



## Origins Lesson 3 1Q 2013

### The Creation Completed

#### SUNDAY

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Read first paragraph, “The fourth day...” thoughts?

The lesson suggests three possibilities:

- God’s presence was a source of physical light, the earth rotated at its same constant rate and thus had a light, dark phase.
  - This is consistent with the text and other Scriptures that describe God as living in unapproachable light.
- The Sun, Moon, Stars were “appointed their functions” at that time?
  - Which means what? They were not functioning before they were appointed? So before they were appointed, their light didn’t travel the universe and shine onto the planets? Or does it mean they didn’t have light until they were appointed? Which would mean they weren’t a sun, moon or stars, so then we are back to the same problem.
- That volcanic dust or clouds obscured the view until day four
  - Which means what? That the earth had hot, volcanic disruptions etc. Does that fit with creation account?

Any other possibilities? That day 1-3 were written this way by Moses as a means to communicate to humans these periods were 24 hours in length, a normal earth day, and not some expanse of time.

Which do you like best?

#### MONDAY

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Creation of air and water animals – thoughts?

Read last paragraph, “Few living creatures...” thoughts?

Do we really think, these incredibly engineered, living animals, evolved on their own by random chance?

What about eagles, hawks, and falcons – what do you think they were like before sin? Or vultures, buzzards, and condors, what did they eat before sin?

Do you think God created animals to kill each other, or animals that fed on carcasses?



In fact, what did the carrion birds eat before the flood? Do you think animals were dying frequently before the flood?

Evolutionary theory would point to these animals and the Biblical account and attempt to suggest that the Bible is wrong; it takes millions of years for a species to evolve into the efficient killing machines of eagles and falcons. Therefore, the evolutionist argues either the Bible is wrong and God didn't create, or God created through evolution, or God created animals to kill each other, which means God isn't a God of love.

What do you say to such an argument?

Two main arguments which are consistent with Scripture:

1. Given what we know about epigenetic modification of the Darwin's finches, it is not unreasonable to believe these changes occurred after sin and in a very short time span. (See last week's notes)
2. Adam's sin gave satanic agencies access to life on planet earth and Satan began messing with the code. Jesus said that an enemy planted the tares in the field, meaning purposeful intent
  - a. One commentator wrote the following in 2Selected Messages page 288:

Christ never planted the seeds of death in the system. Satan planted these seeds when he tempted Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge which meant disobedience to God. Not one noxious plant was placed in the Lord's great garden, but after Adam and Eve sinned, poisonous herbs sprang up. In the parable of the sower the question was asked the master, "Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?" The master answered, "An enemy hath done this" (Matthew 13:27, 28). All tares are sown by the evil one. Every noxious herb is of his sowing, and by his ingenious methods of amalgamation he has corrupted the earth with tares. {2SM 288.2}

Thoughts?

I really don't know what a bird of prey would look like without a beak ideal to tear flesh or talons ideal to kill, but these changes are consistent with a creation designed to modify itself based on need, choice, exposure, environment etc. and one infected by selfishness and sin.

## **TUESDAY**

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Creation of Land Animals

Read last paragraph, "The phrase..." thoughts?

Does this mean one species can become another species? Or is it saying that genetic design allows for recombination within certain limits? Or are there no limits?



Does one species change into another species? Can new species be created through natural selection?

What about through intelligent, purposeful, manipulation? Some Christian writers have thought this has happened:

Every species of animals which God had created was preserved in the ark. **The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation**, were destroyed by the flood. Since the flood, there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men. {1Spirit of Prophecy 78.2}

Does this suggest there were species that were not created in Eden? Where did they come from? What does this mean about the “fixity” of the species?

What species were not on the ark? Dinosaurs? Science would tell us that dinosaurs are life forms from an evolutionary path of millions of years. But, what different conclusions might we draw if we consider the possibility that dinosaurs are actually hybrid organisms?

Amalgamate means: to unite in, as if in an amalgam; *especially* : to merge into a single body.

Do you think this idea of amalgamated species is reasonable or pure fiction?

1991 geneticists inserted human genes into pigs and pigs produced human blood.

2003 Pig human chimeras were developed in which pig embryos had human cells injected into them and piglets were born that had both human and pig cell lines.

2003 FDA approved Glowfish for sale in the US, which are Zebra fish, that have a foreign gene, derived from jellyfish, inserted into its genome that causes it to fluoresce.

In 2011 news services reported that researches in Great Britain had created 155 human/animal embryos, in which animal and human DNA had been mixed. This was done under the stated purpose of research to find cures for various diseases.

Thoughts?

If we believe the Bible account, prior to the flood people lived almost 1000 years, compared to most not even reaching 100 years today. So, prior to the flood, living beings had approximately 10 times the vitality that we have today. Does this have any implication in regard to the ability to get amalgamated species to live? Would it be more difficult or easier before the flood?

Additionally, do we believe the humans before the flood would have had brains less developed and capable than ours, or more efficient than ours?



Then, given what we can do, with the weakened genetics and weakened mental abilities, is the conclusion about amalgamated species before the flood unreasonable? Not at all. It is the best explanation for such things as dinosaurs and also could explain some other fossils such as Neanderthal and other “subhuman” type remains.

What is a soul? From where does a soul come? When does a soul come into existence? If we clone a human from a skin cell, will the new human have a soul? From where did will it come?

The Greek for soul is “psuche” or psyche, and means the identity, individuality, personhood of the being.

So, when does individuality come into existence?

If a baby is born without a brain, does it have a soul? Does it have individuality?

Does a soul operate outside the brain?

Here is one person’s perspective:

**The brain nerves which communicate to the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man, and affect his inmost life.** Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system, lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind.-- T., V. II, p. 347. {Healthful Living 54.3}

Thoughts? Do you agree? Do you think there is some other organ through which God can communicate to man? Do you think that the “soul” can operate independently of a brain?

Science has found no avenue to affect an individual that does not utilize or go through the brain. Science has found no evidence of individuality operating outside the brain.

Consider the analogy of a computer – can software operate without hardware? Software is the individuality, it is what makes the computer unique – and the software can be stored without operational hardware, but it cannot operate without hardware.

Likewise our individualities can be stored without a brain, but cannot function without a brain.

Thus Scripture teaches that at death our individualities are safely stored with God in heaven, that we don’t need to fear the one who can destroy the body (hardware) but cannot destroy the soul (psyche, individuality, or software), and that when Christ returns he “brings with him” those who have fallen asleep, and “downloads” them into new bodies at the resurrection. Thus, they begin to “operate” or live again.

What about near death experiences NDE?



Reports of NDE experiences go back almost 2000 years and are reported by approximately 20% of people who suffer a heart attack and are revived.

Interestingly, however, a person does not have to be near death to experience a NDE. A 1990 study at the University of Virginia Health Sciences Center in Charlottesville of 58 people who had experienced NDEs found that half would have survived without medical care. Something as innocuous as fainting can produce an NDE.

There are many theories about the cause of NDEs to include hypoxia (lack of oxygen to the brain), which could trigger seizures in the temporal lobes and cause the symptoms of NDE, hypotension (loss of blood pressure to the brain), endorphin and enkephalin (brain produced mood elevators and pain killers) release, drugs injected during resuscitation, low blood sugar and other metabolic processes.

Recently, Kevin Nelson a neuropsychologist at the University of Kentucky has done research into NDEs and offered a most reasonable explanation. NDEs are actually a form of sleep disorder called REM intrusion in which dreams occur in a non-sleep state. During this time a person is awake but paralyzed, may experience the sensation of floating, will have vivid dreams that would be experienced more like a hallucination and have out of body experiences. All of this will be remembered quite vividly after the event is over with a sense of conviction to the veracity of the experience.

A study published in 1994 by Thomas Lempert, then at the Rudolph Virchow Clinic in Berlin, Germany, documented how volunteers made themselves faint through a combination of hyperventilating, standing and breath-holding. Many of them experienced euphoric NDE-like sensations such as floating out of their body, entering another world, or encountering supernatural beings. This is thought to be due to activating the vagus nerve which stimulates the brainstem to cause these NDEs. This would explain the high occurrence of NDE in people being resuscitated from a heart attack as vagal nerve stimulation occurs during this process.

The Bible is silent on near death experiences. In fact the Bible record would tell us the dead know nothing (Ecclesiastes 9:5,6). Jesus said that His friend Lazarus was “asleep” and He was going to wake him up (John 11:11). Once Jesus resurrected Lazarus, after four days in the grave, the Bible provides no report that Lazarus had anything to tell about what happened to him while he was dead. In fact, in 100% of the cases in the Bible where a person died and was resurrected the Bible records nothing from them of their experience while dead. Therefore, given the Biblical and scientific evidence I would conclude that NDEs are not spiritual experiences of someone crossing over to the other side, but physiological experiences of a stressed and near failing brain.

Thoughts?

## **WEDNESDAY**

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Read second paragraph, “The Hebrew word...” thoughts?



The paragraph said, “God’s special blessing rests on the seventh day.” What is that special blessing? What is it that one can experience on the seventh day, or gets from the seventh day that they cannot experience or get on the sixth day, or the first day?

The lesson suggests, “Thus, God gave special significance to the Sabbath in the context of the relationship between God and humans.” And in the last paragraph states, “God rested from His acts of creation and devoted His time to relationship with His creatures.”

Thoughts?

Is it true that God is a relational being and created his intelligent beings for relationship with him? Absolutely!

Is this reason the reason for the Sabbath? Does this reason separate the Sabbath from the other six days of the week?

Does God only engage in relationship on Sabbath? Does God not associate, visit, relate with his creatures on the other days of the week? If people work on Sabbath and rest on a different day of the week, seeking to spend time with God on another day, will God be unavailable? Will God refuse?

While it is true that God is love, and enjoys spending time with his children, and does spend time with us on Sabbath, is this reason exclusive to the Sabbath? Then does this “separate” the Sabbath from other days? So, I would suggest that while we can definitely experience a blessing of relationship with God on the Sabbath, the special blessing of the Sabbath is not the fact we can spend time with God as we can do that every day – then what is the special blessing?

What about the stated purpose that the Sabbath was created for man to rest? Is that the special blessing? Can man only rest on Sabbath? For the millions of people who rest on a different day of the week, will their bodies not experience rejuvenation and refreshing? Is it only on Sabbath that one can experience rest? So, does the idea of the Sabbath being created for humans to rest separate it from the other days?

The blue section at the bottom states, “God commands us to give one-seventh of our lives to the remembrance of the act of Creation.” Thoughts about this?

Do you agree with this? Are we commanded to do this?

Any problems with this idea?

- Reminds me of one Sabbath we went to church, the opening prayer the pastor prayed, “Lord we are here today, not to hear the special music, not to visit with friends, not even to hear the sermon. No, Lord, we are here for one reason, and one reason only, because you commanded us to be here.”



- Really? If this were the reason what is the problem? What happens to love in an environment when obedience is forced or coerced?
- What kind of God does such a teaching make God out to be?
- What then happens to our treatment of others on the Sabbath?
- Why wouldn't the Jews help others on the Sabbath? Because they were commanded not to do any work! They wanted to obey the rule!
- Was the Sabbath created before or after sin entered the universe? After, what does this mean?
- Were there created beings in existence before the Sabbath? Did those beings appreciate God as creator, or only after the Sabbath?
- Is the issue in the GC who has the power to create? Or is the issue in the character of the one who wields the power?
- If we make the Sabbath only about God being creator what danger do we run?
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Century Theologian George MacDonald said, "What is the deepest in God? His power? No, for power could not make him what we mean when we say *God*. A being whose essence was only power would be such a negation of the divine that no righteous worship could be offered him; his service would be only fear."<sup>i</sup>
- Why did the Commandment say in Exodus to remember God as creator?
  - To whom was it written? To the Jews who just came out of Egypt, and what were their minds filled with?
  - What were the 10 plagues of Egypt designed to do? The plagues were all designed to show that the gods of Egypt were false, and the commandments were give to these people because they had forgotten so much.
  - They had forgotten God, his character, methods, principles and that he was creator. So the Sabbath was given first to remind them of this. But God gave them the 10 Commandments again, this time the Sabbath reminded them of something else:
    - "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor the alien within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may rest, as you do. **Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.** Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. Dt 5:12-15

Why don't we say that the Lord gave the Sabbath to command us to spend one seventh of our time remembering he delivered us from slavery in Egypt? Because this was written to the Jews – was the version written in Exodus written to a different group?

Now, what is the point of all of this? Is it to say that because the 10 Commandments were written to the Jews that it is okay for us to have other gods before the true God, or it is okay to take God's name



in vain, or it is okay to murder, commit adultery etc. No, of course not, and neither are we in any way undermining the Sabbath when we recognize these 10 Commandments were written to the Jews.

What we are doing is recognizing that the reasons given to that group spoke to a particular need and significance they had. We need to understand the truth about God, his character, methods and purposes in creating the Sabbath in its context to fully appreciate it.

We absolutely want to remember God as creator, but why? Which member did the creating? Why do we want to remember that? Why was that in question?

And what was the context in which the Sabbath was created?

Is there any evidence that there was a weekly Sabbath before creation of this planet?

Why wasn't there one? Because it wasn't needed before Satan made his allegation against God.

Before Satan alleged God abuses his power, and that God doesn't grant real freedom there was no need for God to make a special demonstration of the freedom that has always been there, thus no need for a Sabbath created for his creatures to consider the evidence God has provided. But after sin, after the questions about God's character were raised, the Sabbath became a necessary gift to reveal the truth about God's character that has always been true- that God operates with truth, presented in love, leaving beings free!

Notice, God provided evidence that Christ is fully God when Christ revealed his creatorship and then God "rested" for the universe to consider what had just happened and been revealed. But the second great work Christ accomplished, our redemption at the Cross, was immediately again followed by Christ "resting" in the tomb for the Sabbath and giving the universe time to reflect and considered consider what Christ had just done.

What does the existence of the Sabbath reveal about God? More than he is creator, it reveals the character of the one who creates! It reveals His methods, of truth love and freedom!

## **THURSDAY**

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The lesson emphasizes that the days of creation week were 24 hour time blocks and not eons of time. What evidence do you find most persuasive of this?

## **FRIDAY**

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Read first paragraph, "As stated..." thoughts?

What is the problem with the argument of using the Bible to suggest a day is like a 1000 years, and extrapolating that creation days were like 1000 years?



Peter's point is that "For the Lord" a day is like a 1000 years and a 1000 years is like a day, *not* for the creation. He is saying that God is not bound by time; God doesn't live in a linear existence. But created beings are constrained by time. Thus creation was built into the fabric of space/time by a creator who lives outside of space/time. So to suggest that space time doesn't operate with an earth day being a 24 hour earth day, is like saying water doesn't contain oxygen. In some other reality perhaps there is something called water that doesn't contain oxygen, but not in this reality. And in some other place a planet's light/day cycle might be a 1000 years, but not on earth, on earth it is 24 hours. And on earth, space time operates in constant ways.

Read last paragraph, "But the infidel..." thoughts?

Why is this the worst kind of infidelity? Because it masquerades as righteousness!

Read question 2: "Why is it important to understand that science, for all the good that it does, is still merely a human endeavor?"

Thoughts about this question?

What about this question, "Why is it important to understand that church attendance, for all the good that it does, is still merely a human endeavor?"

Can church attendance be a merely human endeavor? Can church attendance be blessed by God and accompanied by the working of the Holy Spirit?

Can science be merely a human endeavor? Can science be blessed by God and accompanied by the working of the Holy Spirit?

What is science? It is conducting careful experiment, with reproducible evidence and following where the evidence leads.

I read this two weeks ago, but in response to what appears to be an attack against science, I thought it deserved to be read again:

**"Experience** is said to be the best teacher. **Genuine experience is indeed superior to mere theoretical knowledge**, but many have an erroneous idea as to what constitutes experience. Real experience is gained by a variety of **careful experiments, made with the mind free from prejudice, uncontrolled by previously established opinions and habits. The results are marked with careful solicitude.** . . .

"That which many term experience is not experience at all. . . . There has not been **a fair trial by actual experiment and thorough investigation, with a knowledge of the principles involved in the action.** . . .



**"Here is where we have met the greatest difficulties in religious matters.** The plainest facts may be presented, the clearest truths, sustained by the word of God, may be brought before the mind; but the ear and the heart are closed, and the all-convincing argument is, 'my experience.' Some will say, 'The Lord has blessed me in believing and doing as I have; therefore I cannot be in error.' 'My experience' is clung to, and the most elevating, sanctifying truths of the Bible are rejected. . . .

"Many examples might be given to show how people have been deceived by relying upon what they supposed to be their experience." *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene* 109-110 (1890 - Originally written in 1865 in a series "How to Live"); *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 71; *RH* July 27, 1886; *The Health Reformer* , June 1, 1872; *Australasian Signs of the Times*, Dec. 19, 1904; *The Watchman*, Sept. 1, 1908

thoughts?

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<sup>1</sup> George MacDonald, *Discovering the Character of God*, p. 29.