitates the transformation that occurred at the creation (Genesis 1:2a)

The earth was in a bad state. Something was drastically wrong. The earth was formless and void". Not only that, but darkness covered everything. It is not the purpose of

Genesis to explain how the chaos came into being. It is possible that the fall of Satan (Ezekiel 28) was how the chaos came about, but we don't know this for sure.

c. The Spirit of God ensures the creation (Genesis 1:2b)

The unformed, lifeless mass of the watery earth was under the care of the divine spirit, who hovered over it, ensuring its future development.

2. God creates everything by His powerful word (Genesis 1:3-31)

The next section traces the creation of the universe through six days. The first three days remedy the formlessness.

a. God brings about form and order in creation (Genesis 1:3-13)

1. God sovereignly created light and divided it from the darkness (Genesis 1:3-5)

Day 1 (1:3-5): *“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”*

The means by which God created was His powerful word. God said “let there be, and there was.” He created the light and separated it from the darkness. This shows that God establishes divisions and makes boundaries. God then pronounced His evaluation. He said that the light was good. (fitting, useful). The meaning of the term day in the creation context likely refers to a twenty-four hour day, but saying that opens up more questions than it answers.

2. God sovereignly creates light and divides it from darkness (Genesis 1:6-8)

Day 2 (1:6-8): *“Then God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.’ God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the*

expanse; and it was so. God called the expanse heaven.¹⁵ And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.”

God showed His power again by putting limits on the waters of the earth (cf. [Job 38:8-11](#)). The “expanse” is a reference to the sky (cf. 1:8; 7:11-12; [2 Kgs 7:2](#); [Ps 104:3](#); [148:4-6](#); [Prov 8:28](#)).

3. God provides fertility for the earth (Genesis 1:9-13)

Day 3 (1:9-13): “Then God said, ‘Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear’; and it was so. God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, ‘Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them’; and it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a third day.”

On the third day we see God carrying out two distinct acts: He prepares “the land and the seas,” and He furnishes the land with fruit trees. Unlike the work of the second day, both acts are called “good.”

b. God brings about fullness and harmony in creation (Genesis 1:14-25)

1. God appoints luminaries to regulate the divisions (Genesis 1:14-19)

Day 4 (1:14-19): “Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth’; and it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.”

On the fourth day the lights that God had created were given a purpose, namely, “to separate the day from the night” and “to mark seasons and days and years.” These heavenly bodies were to serve as signs for seasons and days and years (1:14). How did we have days without the sun? How do you have animals and plants living without

sunlight? God is explaining His creation in these verses. Don't worship these things; I've made them! Worship Me!

2. God creates life in the sea and in the sky (Genesis 1:20-23)

Day 5 (1:20-23): *“Then God said, ‘Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.’ God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’ There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.”*

On the fifth day God populated the land with many kinds of living creatures (birds and fish

3. God creates life for the land, human life for His service (Genesis 1:24-25)

Day 6 (1:24-25): *“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind’; and it was so. God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.”*

The “living creatures” are divided into three groups: “cattle, creeping things, and beasts of the earth.” God brings forth these creatures for man’s benefit.

First, we should be thankful for God’s creation. Most Christians express gratitude for God’s gift of salvation—and rightly so. But throughout the Scriptures there is a greater emphasis on expressing gratitude and worship for God’s creation.

Second, we should delight in God’s creation. God calls His creation good. There is beauty in creation. God is a great artist. God Himself enjoys the goodness of His creation ([Ps 104](#); [Prov 3:19](#); [8:22](#)). If pagans worship nature in idolatry, we should worship God for it. God’s creation is amazingly diverse and is completely overwhelming to man.

Finally, we should demonstrate a responsibility toward creation. The world is becoming dirty and ugly. The air is being turned into smog. The rivers are polluted. Toxic chemicals fill the soil. The oceans have become garbage dumps, trash is piling up on the edges of our cities, and oil spills pollute our beaches. All the while many Christians laugh at environmentalists. We must change our actions and attitudes. Maybe you feel like you don’t have the time to spend upholding the environment. Can you encourage someone who is involved? Are there little things you can do like be informed? Can you do your part?

