# God's Good Creation

**Genesis 1:2-31**

10/12/97

INTRODUCTION:

## *God made it all very good.

**I. DAY 1 - The Heavens/Earth & Light (v. 1-5)**

**II. DAY 2 - A Canopy Expanse in the Sky (v. 6-8)**

**III. DAY 3 - Dry Land/Seas & Vegetation (v. 9-13)**

**IV. DAY 4 - The Sun, Moon, & Stars (v. 14-19)**

**V. DAY 5 - Sea Life & Birds (v. 20-23)**

**VI. DAY 6 - Animals, Reptiles, Insects, & MAN (v. 24-31)**

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INTRODUCTION:

Many of the pagan nations of the ancient world had their own creation stories. But in these stories, their gods evolved out of natural processes connected with the world itself. They believed the material universe was eternal, and it brought their gods into being. But Genesis declares that God existed before creation and is in full control of the physical universe. He called the world into being by His word. His power is absolute. He does not have to conform to nature and cannot be threatened by it. God is sovereign and does not have to share His power with other supernatural beings.
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| DAY OF CREATION | GOD'S CREATION |
|---|---|
| **Day 1** | **Heavens/Earth & Light/Darkness** |
| **Day 2** | **A Canopy Expanse in the Sky** |
| **Day 3** | **Dry Land & Seas; Vegetation** (Plants & Trees) |
| **Day 4** | **Sun/Moon/Stars** |
| **Day 5** | **Sea Life** (fish) **& Birds** |
| **Day 6** | **Animals, Reptiles, Insects & MAN** |
| **Day 7** | **God Ceased ("Rested")** |

## *God made it all very good.

## I. DAY 1 - The Heavens/Earth & Light (v. 1-5)

**v. 2**

**"The earth was without form and void" -**

Some want to interpret this to mean: "the earth became ruined." Some well-meaning Christians, in an attempt to reconcile God's act of creation with the supposed geological evidence that the world is exceedingly old (i.e. 4.5 billion years), see a "gap" between verses 1 & 2.

What is the Gap Theory? Weston W. Fields in his book, Unformed and Unfilled (p. 7) states: "In the far distant, dateless past God created a perfect heaven and perfect earth. Satan was ruler of the earth which was peopled by a race of "men" without any souls. Eventually, Satan, who dwelled in a garden of Eden composed of minerals (Ezekiel 28), rebelled by desiring to become like God (Isaiah 14). Because of Satan's fall, sin entered the universe and brought on the earth God's judgment in the form of a flood (indicated by the water of 1:2), and then a global ice-age when the light and heat from the sun were somehow removed. All the plant, animal, and human fossils upon the earth today date from this "Lucifer's Flood" and do not bear any genetic relationship with the plants, animals, and fossils living upon the earth today." (Ken Ham in "Back to Genesis" quoting Weston W. Fields)

Those who hold to this "Gap Theory" believe that God created a good earth in verse one, but that the earth experienced a global holocaust and the fall of Satan (which occurred in between v. 1 & 2). God then (according to this view) reconstructs the earth and calls upon the earth's living creatures to "replenish" the earth (implying that it had been filled with living things previously).

The word "replenish" (*maleh* - 1:28) does not mean "refill." In none of this Hebrew word's 206 occurrences does it mean refill, but simply "fill."

The "Gap Theory" or the "ruin-reconstruction" theory is erroneous for the following reasons:

1. The word "was" (*hayah*) occurs 264 times in the Old Testament and in only six of these can it be translated "became" (Gen. 3:22, 19:26, 21:20; Exod. 7:19, 8:17, 9:10)

2. The terms *tohu* and *bohu* mean "unformed" and "unfilled" (unshaped and uninhabited).

3. The conjunction "and" in v. 2 is not a *waw*-consecutive but a *waw*-conjunctive, which should be understood in the sense of "now," giving an expansion on what was introduced in verse 1. Not marking a sequence of time.

4. The Bible clearly states that God did all of His creative activity in six days and ceased for good on the seventh.

5. No other Scripture mentions a pre-Adamic race which was destroyed by an Ice Age as the Gap theorists claim.

God created in stages.

1) First, He created the globe

2) Then He shaped it (formed it) by causing "dry ground" to appear (Gen. 1:9-10).

3) Then He filled it with life (plants, fish, birds, animals, insects, reptiles, and man) (vv. 11ff)

**"The Spirit of God moved" -** The Holy Spirit is pictured as hovering over the earth's waters. God's Spirit via God's Son had part in creation (Ps. 104:30).

**v. 3**

**"And God said" -** Each time a new day of creation began, the phrase "and God said" occurs (v. 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24).

The power of God's creative word made it all! Heb. 11:3 - Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

God created physical light (Day 1) before He created the sun (Day 4). This (temporary) light source was used to mark the first day of creation. (the earth passed through its first day/night cycle).

**v. 4**

Light is "**good"** because it makes visible the good creation of God.

Both visibly and metaphysically, light is superior to darkness.

Sinful men love darkness rather than light (Jn. 3:19).

**"Divided" -** Genesis 1 gives us the origins of three contrasting separations:

--Light from darkness
(day from night - v. 5)

--Sky from water (v. 7)

--Dry land from seas (v. 9)

**v. 5**

**"God called (named)" -** God's naming of the day/night (v. 5), Heaven (sky - v. 8), earth (v. 10), mankind ("Adam") (5:2) in Semitic thought reflects His authority over creation.

**"The evening and the morning" -** This statement is what originated the Jewish reckoning of time. The Hebrews begin the day in the evening (Lev. 23:32); daytime closes at sunset.

The sequence of a day is dark night and then bright light.

This order fits with God's sequence of starting creation on Day 1 in "darkness" (v. 2) and ending it after the light cycle ran its course.

The word "day" in Genesis 1 refers to a literal 24-hour day as we know it.

While some view the reference to "day" in Genesis 1 (v. 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:2) as referring to a long period of time or an age of time, the Bible most clearly refers to a literal, solar, 24-hour day.

Evidence:

a. The Hebrew word for "day" is "yom," which always refers to a literal, 24-hour day [unless a figure of speech is being used; in which case the context would demand a different meaning (EX: Gen. 2:4)].

   1) If God intended the reader to interpret the word "day" as a long, indefinite period of time, He would have used "olam."

   2) Hebrews 4:4, which refers to the seventh day of creation, employs the word "hemera" which refers to a 24-hour day, not the word "aeon" which refers to a period or age of time.

b. The numerical adjectives ("first" . . . "second" . . . "third" . . . etc. - Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:2) are never used to refer to an age of time when they are associated with a number (cp. Gen. 7:17, 24; Num. 7:12-77).

c. The qualifying phrase "evening and morning" proves a literal, 24-hour day (cp. I Ki. 17:6; I Sam. 17:16; Ps. 55:17).

   [Note: The Jews began their day in the evening and ended it in the morning.]
   The words "evening" and "morning" are used more than 100 times in the Old Testament, always with the literal meaning (Henry M. Morris, The Beginning of the World, p. 24).

d. The fourth commandment (to remember the Sabbath day) is based upon a literal understanding of God's creative activity in six days and His resting on the seventh (Ex. 20:11; 31:17; cp. Gen. 2:2).

   God could have created the world in six seconds or less if He so chose, but this commandment suggests that He chose to do so in six days to serve as a pattern for Israel's rest and work periods.

## II. DAY 2 - A Canopy Expanse in the Sky (v. 6-8)

The firmament (*raquya*) refers to a visible dome of the sky in which the clouds move.

**v. 6**

**"Firmament" -** lit. an expanse; or a spreading out of an atmosphere above the earth causing a canopy of vapor to rise above the earth creating sky in between that canopy and the sea waters on earth.

"Apparently God suspended a vast body of water in vapor form over the earth, forming a canopy that caused conditions on the earth to resemble those inside a greenhouse This may account for the longevity of human life (Gen. 5) and for the tremendous amount of water involved in the worldwide flood (Gen. 6-9)." (Ryrie note, Gen. 1:7).

**v. 8**

**"Heaven" -** sky

--The "first" heaven is sky.

--The "second" heaven is outer space

--The "third" heaven is God's abode (II Cor. 12:2)

## III. DAY 3 - Dry Land/Seas & Vegetation (v. 9-13)

**v. 9**

God shaped the earth's surface. Whereas it was "unformed" (v. 2), now God gives it shape by pushing up the dry land and pushing down the earth's cruse to form a depression below what we call "sea level."

**v. 11**

With dry land appearing on Day 3, God now had the elements prepared to sustain vegetation, plants, and fruit trees.

The phrase **"after his kind"** (1:11, 121, 21, 24, 25) proves that God created the fixed categories of biological classification.

One "kind" of biological category cannot co-mingle with another and reproduce (hence, there has never been a half plant/half bird or half fish/half man - No mermaids!)

**v. 12**

**"Whose seed is in itself" -** A key phrase, repeated from v. 11

[What came first, the plant or the seed? The plant. Evolution does not know which came first (EX: the chicken or the egg).]

God created inanimate life ith the ability to reproduce itself. Hence, He designed plant life to be eaten and replenished.

## IV. DAY 4 - The Sun, Moon, & Stars (v. 14-19)

**v. 14**

**"Lights" -** The Sun, moon, and stars.

By means of these we calculate:

1. The time of day
2. Direction signs - to give men (EX: nautical sailors) their bearings - Sun rises in east, sets in west. This provides direction.
3. Seasons of the year (EX: the position of the moon)

**v. 15**

**"To give light on the earth" -** Having created vegetation, now God had to create that which would sustain the life and growth of vegetation. So now he created the sun.

## V. DAY 5 - Sea Life & Birds (v. 20-23)

**v. 20**

**"That hath life" -** Now God moves from inanimate life (as vegetation) to animate life.

God's orderly work of creative activity:

1. First, the elements to sustain life (light, land, water)

2. Second, inanimate life (vegetation, trees, to produce fruit and vegetables)

3. Third, living creatures

    a. Sea creatures (fish, whales)

    b. Air creatures (birds)

It is interesting that God fills the 3 spheres with animate life in the order of which He made them:

1. Water (v. 2) --- Sea Life

2. Sky (v. 6-8) --- Birds

3. Dry Land (v. 9-10) --- Animals, reptiles, insects and man)

**v. 21**

**"Great whales" -** great sea creatures, which would include whales, but also sea monsters (as described in Job 41:1; Ps. 104:26).

## VI. DAY 6 - Animals, Reptiles, Insects, & MAN (v. 24-31)

**v. 24**

**"Let the earth bring forth" -** On day six, God used the natural elements of the ground to form the various mammals, reptiles, etc.

**"Living creature" -** (*nephesh)* animals which possess vitality (life)

**"Cattle"** (*behemouth)* - large land quadrupeds

**"Creeping things" -** (*remes)* - relatively small, rapidly moving vertebrates; rodents and reptiles and invertebrates (worms and insects)

**"Beast of the earth" -** (*chay*) - wild animals

**v. 26**

**"Let <u>us</u> make man in <u>our</u> image, after <u>our</u> likeness" -** The plural pronouns must refer to God Himself (not including angels); because v. 27 describes man as being created in the image of <u>God</u> (not God and angels).

Since the Scripture asserts that God <u>Himself</u> created all things (Is. 45:12, <u>18</u>), the "us" cannot refer to finite angelic beings, but to God's own triune essence.

**"Let <u>us</u> make man in <u>our</u> image" -** The Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) was involved in creation.

Evidence:

a. Plural pronouns - Genesis 1:26 - "Let <u>us</u> make man in <u>our</u> image." Cp. verse 27 - "So <u>God</u> created man in his own image."

b. Man was created:
   1) By the <u>Father</u> (Rev. 4:11)
   2) By the <u>Son</u> (John 1:103; Col. 1:15-16; Heb. 1:2)
   3) By the <u>Spirit</u> (Psalm 104:30; Job 33:4; cp. Gen. 2:7 - "breathed" and "breath" = "ruach," which can be translated "Spirit")

Man was created in the <u>image</u> and <u>likeness</u> of God.

In what sense?

a. "Image" ("tselem") - points to man's personality features that are <u>reproductions</u> of God's spiritual, intellectual, and moral qualities.

b. "Likeness" ("demuth") - points to man as not being the same as God, but as being similar in pattern or model.

c. Why does God use both words, "image" and "likeness?"

To avoid the implication that man is a precise copy of God, albeit in miniature, the less specific and more abstract word "demuth" ("likeness") was added by God. "Demuth" then defines and limits the meaning of "tselem" (Humbert, Barr, T.W.O.T. Vol. 1, p. 192).

d. Man bears the image of God in three senses:

1) Man is like God in that he is a person (with personality). A "person" is a being who possesses self-consciousness, self-determination, intellect, emotion, will, world-consciousness, etc.
2) Man is like God in that he has a spirit (Jn. 4:24; I Cor. 6:20; cp. Eph. 4:23-24)
3) Man is like God in that he has a moral nature (a basic, innate comprehension of right and wrong - Rom. 2:14; Eccl. 7:29).

When Adam sinned the image of God in man was marred and defiled but was not obliterated.

*Since mankind still retains this sense of the image of God, his life has a dignity and is to be respected, honored, and protected. Doing so honors the Creator (Gen. 9:6; James 3:9).

e. Important Notes:

1) Man's being created in the image and likeness of God does not mean that man is an emanation of God ("Ethical Monism").

Man is distinct from and in no way is he one in essence with God.

2) Also, man being created in the image and likeness of God in no way identifies God as being physical or corporal. The Bible is clear: "God is Spirit" (John 4:24).

The crown of God's creation – man – occurred on the sixth day.

Mankind was created last because he was the most special of God's creation. Special because he would be made in God's image and likeness and because he would rule over the rest of creation.

Psalm 8:4-9 - 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?
5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.
6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:
7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;
8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.
9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

**"Dominion over" -** rule over; control over; stewardship over; man was to govern the elements and species of the world.

This dominion expresses God's desire and design that people be regarded as superior to the rest of the animal world and it explains why people have a natural tendency toward fishing, hunting, taming animals, utilizing domesticated animals for man's benefit, etc.

**v. 27**

**"Male and female" -** God created Adam & Eve both on the sixth day of creation (with a time frame in between during which Adam named the animals).

**v. 28**

**"Be fruitful and multiply" -** Has God ever withdrawn this injunction? NO!

If anyone ought to have large families, it is God's people.

Population control is <u>not</u> God's design. It is sinful, selfish man's plan (Ps. 127:3, 5 - Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.
5 Happy *is* the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

**v. 29**

Man was a <u>vegetarian</u> prior to the flood (Gen. 9:2-3 - And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.
3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.)
A vegetarian diet is very health; however, you are not more spiritual for abstaining from meat (I Tim. 4:3f).

**v. 31**

**"It was very good" -** After each of God's creative activity, He pronounce dit good (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).

Everything God does is good. He only knows how to give good things

Ja. 1:17 - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Mt. 7:11 - If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Ps. 84:11 - For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

CONCLUSION:

"Through faith we understand" -

"Faith is the greatest perceptive power in the wold. Through faith we see" (Thomas p. 35)

"Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!" (Is. 45:9)

Since God is Creator, we should:

--Not worship God's creation (but the Creator - cp. Rom. 1:25)

--Respect God's creation
(Don't abuse the earth - be a good steward)
(Don't dishonor people - who are created in His image and likeness)

--Glorify God for His creation

--His power (which created and constructed it so vast and yet so detailed)

--His wisdom (which planned it so well; it is ordered, balanced, and purposeful)

--His authority (which rules over it)

God created all things for His pleasure (Rev. 4:11 - Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.) and for His glory (Is. 45:25)

This chapter boldly asserts that:

1) The world is not self-originated
2) Matter is not eternal
3) Man is the crown and culmination of creation
4) God is awesome
   Isaiah 40:21-22
   Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?
   *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

If God can effortlessly speak he world into existence…Is anything too difficult for him to do?

Is a soul ever so lost, that He cannot save?

Is a sin ever so strong, that He cannot deliver one from it?

Is a life ever so confused that He cannot bring order & direction to it?

Is a marriage ever so damaged that He cannot restore it?

Is a child ever so wayward that He cannot transform that life?

Is a ministry ever so small and weak, that He cannot build & strengthen it?

If God can create all things in 6 days, He can also do he miraculous

If God can create water, He can satisfy the thirsty soul

If God can create light, He can give light to those who grope in darkness.
(He can brighten your dark circumstances)

If God can provide fertility to the earth, He can put food on your table.