



Sunday, May 4, 2025

Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 Part 1

A few years ago, when we were walking through the book of Romans, we came across a brief section that touched on the significance of the Israelites. I took that opportunity to launch a series-with-in-a-series entitled The People of God. During that time, we went all the way back to the beginning - well, almost all the way back - Genesis 12 to be exact, where we were introduced to our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the role that these three had in establishing the People of God known as the Israelites.

Now, many theologians and Bible scholars have pointed out that Genesis 12 is a kind of hinge in the biblical story: marking the shift from the universal problem of sin to the beginning of God's redemptive plan through a specific people, starting with Abraham. In fact, some may even go as far as to say that this hinge is so strong that the Bible isn't just divided into Old and New Testaments, but rather into two narratives: Genesis 1-11, and Genesis 12 to Revelation 22. The point being that everything that unfolds in the rest of the Bible is set in motion by what happens in these first 11 chapters.

So, welcome to our next series, entitled, 'Created,' where we will walk through the first 'half' of the Bible - Genesis 1-11 - where we'll explore the creation of everything, the fall of humanity, God's heart for humanity and the deep impact these foundational chapters have had and will continue to have on human history: past, present, and future.

And I'll be honest with you: I've felt significant pressure about this series. We all have questions - about how the Bible and science line up, about dinosaurs and fossils, the age of the earth, how long Adam and Eve lived before they sinned, what life was like in the garden, and yes - what about the dinosaurs??

But, I'm not a scientist. So while I'll do my best to address some of these questions along the way, not everything will have a clean, satisfying answer. I think that's part of the mystery of God. I am a pastor though so ultimately, my goal is that through this teaching you will grow closer in your rela-

2. If you are able to stand, please do so for the reading of God's Word:

Genesis 1-2:3

' In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." 7 Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20 Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged

bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24 Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind”; and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

29 And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is [i]life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so. 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.’

The first verse of Genesis is absolutely jam-packed with significance. And the very first thing we read is not the creation of light, or land, or humanity - but the introduction of time.

‘In the beginning...’

That phrase introduces a concept that is fundamental to our existence. You and I live in a world ruled by time. We wake up by clocks. We age by calendars. We even think in terms of past, present, and future. We simply cannot imagine a world or existence where time is not a factor. But the Bible shows us something radically different: time actually had a beginning.

We often say that when we die and go to heaven, we'll live for eternity - which still sounds like a really long time. But eternity, in the biblical sense, isn't just endless time - it's a different kind of existence altogether that is not controlled by the laws of time as we experience here on earth.

Example: when I was a kid I would often think of eternity. And as good as heaven was going to be, my mind could not comprehend the concept of forever....that we will live forever....no end....just when you think it's going to end....it's just a drop in the bucket....and you keep on going and going and going....and my mind would work itself into a frenzy just trying to comprehend something that is simply incomprehensible.

Time - as we know it - was created. It didn't always exist. It had a starting point.

Genesis 1:1 says, 'In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.'

Which means that before there was a beginning, God already was. He is the Alpha and the Omega - the beginning and the end. But unlike us, He is not confined by time. He created it, therefore He stands outside of it and is not confined by it. Instead, He rules over it.

So right here in the opening line of Scripture, we are introduced to time and the God who created it - the One who exists before it, above it, and beyond it.

And right from that very first line, we can see that our God is One who creates. In English, this reads as a singular word: God. But in the Hebrew, the word used here is Elohim - a plural form. Now, this doesn't mean 'gods' in a polytheistic sense, but it does suggest something unique - that the God who creates is One - yet somehow contains a kind of plurality within Himself.

And as we keep reading, we get a glimpse of what that means:

God creates.

The Spirit of God hovers.

And then God speaks.

This is the first hint we get in Scripture of something we come to know fully later on: that God is One, but exists in three persons.

God is Creator - pointing us to the Father.

God is the Spirit - the Holy Spirit hovering over the waters.

God speaks – the Word of God, which John tells us, is Jesus.

Remember how we ended our Ephesians series? We talked about the power of the Word of God—that it isn't just about Jesus, it is Jesus. That's exactly what we see in John 1:

John 1:1-2 says:

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.'

So even here, in the very first few verses of Genesis, we're not just reading about the start of the universe - we're introduced to the trinity: Father, Son, and Spirit - acting in perfect unity to bring everything into being.

'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'

I want you to see something here. It's very easy to look at this first line and place the emphasis on the heavens and the Earth coming into existence. But the focus of this verse isn't necessarily on what God created, but quite simply that God created.

The fact that God created in the beginning, helps to set the stage for everything that we are about to step into over the next few weeks and months. Ultimately though, before we can get into all of the nitty-gritty, we need to understand the 'why' behind God's action to create in the first place. Knowing God's heart behind this helps set the foundation for everything that comes next.

The act of creation is, at its core, an expression of love. I think it's fair to say that God created as an expression of His great love. Because ultimately, love creates. When a husband and wife come together in love, they create life. And we do that because He first created - because love, by its very nature, is meant to be expressed as it overflows. Love that is real doesn't remain static or hidden - it moves, it gives, it creates. That's what we see embedded in the creation story: a God who is not content to simply exist alone, but who brings life into being so His love can be shared and poured out.

In John 17:24, Jesus references this concept of God being love - even before the creation of the world by saying:

John 17:24

'Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.'

That means before the world was formed - before Genesis 1:1 - God's Love already existed. And creation was His way of making space for that love to be received.

And we - we've become the object of His love. Because love needs an object in order to be expressed; it needs someone to pour itself out on.

Think about the great lengths that God went through to express His love upon us. He created light, sky, water, land, the sun and moon and stars, oceans and mountains, planets and galaxies, biology and chemistry, ecosystems and energy. And then.....the pinnacle of all creation...His best work yet.

Humanity.

Relate to setting up an entire ecosystem to support one clownfish. Now multiply that by a trillion, and you begin to grasp the scale of what God did - to support you. And me. (ALL of this to support life for you and me! There's no life anywhere else - everything else exists in perfect place and space to allow for life on planet earth) We are the expression of God's love.

And here's the mind-blowing part: even though God knew we would mess it all up - even though He knew that the story would lead to rebellion and brokenness and death - He still chose to create. He knew that Revelation 22 would be necessary well before Genesis 1 ever began. And still, He said: Let there be light.

Genesis 1-11 is the event. And Genesis 12 all the way to Revelation 22? That's God working everything through - writing chapter after chapter of redemption - with one purpose. To restore His relationship with His creation.

Talk about love!

You and I exist because He made us. And because He made you, then your life has purpose. You are not random. You exist for a reason. And a large part of your existence is not to strive to do this or that, but to receive His great love poured out on you. He created you because He loves you. He loves you because He created you. God is love and creating is how He expresses that love.

So this is the first thing that we are told in the creation story that God is love and through His great love, He creates life. And so, because of that fact alone, then everything else from Genesis 1:2 all the way through to Revelation 22, must be looked at through the lens: God is love.

Now watch this, a God of love doesn't just make things functional, He makes them beautiful: with form, with rhythm, with artistry. Genesis 1 isn't just a list of what God made - it's a carefully crafted passage filled with poetic elements, repetition, and literary design. It reads like a song, a hymn, a declaration of wonder.....it's worship.

In fact, many theologians suggest that before this passage teaches us anything about science or biology, it first functions as a poem or even a hymn that begins in Genesis 1:1 and concludes in 2:3.

And when we read it that way, the structure comes alive. Look at the repetition of these phrases:

And God said...

And it was so...

And God saw that it was good...

There was evening and there was morning...

Sounds like it could be a chorus or a bridge of a worship song doesn't it?

And then there is this beautiful parallelism between days 1+4 / 2+5 / 3+6 which create a beautiful picture of 'Forming' and 'Filling.' The first three days of creation are God forming and the last three days are God filling what He just formed:

He forms the light and darkness on day 1, and then fills them with the sun, moon and stars on day 4.

He forms the sky and waters on day 2 and then fills them with birds and sea creatures on day 5.

He forms the land and firmament and then fills it with animals and humanity.

He's not just bringing order to chaos, He's bringing purposeful, strategic design. And so these specific patterns suggest intentionality by the writer that almost seems to lend itself to a call and response liturgical reading where the reader reads the day of forming and the congregation responds with the reading of the corresponding day.

So why would the writer of Genesis craft the first section as a poem or hymn?

Because it was meant to be remembered. Poetry and song help truth stick. They were the ancient

world's memory tools - used when something was so important, it couldn't afford to be forgotten.

And so, God formed the days and then filled the days. 7 total. 6 days of creative genius and then on the 7th day He rested.

Now, historically, there's been much debate about these days. Did God create the world in 6 literal days? If so, how is this possible? Some say that the use of the word 'day' here suggests a length of time closer to a thousand years. This idea gains support from 2 Peter 3:8 that says that, '...with God, a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like one day.' Further to that, scientists have suggested that the age of the earth is said to be closer to millions or even billions of years, not thousands. So which is it and how do we know?

For me, I've never wrestled deeply with this. Not because the questions don't matter, but because the answer doesn't shake my foundation. We live in a culture obsessed with 'how and why' - and sometimes that obsession can distract us from the 'that.' That God created.

Let me explain. Could God have created the world in 6 literal days? Absolutely. The fact that He created time means that He is not limited by time, so what seems like an impossibility is already overshadowed by the greater miracle of creating the universe in the first place! Could 1 day represent 1000 years? Well sure it could - but know this - God doesn't need the extra 999 years and 364 days to do the impossible. When Peter compares one day to a thousand years, he's using hyperbole - a gross exaggeration - to show just how little of an effect time has on the One who created it.

Well, then how do you explain that scientists have shown that rocks and fossils are undeniably millions of years old. Shouldn't that debunk the literal 6 day or 6000 day thought? Nope - not at all. Think about the vastness of this universe for a moment. Since God created a vast, ordered, seemingly eternal universe, could He not also create a rock with an age of a million years? Think about it - if God can create galaxies beyond human comprehension, why would the appearance of age in creation be a problem for Him?

The truth is, some of these questions are simply unanswerable - and that's okay. That's the mystery of God.

Because the point isn't necessarily how He did it, but that He did it.
That He created it all - because of His great love for you and me.

One gets the idea that God is creating all of this so that He can commune with humanity. In six days, He takes the wild and uninhabitable creation of verse 2 and systematically brings order to that chaos, and then calls it 'good.' And it is only when it is good that He creates humanity to be a part of it.

Next week we will explore the creation of humanity because as we've already noted, as the pinnacle of all creation, the creation of Adam and Eve is unlike the creation of anything else!

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

'For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, [d]"Take, eat; this is My body which is [e]broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.'

Blessing

Pastor Josh Hageman

Lead Pastor

Kingsview Community Church

Stoney Creek, ON

www.kingsviewchurch.com

<https://www.facebook.com/KingsviewCommunityChurch/>