



The single statement that "God created the heavens and the earth" tells us that all things exist because of God. He is outside of time. He is outside of matter. The skeptic responds, saying how can you believe in a fairy tale God? Some in the scientific community ask these same questions. Our response is, how can there *not* be a Divine Architect? The skeptic

cannot explain the origin of matter, existence, consciousness, or self-awareness. Creation itself manifests a Creator. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork. (Psalm 19:1, KJV).* Today, we will look on in wonder as we read the account of God giving form to the world and filling it with His goodness.

There is a designer behind anything and everything complicated. It is illogical to believe that there is no Master Engineer of the universe. Belief in a Creator is the most rational thing you can come to when you look at everything logically. To believe otherwise is irrational. Science can't even explain the origin of matter. If there was a big-bang, where did the stuff come from that banged? Genesis provides the answer in what we read this morning. This is not a metaphor or myth. We might not understand this reality exactly, but I believe it is reality. We are believing what really happened.



I remember going outside when I was just a little boy and looking up wonderfully at the stars in the sky. I remember asking myself what all of this meant. I remember how big it all looked and how small it made me feel. As I grew older, I heard these words echoing in my mind when I looked up at the stars. 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: (Psalm 8:4-6, KJV). That means that MAN HAS A UNIQUE STATUS AND ROLE IN THE UNIVERSE.



Day 2 – God Creates Sky and is Ruler Over it

⁶ *And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. ⁷ And 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. And the evening and the morning were the second day. (Genesis 1:6-8,*

KJV).

Last week, we ended with “the evening and the morning were the first day.” This is the Jewish way of counting a day. The day starts when the first three stars appear in the sky and continues until evening begins again. Daytime starts in the evening and progresses through to the next morning. Verse 6 tells us that God then made a division (the sky) that He placed between the waters below and the waters above. Some believe the “waters above” were a great vapor barrier at the top of the atmosphere. This vapor barrier would have shielded the earth from radiation, drastically increasing the lifespan of those on the Earth. This vapor barrier is what was later released to fill the earth and flood it. When I was in Boise a few weeks ago, I heard



conversations about “tsunami storm clouds.” I had never heard of them, but our friends explained that one came two years ago over Las Vegas that refilled Lake Meade. It contained as much water as the entire Mississippi River from the headwaters in Minnesota down to the Mississippi Delta down in New Orleans. That’s hard to even conceive of. But we can imagine if such a “tsunami storm” were to occur all over the world simultaneously - there would be a huge flood. Anyway, I’m getting ahead of myself. Let’s get back to the sky.

It is particularly significant that the text proclaims that it is **God who made the expanse of the sky (the heavens)**. The surrounding pagan religions attached much of their pantheon (list of gods) to the sky. For example, Anu, the sky god, and Enlil, the god of the atmosphere, were thought to determine who would be king in Sumeria. Also, Baal was described as the “rider of clouds.” He was the god of the rain and storms (1 Kings 18). But Israel faithfully declared that Yahweh Himself is the source of heaven’s powers. They learned this from Genesis chapter one (Psalm 68:4).



Day 3 - Waters – Seas – Earth – Dry Land - Vegetation

⁹ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto 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 called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after

his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. ¹² And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. ¹³ And the evening and the morning were the third day. (Genesis 1:9-13, KJV).

So, on the third day, the waters under the sky (down on the earth) gathered together, and the land rose out of the waters as they receded in certain places. This is God fashioning the topography of the earth. This is a description of God dividing up the surface of the earth into dry land and waters as He saw fit. Now that there was land, there was a place for vegetation to be rooted. God brought forth the grass, the herb-yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its own kind, and “its seed was in itself.” Apparently, God established plant life on the earth, and it was already mature with it’s seed in itself. This means, for example, that a fully grown oak tree appeared and had its acorns on it, ready to fall to the ground, reproducing

itself. And as that evening and morning of creation were completed, God once again (now for the third time) saw that it was *tov* (good).



Day 4 - Lights in the Heavens

14 And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: (Genesis 1:14, KJV).

God now put “lights in the sky” to create signs, seasons, days, and years. This statement means that these bodies in the sky are NOT deities; rather, they are instruments through which and by which God is in control, setting forth the days, seasons, months, and years. While he was placing them, He put the sun and the moon perfectly distanced from the earth. They are His tools to be used at HIS disposal. This is a distinction being made, which will be made further in the next few sentences, that refrain from even naming the sun or the moon. This was purposeful because the prevailing ancient cultures routinely worshipped the sun, moon, and stars themselves as being supposed deities. The Israelites were specifically prohibited from worshipping the sun, moon, or the stars (Deuteronomy 4:19). This passage makes it clear that these are objects created BY God for HIS use in the world. They are not deities but are creations of the One True God.



15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And 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 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon 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 And the evening and the

morning were the fourth day. (Genesis 1:15-19, KJV).

Think about this. The sun is 93,000,000 miles away. The earth would be uninhabitable if the distance between the two moved approximately one astronomical unit. That’s about a 1% change in distance. The moon is also in a perfect ballet dance with the earth. It is distanced perfectly to create the tides as they are. God worked all together in perfect balance. He is the Master Astro-Engineer.

Note again that God names neither the sun nor the moon. And he put the “stars” also in the



heavens. Just think about what that means. In one word, the Creator of the Universe made every planet, moon, sun, star, solar system, galaxy.... HE MADE IT ALL. WOW!

Day 5 - Birds and Sea Creatures

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21 And God created [bara 2x] great whales [taninim = serpents, dragons, sea monsters], and every living creature that moveth, which the

waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his 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 fowl multiply in the earth. ²³ And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. (Genesis 1:20-23, KJV).

Now God filled the sea with every sort of creature, and He filled the heavens with flying animals. This is the second instance in the text that the word *bara* (creation only God can do) is used in Hebrew. Of particular interest is the word translated “whales.” The Hebrew word translated as “whale” is *taninim* that refers to a sea creature worshiped by other nations in biblical times. This is God saying, “STOP WORSHIPING WHAT I CREATED.” It can also mean a dragon. This could even be a reference to dinosaurs. Notice again that each creature is made “after its kind.” I think it clearly shows that creatures are made to be in one species, and there really is no instance or evidence of “species jumping.”

Day 6 - Living Creeping Creatures – Man and Woman



²⁴ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:24-25, KJV).

These are all the walking animals. The text is talking about anything and everything that walks on earth. This includes bovines, equines, dogs, cats, alligators, insects, and everything that walks about on the earth.

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. ²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Genesis 1:26-28, KJV).



Jewish scholars have wrestled with the first-person plural used in this passage: “Let us,” “our image,” and “our likeness.” Some suggest God was talking to angels, but man is not made in the image of angels. Others suggest it is sort of an inclusive “royal we.” As though a king is speaking of his kingdom, saying “we will go to war with so and so.” **I think this is a direct affirmation of the Godhead in its entirety. This is the “I AM” saying among the persons of the Godhead, “let us make man in our image.”** This means that men and women have in themselves godlike qualities. How are we like God? Well,

for one, we are creative like God. We are self-aware. I also believe we are a being with three parts: flesh, soul, and spirit. That is not really analogous to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but the Godhead Himself is three persons in One. Humans are tripartite beings.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ בְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרִדוּ

V yo-mer Elohim na-seh adam b-tsalmehnu c-demetnu yirdu

Let us make man in our image in our likeness to have dominion.

Distinctions and Divisions

As we've already seen in Genesis, God makes distinctions and divisions among His creation. The text doesn't say, "God created IT." It says, "God created "mankind" **ha-adam**, male and female created He them." There are only two kinds of humans. There are males, and there are females. It was God Himself who made these distinctions. There are no "its." Current culture has abandoned the Bible, which shows and teaches clear distinctions. It leads to so much confusion in the minds and lives of so many. This is a very vivid example of how cultural chaos ensues as a people grow farther and farther removed from God's revelation in the Bible. It removes the foundation upon which people can build and live out their lives.

Man, the crown of God's creation, is not "just another animal." We are not just a nephesh [a living being as animals are described], but man had the **nishmat chayyim (breath of life)** breathed into him, and he became a **LIVING SOUL** (Genesis 2:7). This is why we oppose euthanasia and abortion. This is why we try to preserve life. This is why we believe in the dignity of every human being. We believe that every human being is made in the image of God and we are to treat them as such.

IN OUR IMAGE

The title to this sermon was for a reason. The most magnificent statement to me in the text today is that you and I (and all human beings) are made in His Image. What does this mean? Does it just mean maybe we're some sort of tripartite being or something? I don't think that is the BIG THING. The big thing is that **HUMANS ARE THE ONLY BEING IN ALL OF CREATION THAT CAN BECOME THE VERY VESSEL OF GOD**. We can become the Temple of the Holy Spirit. God can work in us and through us like no other thing created. We are the only being in the universe that can have an awareness of God's existence. Paul clearly says this in Romans chapter one.

²⁰For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:20, KJV).

We are the only creation that can have the Holy Spirit of God within us, thereby enabling us to exhibit the God-like fruit of the Spirit qualities that should be manifested in the life of every believer. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to love like no other creation. We are able to contain and exude joy like no other being. We are able to have peace within and without us like no other creation. We are able to exhibit patience that is other-worldly. We are able to breathe a gentleness and goodness that is Christlike in every way. We can be filled with faith in God like no other creation. I messed up one thing I was trying to say last week: "we don't know what tomorrow holds, but we **CAN KNOW WHO HOLDS TOMORROW!**" We can

restrain ourselves from the power that we hold to hurt others. And through the operative power of the Holy Spirit we can exercise a self-control that is supernatural. Yes, brothers and sisters, we are made IN HIS IMAGE. So the overall message of today is WALK IN IT. WALK IN THAT IMAGE, IN THAT LIKENESS. LIVE IT OUT.

Let's now finish up.

²⁹ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good "meod tov." [טוב מאד]. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

***2** Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God ended his work [Hebrew "milacha"] which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. ³ And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. (Genesis 1:29-2:3, KJV).*

God finished His "milacha." That is the Hebrew word for "productive work." There is another word for work which we have learned, and that is *avodah*. In Judaism, it is **milacha** that is prohibited on the Sabbath. God's productive work in creation ended on the sixth day, and the text tells us that "He rested" on the seventh day. God is God and doesn't need to rest, so what is this all about?

Judaism teaches that the primary reason for a Shabbat is to imitate God, affirming that He is the Creator. For the Gentile believer, Paul clearly tells us that Jesus is our Sabbath rest. However, having said that I believe a rest is needed for us. And not only that, we need to take a pause from our **milacha**, our work that's producing something (work that results in gain). We were not made to "get get get" and "go go go." That leads to burnout. Jesus was explicit in saying that the Sabbath was made for man. Why? Because we need a rest! Taking a Sabbath rest may not be a commandment applicable to the believer, but believe me, it is a good idea. We all need downtime, and we all need to recharge our batteries. When we do that, we're able to rest in the Holy Spirit and not be stressed out. We're able to be, love, and live in the way we were meant to be. Why? Because we are made in His Image!

Let us pray.

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