

Genesis 1-5

The Creator

No scientist or historian can improve upon, “**In the beginning God . . .**” This simple statement refutes the atheist, who says there is no God; the agnostic, who claims we cannot know God; the polytheist who worships many gods; the pantheist, who says that “all nature is God”; the materialist, who claims that matter is eternal and not created; and the fatalist, who teaches that there is no divine plan behind creation and history.

Creation Story not meant as scientific account...widely believed this section of scripture is poetic...not meant to defend the how and why of creation

In fact “why” he created is a great question... it was certainly not to add anything to Himself, since He needs nothing. And actually, creation limits God, since the Eternal must now confine Himself to work in time and human history.

Instead creation seems to be about displaying the characteristics of the WHO: God.

God’s personality is seen in this chapter, for He speaks, sees, names, and blesses. Creation reveals: (1) His wisdom and power (Job 28:23-27; Pro 3:19); (2) His glory (Psa 19:1); (3) His power and Godhead (Rom 1:18-21); (4) His love for insignificant man (Psa 8:3-9); (5) His providential care (Isa 40:12).

The Hebrew name for God in Gen 1-2 is *Elohim* — the name of God that links Him with creation.

El which means “mighty, strong, prominent.”

In Gen 2:4 we have “LORD God” which is *Jehovah Elohim*. *Jehovah* is the covenant name of God and links Him to His people.

The Creation

The existence of the angels and the fall of Satan pre dates Creation

- the angels sang at Creation (Job 38:7)
- Lucifer a prominent being of all God’s created beings (see Eze 28:11-19) wanted to take the place of God (Isa 14:12-17)
- We find Satan already on the scene in Gen 3:1-24, so we know that his fall must have taken place earlier
- The earth was formless, so on the first three days, God formed what He wanted.
- The earth was empty, so God filled up what He had formed
- He made the expanse of the heavens (“firmament”) and filled it with stars and planets

- He made the land and filled it with plants and animals
- He made the seas and filled them with fish and water mammals
- God brought light into being before He placed the lights into the heavens
- Note the principle of separation illustrated in Creation; for God divided light from darkness and seas from land (see 2Co 6:14-18)
- Note too that each living thing was to reproduce “after its kind”; there is no suggestion here of gradual evolution. We may breed different kinds of cattle, but we cannot breed a cow into a reindeer!
- Man is the crown of Creation. There is a “divine conference” among the members of the Godhead before man is created, something not seen at any other step of the Creation.
- Some of the angels had already rebelled against God, and He certainly knew what man would do. Yet, in His love and grace, He molded the first man “in His image,” referring to man’s personality — mind, will, emotions, freedom — rather than his physical appearance. (See Eph 4:24; Col 3:10.)
- Man was given the place of dominion over the earth, the highest position in Creation.
- This explains the attack of Satan; for Satan (Lucifer) had once held this position. If Lucifer could not have the place of God in the universe, then he would try to take the place of God in human’s lives.

The First Sabbath

- The word “Sabbath” simply means “to cease.” God did not “rest” because He was weary
- He ceased from His creative works; the task was now finished. He had blessed the creatures (Gen 1:22) and man (Gen 1:28) & now he blesses the Sabbath by setting it apart as a special day
- Could the Sabbath be about enjoying what has been created?

The Garden

- Moses describes the first home God gave to the first couple
- Gen 1 is the big picture, Genesis 2 & 3 are more of a zoom on some important details
- Gen 2:5 indicates that God needed man to help till the ground
- Man was “formed” and was responsible to dress the garden (tend it) and keep it
- God gave Adam and Eve all they needed for life and happiness, all that was good and pleasant, and He allowed them to enjoy it in abundance

- The two trees are important
- The text in Gen 3:22 suggests that the tree of life sustained life for humankind (see also Rev 22:2)
- Had Adam eaten of the tree of life after he sinned, he could not have died, and then death would not have passed upon all men (Rom 5:12) and Christ could not have died to redeem men
- The tree of knowledge symbolized the authority of God; to eat of that tree meant to disobey God and incur the penalty of death
- We do not know what these trees were, yet it is certain that Adam and Eve understood their importance

The First Law

- Adam was a perfect creature, one having never sinned, but he had the ability to sin
- God made Adam a king with dominion (Gen 1:26). But a ruler can only rule others if he can rule himself, so it was necessary for Adam to be tempted
- God has always wanted His creatures to love and obey Him of their own free will and not out of compulsion or because of reward.
- *Discuss love is only love if free will AND choice**
- This test was perfectly fair and just. Adam and Eve enjoyed liberty and abundant provision in the Garden and did not need the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

The First Marriage

- Everything in Creation was “very good” (Gen 1:31) except the loneliness of Adam. “It is not good for man to be alone” points to the basis for marriage:
 - 1) to provide companionship
 - 2) to carry on the race
 - 3) to help one another and bring out the best
- The word “help-mate” or “helpmeet” (Gen 2:18) refers to helper: one that meets his needs. But this is not best translation...better is “help-against” or “help-opposer”....this lends toward not just companionship, but tension that brings out best
- This companion was not found anywhere in animal creation, thus showing the great gulf that is fixed between brute creatures and human beings made in the image of God. God made the first woman out of the flesh and bone of the first man, and He “closed up the flesh in its place” (Gen 2:21 4, NKJV)

-Adam had named all the animals that God had brought him (Gen 2:19), thus showing that the first man had intelligence, language, and speech. Now he names his bride “woman” (in the Heb. *ishshah* which is related to *ish* meaning “man”). Thus, in name and nature, man and woman belong to each other.

Temptation

1. The tempter

-God is not the author of sin, nor does He tempt people to sin; this is the work of the devil (Jas 1:13)

-We have already seen that Satan fell into sin prior to the work of Gen 1:3

-He was a beautiful angel originally, rejoicing at God’s Creation (Job 38:4-7), but he sinned and was judged by God (Isa 14:12-17; Eze 28:11-19)

-Note that Satan came to Eve in the guise of a serpent, for he is a masquerader and appears to people in his true character

-In Gen 3:1-24, Satan is the serpent who deceives (2Co 11:3); in Gen 4:1-26, he is the liar that murders (Joh 8:44)

2. The target

-Satan aimed at Eve’s mind (2Co 11:1-3; 1Ti 2:9-15) and succeeded in deceiving her

-Man’s mind is a part of his being created in God’s image (Col 3:9-10), so Satan attacks God when he attacks the human mind

-Satan uses lies. He is a liar himself and the father of lies (Joh 8:44)

C. The tactic

-As long as the mind holds to God’s truth, Satan cannot win; but once the mind doubts God’s Word, there is room for the devil’s lies to move in

-Satan questioned God’s Word (Gen 3:1), denied God’s Word (Gen 3:4), and then substituted his own lies (Gen 3:5). Note that Satan seeks to undermine our faith in the goodness of God — he suggested to Eve that God was “holding out on them” by keeping them from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

3. The tragedy

-Eve should not have “given place to the devil” (Eph 4:27); she should have held to God’s Word and resisted him. She did not, nor did Adam, and both experienced God’s punishment for their disobedience.

Punishment

1. Internal

- Immediately there came a loss of innocence and glory and a sense of guilt/shame
- They tried to cover their nakedness with their own works, garments that God did not accept (Gen 3:21)
- Further, we see a loss of desire for fellowship with God. When they heard God approaching, they hid! Guilt, fear, and shame broke the fellowship with God that they had enjoyed before their disobedience
- Note too that there was a growing attitude of self-defense: the man blamed the woman and the woman blamed the serpent. We see here the tragic internal effects of sin.

2. External

- It is likely that the serpent that Satan used was not the crawling creature that we know today
- The name suggests brightness and glory, but because the creature yielded to Satan and shared in the temptation, it was judged and condemned to a lowly life in the dust
- The woman's judgment involved pain in childbirth. She was made subject to her husband.
- The judgment on man involved his work: paradise would be replaced by wilderness, and the joy of ministry in the garden by the sweat and toil in the field.
- It is not work that is God's penalty, because work is not sinful (Gen 2:15). It is the sweat and toil of work and the obstacles of nature that remind us of the fall of man. All creation is cursed and in bondage because of sin (Rom 8:15-25).

3. Eternal

- This is the first Gospel declared in the Bible: the good news that the woman's seed (Christ) would ultimately defeat Satan and his seed (Gal 4:4-5).
- It is from this point on that the stream divides: Satan and his family (seed) oppose God and His family. God Himself put the enmity (hostility) between them, and God will climax the war when Satan is cast into hell (Rev 20:10).
- The OT is the record of the two seeds in conflict; the NT is the record of the birth of Christ and His victory over Satan through the cross.

Salvation

-The only Gospel Adam heard was what God said in Gen 3:15, yet he believed it and was saved

-How do we know he believed it? Because he called his wife's name "Eve" which means "life" or "lifegiver."

-God had said that Adam and Eve would die, and Adam did die physically after 930 years. But he also died spiritually, in that he was separated from God because of sin.

-God promised the birth of a Savior through the woman, and Adam believed this promise and was saved.

-God did not change the physical consequences of sin, but he did remit the eternal consequences — hell.

-**The coats of skins** in Gen 3:21 are pictures of the salvation we have in Christ. There must be the shedding of blood, the offering of innocent life for the guilty. Adam and Eve had tried to cover their sin and shame with leaves (Gen 3:7), but these good works were not accepted by God. Nor does He accept such works today!

-Garments in the Bible are often a picture of salvation. See Isa 61:10 and Zec 3:1-10. The prodigal son was clothed afresh when he came home (Luk 15:22). The garments of self-righteousness and good works are but filthy rags in God's sight (Isa 64:6).

-We also see the extravagant generosity of God that he clothes Adam and Eve and we see that he acts in grace driving them out of the garden.

-They had forfeited their right to the tree of life by disobeying God. If they had eaten of that tree, they would have lived forever in their sinful state. This would mean that the Savior, could not come to die to deliver humans from sin. Thus, in driving Adam and Eve out of paradise, God was showing His grace and mercy to the whole human race.

Genesis 4: Cain & Abel

-Cain is the chief actor in this chapter, and his character and conduct are revealed in four different aspects.

1. The Worshiper

-Eve brought new life into the world "Cain" means "acquired" Abel means "vanity, vapor" — it suggests the futility of life apart from God

-From the beginning we see a division of work: Cain identified with ground, Abel with the flock

-(God had already cursed the ground (Gen 3:17), so Cain is identified with that curse.

-This earliest family must have known a definite place for worship, for both sons brought offerings to the Lord

-That God accepts Abel's offering but rejects Cain and his offering, means that God must have taught Adam and his family how to approach Him

-There are many possibilities for why, but the point here is that God warns Cain that he will be accepted if he does what is right and that sin is crouching at the door and he must subdue it and be its master

2. The Murderer

-Cain does not subdue sin, instead he murders his brother

3. The Wanderer

-Once again God uses his approach to the guilty: where are you/where is your brother?

-Abel's blood cried out to God /God establishes that he hears the cry of injustice/victimized and he responds

-God curses Cain with the ground not yielding for him and a life of wandering

-Cain did not repent of his sin; instead, he showed remorse and despair

-Cain is also fearful and hopeless (anyone who finds me will kill me/this is too much to bear)(btw: who are all these people he's afraid of?)

-God promised to protect Cain and gave him a sign (mark) to verify His promise (lots of great conversation in the rabbinical world of what this mark was)

-Why did God release Cain? For one thing, Cain became a "walking sermon" on the grace of God and the tragic consequences of sin. What a picture of humankind today: restless, hopeless, wandering, defeated!

-Did Cain spend the rest of his life literally wandering? No! He settled down and built a city!

-Though the wandering could also be spiritual

4. The Builder

-“Nod” means “to stray, to wander”, so the very land of Cain's choice speaks of his wandering away from God

-He went away from the presence of God

-Cain certainly married one of his sisters, for by then there were many descendants of Adam (Gen 5:3 indicates 130 years had passed).

-Evaluated from a human point of view, Cain's descendants are an admirable lot.

-Jabal ("wanderer") founded the science of agriculture (Gen 4:20);

-Jubal founded "culture" — music;

-Tubal-Cain founded the metal industries

-In outward appearances, Cain's "city" was a great success, but God made it clear that He had rejected the whole thing.

-In Gen 4:25, God gave Adam and Eve another seed — Seth — which means "the appointed, the substitute" (taking Abel's place)

-God did not try to reform the Cainites, He rejected them and ultimately would condemn them in the flood

-As the Cainites were gradually wandering away from the true worship of God, the Sethites were returning to Him (Gen 4:26) and establishing again their worship of the Lord

(*special note of "Lamech's Message" (Gen 4:23-24). This passage is not clear, and not all Bible students interpret it the same way. Lamech was the seventh from Adam on Cain's side and was a man who displeased God, while Enoch was the seventh from Adam on Seth's side (Gen 5:3-27) and walked with God and pleased God (Heb 11:5). Note that the Cainite line even copied the names of the true believers in Seth's line (Enoch — Enos; Irad — Jared; Mehujael — Mahalaleel; Lamech — Lamech). Some suggest that Lamech had been wounded by a young man, so had killed his attacker in self-defense. If God had avenged Cain, who was guilty of gross murder, surely He would defend Lamech who had killed in self-defense. Another suggestion is that Tubal-Cain had devised the first weapons of brass and iron and that Lamech had proudly demonstrated them to his wives. The Hebrew verbs can be translated in the future tense: "I will slay anyone who wounds me and will not need God's protection, for with these weapons I can avenge myself seventy-seven fold!" Seen in this light, it is the first expression of arrogant defiance and warfare in the Bible.)