

## *The Bible and Creation*

### **Creation: The First Day**

Genesis 1:3-5

Howard Dial

Why the story of creation?

1. The God of Israel's covenant is the God of creation. He is the God of our salvation.
2. To attack the mythology in existence in Israel's day (e.g., Canaanites). We are given the truth of the origin of the universe.
3. To tell us about God. He is preexistent, sovereign, personal, unity, wise, and omnipotent. He is a God of order and beauty.

I. On the first day of creation week, God spoke light into existence (1:3-5).

- God's creative power was expressed in the spoken word ("Then God said").
  - This phrase occurs ten times in chapter one and indicates the method of creation (Psa. 33:6, 9).
  - This tells us how God did the work of creation.
  - It was accomplished with "ease."
- A special light source came into existence.
  - It was not sunlight. The sun did not appear until the fourth day. This was a "put-down" of all sun worship (e.g., Egyptians and Ra the sun god).
  - "Such a cyclical light-dark arrangement clearly means that the earth was now rotating on its axis and that there was a source of light on one side of the earth corresponding to the sun, even though the sun was not yet made... the presence of visible light waves necessarily involves the entire electromagnetic spectrum... setting the electromagnetic forces into operation completed the energizing of the physical cosmos..." Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*

- “God saw” – No experimentation was involved. This language is for our information, not God’s discovery.
- Light and darkness were called “good” (1:31).
  - “God delights in material reality.” D. F. Kelly, *Creation and Change*
- This introduced the beginning of the light-darkness cycle.
  - This marked the beginning of the earth’s rotation. Actually, the earth has three motions: (1) spins like a top, (2) travels around the sun, and (3) moves through the Milky Way galaxy with the rest of the solar system.
  - “Evening and morning” – This was to establish clearly for Israel the fact that it was like every other day in the normal sequence of days.
  - Nothing new took place between the evening and morning. God didn’t create every minute of the 24 hour cycle.
- The Hebrew word for day (*yom*) is used in four different ways in Genesis 1 & 2.
  - A 12-hour period of daylight as opposed to night (vv. 14, 16, 18)
  - A solar day of 24 hours (v. 14)
  - The period of light that began with the creation of light on the first creative day (v. 5)
  - The entire six-day creative period (2:4)
- Four views on the nature of the length of these days
  - Literal day – the natural reading of the text (Ex. 20:11)
  - Day-age – takes days of Genesis 1 metaphorically rather than plain literal.
  - Literal day with gaps
  - Revelatory day – creation was revealed in six days, not performed in six days (not six days of activity).

- The literal 24-hour day view interprets Genesis in a plain literal sense and the most natural understanding of the reading. The alternatives have been developed in response to the pressure of scientific opinions (uniformitarianism).

## II. The days of creation week were 24-hour cycles of time. Four evidences for a literal seven-day creation week

- Numerical adjective – “The plural form, *yamim*, occurs 846 times in the Old Testament, and in the plural, the unadorned noun means ‘a span of time,’ *but always a span of literal days.*” Trevor Craigen, *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 204. “When *yom* is used with a numerical qualifier in the Old Testament, *it is never used in a figurative sense.*” Robert V. McCabe, *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, p. 226.
- Qualifying phrase “evening and morning” (Dan. 8:26)
- Pattern for man’s cycle of work and rest (Ex. 20:11; 31:17)
- First three days had the same length as the last three in reference to when God set lights in the heavens “for seasons, and for days, and for years” (1:14).

## How should we then worship?

“The unfolding of your word gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple” (Psalm 119:130).

- In the new birth a new creation takes place. The light came on when we became a new creature in Christ (Eph. 5:8; 2 Cor. 4:6; 2 Cor. 5:17).
  - “For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true) and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord” (Eph. 5:8-10).
  - “For God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6).
- Life in the Word is a journey of increasing light upon the path of obedience.
- Those inexperienced in the realities of life are given wisdom by the light of divine revelation.