



Origins Lesson 4 1Q 2013

Creation, a Biblical Theme

Before we get started an announcement. I want to thank Dean, for doing research regarding one of the speculative ideas I have suggested several times in class. Specifically, the idea that on day one of creation week of planet earth that God may have dissipated a black hole in space and used the matter from the black hole to make the earth, sun, moon and planets of our solar system.

Dean has done some research and the current science of physics and astrophysics does not provide a basis to support the idea that structural, formed, matter exists within a black hole.

Therefore, I want to emphasize when I suggest such an idea it is speculation and not fact. And because we want to be consistent with the integrative evidence based approach where Scripture, science and experience harmonize I plan to back off this speculation unless science one day provides other evidence. Perhaps then the best explanation is that day one describes an interstellar space with a large planetary mass/asteroid/comet etc.

The point where Scripture and science agree is that Genesis one doesn't describe the creation of the entire universe, but the creation of earth and our solar system. This is the main point of the suggested idea that a black hole might be involved.

Thanks – Dean for making sure our speculative ideas are clearly delineated from more certain facts.

SABBATH

Read memory text:

“Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people.⁷ He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” Rev 14:6,7

Thoughts?

What are the key points of this passage? What is the meaning?

- A message is to be broadcast around the world
- To be in awe and amazement and admiration and adoration of God and
- To have your hearts and minds healed to reveal his character, i.e. give him glory
- Because the hour in which he is being judged has come, and he needs his witnesses, those who demonstrate his methods and principles work to heal and restore



- Because only the one who created life to begin with is capable of taking sinners and recreating, healing, restoring them back to their original design

What are the reasons that Revelation 14 draws our attention to God as creator?

- Is it as simple as some suggest, ensuring we attend church and close business on one particular day of the week? Didn't the Jews who crucified Christ do that?
- To draw our attention to his original creation, i.e. his protocols for life the law of love
- To distinguish God from false gods who cannot create
- To instill hope, the creator can fix what is broken in us. Don't be afraid, God can fix us!

SUNDAY

The creation of man, any questions or thoughts about what happens in Genesis two?

What is the significance of man being created first and woman being created from the "rib" of man?

It goes against nature – where in the natural world do you find a human male giving birth to a female? Do we find females giving birth to males? Might it imply something regarding Moses' inspiration for this text? If he was working only from human knowledge would he have likely written it this way?

Any significance to the fact that it is written this way? What about the genetics of males and females? Does a woman have the genetics to make a man? Does a man have the genetic material to make a woman?

Isn't it interesting, that Moses wrote this in a way that is consistent with advanced scientific knowledge, something that wasn't known when he wrote Genesis.

Do facts like this make the Bible account more credible to you?

What is the significance that God chose to make Eve from tissue taken from Adam's side?

She was to be a helper one who walks along side – does this sound like anything else in Scripture – a helper that walks along side? A paraclete? This is a description also used for the Holy Spirit, the "helper" who walks along side.

Do you think it is mere coincidence that the Holy Spirit is described as a helper, one who walks along side us to help us, and woman was created from the side of Adam to be a helper to walk along side?

What is the Holy Spirit to help us with? The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of truth and love – what was woman created to help man with?



Truth and Love? Could Adam know the fullness of Godlike love without someone for him to serve, without someone for him to give himself for? And then someone to receive that love and give of herself in return? And don't women have the ability to draw out love from our hearts? And do spouses serve as mirrors for each other, to reflect and reveal things in each other that we would not see in ourselves?

In whose image was mankind made? As the Father Son and Spirit live in a triune perfection of love, God made human beings to be dwelling places for his Spirit, thus Adam, Eve and God are to exist in a triune perfection of love.

This can only happen when the heart has been healed, when we die to self, when we experience recreation within, when we love others more than self.

And this only happens when the lies about God are removed.
Here is what one Christian author wrote in Patriarchs and Prophets:

God Himself gave Adam a companion. He provided "an help meet for him"--a helper corresponding to him--one who was fitted to be his companion, **and who could be one with him in love and sympathy**. Eve was created from **a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal**, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was **his second self**, showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation. "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it." Ephesians 5:29. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one." {PP 46.2}

God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe. "Marriage is honorable" (Hebrews 13:4); it was one of the first gifts of God to man, and it is one of the two institutions that, after the Fall, Adam brought with him beyond the gates of Paradise. **When the divine principles are recognized and obeyed in this relation, marriage is a blessing; it guards the purity and happiness of the race, it provides for man's social needs, it elevates the physical, the intellectual, and the moral nature.** {PP 46.3}

Thoughts?

What do you think of that last section, when the divine principles are recognized and obeyed, the marriage relationship elevates the physical, intellectual and moral nature?

Science has shown that healthy marriages result in better physical and mental health and longer life than living single, but conflictual marriages result in worse physical and mental health than living single.



Do you think marriage is under attack? How? What do you think is the most serious attack on marriage?

- Cohabitation without marriage
- Polygamy
- Homosexual marriage
- Godless marriage, i.e. no God, just evolved, humanism
- Marriages amongst those who believe in God but who believe in a punishing God, and husbands dominate and control their wives who are treated as less than equals? (Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Eastern)
- Others?

My view is the greatest attack on marriage is when people profess to represent Christ and then men dominate, abuse, mistreat, demean, and belittle their wives, or treat them as inferior and require their submission, including church sponsored tenants of inequality.

The more we are healed and become like God designed, the more equality is experienced between men and women, husband and wife.

MONDAY

The lesson focuses on the Psalms and how the Psalmist credits God with creation – did you have questions about any of these texts?

Should these texts be taken literally, as in each detail is accurate, or poetically, in that God is recognized as creator but every detail may not be accurate?

Ps 24:1,2:

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;
for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.

Thoughts?

Does it sound like Genesis 1:1, that there was something here, watery and deep before God terraformed planet earth? There is a harmony in the Scripture that supports the idea that Genesis doesn't describe creation of the universe, but terraforming earth and this solar system.

Ps 74:16,17:

The day is yours, and yours also the night; you established the sun and moon. It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.



Thoughts? Is this literal or poetic, recognizing God as creator and the source of the laws of nature that result in the seasons changing, but not necessarily that God created summer and winter, or is it literal God created summer and winter?

In other words, did God “create summer and winter” or are summer and winter part of the change that came with sin? I read this in Patriarchs and Prophets, do you agree or think this is off base?

In humility and unutterable sadness they [Adam and Eve] bade farewell to their beautiful home and went forth to dwell upon the earth, where rested the curse of sin. The atmosphere, once so mild and uniform in temperature, **was now subject to marked changes**, and the Lord mercifully provided them with a garment of skins as a protection from the **extremes of heat and cold**. {PP 61.5}

Do you think there were extremes in weather before sin? Would winter, with freezing snow be an extreme of whether?

Were there seasons with fall, with leaves falling off and dying before sin?

I read the following in the book Conflict and Courage – do you agree, or is this just wild speculation?

Although the earth was blighted with the curse, nature was still to be man's lesson book. **It could not now represent goodness only; for evil was everywhere present, marring earth and sea and air with its defiling touch.** . . . {CC 19.2}

In drooping flower and falling leaf Adam and his companion witnessed the first signs of decay. Vividly was brought to their minds the stern fact that every living thing must die. Even the air, upon which their life depended, bore the seeds of death. {CC 19.3}

As Adam witnessed the first signs of decay in the falling leaf and in the drooping flowers, he mourned more deeply than men now mourn over their dead. The dying flowers were not so great a cause of grief, because they were more tender and delicate; but when the tall stately trees cast off their leaves to decay, it presented before him the general dissolution of beautiful nature, which God had created for the especial benefit of man. {CC 22.3}

Thoughts?

Does it sound like they had seasons? So, does it sound like God created summer and winter? Or is summer and winter a result of sin changing God's creation?

This lets us explore a variety of questions – how do we understand Scripture? Do we take it concretely and literally? Do we understand the intent, that nature, life, the planet etc. was created by God, but nature, as Paul says in Romans 8 groans under the weight of sin, thus nature doesn't reveal itself to us as God created it. So we see God's handiwork, but that handiwork is marred by sin?



Then why did the Bible writer attribute to God summer and winter?

- Was it just a poetic description of attributing to God all that exists?
- Was it an ignorant mind who didn't understand how nature changed since sin?
- Was he perhaps attributing to God the flow of time, the changing of seasons, i.e. the changing of events, that God doesn't hold us in stasis, but things unfold over time?
- Was the expression literal or poetic?

Is there a danger in reading Scripture and taking it concretely and holding to it obstinately? How about those Scriptures which describe God as angry or punishing?

Does it trouble you to discover that not everything in Scripture is to be taken literally, that we are to think and reason?

Last week we spoke of changes in the animal kingdom, as I was reading the references above regarding the dying leaf, I read the following:

Continually they [Adam and Eve] were reminded also of their lost dominion. Among the lower creatures Adam had stood as king, and so long as he remained loyal to God, all nature acknowledged his rule; **but when he transgressed, this dominion was forfeited. The spirit of rebellion, to which he himself had given entrance, extended throughout the animal creation.** . . . {CC 19.4}

Does this make sense, that God created earth as a microcosm of the universe, a “theater unto angels and men” (1Cor 4:9), with Adam and Eve representing the Godhead to govern earth with love, and that their rebellion against God, then resulted in nature demonstrating that rebellion with the animals rebelling against them, and all nature infected with selfishness?

TUESDAY

Read Job 38:4-7

- “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation?
Tell me, if you understand.
5 Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!
Who stretched a measuring line across it?
6 On what were its footings set,
or who laid its cornerstone—
7 while the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?

What do you think? What is the implication of the fact angels were singing for joy? That the universe already existed when earth was created.



The Hebrew for “angels” in this passage is *ben* and means son and in some versions is translated not as angels but as the sons of God. What might this imply?

In the genealogy of Christ in Luke 3:38 we have each person listed as the son of, son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

What might this imply?

That God’s representative “sons” from other worlds came together before God, Job 1:6 references this. And they watched as God created earth, and they sang for joy at its foundation – why?

Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

¹¹ “You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being.” Rev 4:9-11

What is going on that the intelligent beings in heaven sing together for joy when earth is created, that the intelligent beings shout worthy is the Lord for creating all things? Is it more than just appreciation of a new creation? Is there something bigger happening?

Do you get the imagery of the Great Controversy being played out with intelligences through the universe watching?

I continued looking, in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and there was a **holy watcher**, coming down from heaven.... The sentence is rendered by decree of the **watchers**, the decision is given by order of the holy ones... (Daniel 4:13,17)

Did you know the Bible teaches that there are intelligent beings watching? What are they watching? Are they really watching you and me, merely, or are they watching something bigger being played out upon the landscape of planet earth? What Paul said, we are a spectacle to angels and men (1Cor 4:9)?

Can you see the stadium filled with adoring fans, watching as the two opponents take the field, the challenger, Lucifer the light bearer versus the champion Jesus - The Bright and Morning Star. Cheering and joyous shouting is heard as Jesus, the reigning and undefeated champion speaks and earth is created. Dismay from Lucifer, the challenger, and cries of unfair, unfair, cheater echo from his fanbase.

What do you think about this scene? Why did the sons of God sing for joy? What did Jesus create?



Psalms 8:4-9:

When I look at the sky, which you have made, at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places- what are human beings, that you think of them; mere mortals, that you care for them? **Yet you made them inferior only to yourself;** you crowned them with glory and honour. You appointed them rulers over everything you made; you placed them over all creation: sheep and cattle, and the wild animals too; the birds and the fish and the creatures in the seas. O LORD, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world! GNB

what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have **made them a little lower than God,** and crowned them with glory and honor. Ps 8:4,5 NRSV

thoughts? He created human beings, a little lower only than himself, not lower than angels, above angels, with dominion and creative powers – why? To be his answer, to be his evidence, to reveal the truth about him in the controversy with Satan. We are to reveal God’s character and methods of love, this is our purpose!

WEDNESDAY

Read memory verse, Isa 45:18:

For this is what the Lord says— he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: “I am the Lord, and there is no other.”

Thoughts? Why do the prophets, over and over again, emphasize God as creator? At that time, were there competitor gods that vied for their worship?

On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. 1Kings 11:7

Before we look at these detestable gods, does anyone remember where the Moabites and Ammonites came from?

³⁰ Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave. ³¹ One day the older daughter said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man around here to lie with us, as is the custom all over the earth. ³² Let’s get our father to drink wine and then lie with him and preserve our family line through our father.”

³³ That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.



³⁴ The next day the older daughter said to the younger, “Last night I lay with my father. Let’s get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and lie with him so we can preserve our family line through our father.” ³⁵ So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went and lay with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.

³⁶ So both of Lot’s daughters became pregnant by their father. ³⁷ The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today. ³⁸ The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites of today. Gen 19:30-38

Thoughts? What do you learn from this?

Did you notice it was written to make Lot to look out the best? He was seduced and tricked by his daughter, the “roofied” him. But they didn’t have roofies, they just used alcohol.

What does it say about Lot that he would be willing to get drunk? What does this say about the daughters?

And what does this story say about God? Why were Lot and his daughters living in a cave? Because their city burned, but why weren’t they burned in the city? Because God sent angels to deliver them from the city. What does this mean?

If these people could live like this, why did God consider them righteous enough to bring out of Sodom?

What is God looking for in us in order for him to send angels to deliver us? Perfection? Sinlessness? That we eat the right foods and avoid certain drinks? Or is God looking at the heart for one specific finding - Healability? Something left in us that is healable? And a willingness to allow him to work in our lives to heal and restore us?

God isn’t viewing the world through a legal lens. He isn’t viewing the world through a lens of keeping a list and checking it twice, searching to see whose naughty or nice – No!

He is viewing the world through a lens of his Creatorship, how he built life to operate, where it deviates from his design and what needs to be done to restore it. Then in our individual lives he is assessing, *is our condition treatable*, or have we so persisted in rebellious living, living outside his design, that we have destroyed the faculties that respond to love and truth i.e. are beyond healing. Evidently, as bad as Lot and his daughters appear, they were not beyond healing! Do you find, that while Lot and his daughters look terribly sick, God looks amazingly good!

So back to these false gods, Chemosh and Molech. They shared a common origin, they started out as one god, but over the course of years denominated into two different gods one for the Moabites and one for the Ammonites, but they shared basically the same characteristics. Both Chemosh and Molech



were gods of fertility and believed to have characteristics similar to Baal, and both of these gods, required, at times, human sacrifice.

Dagon was god of the Philistines. The Philistines rejoiced to Dagon when Sampson was captured. When they captured the ark they put it in front of Dagon and Dagon was face down in front of the ark one day and then his hands and head broke off the next. When king Saul was killed in battle they took his armor and head and put it in front of Dagon. Dagon was the god of grain and fertility, and it is debated to be related to fish. Some have his consort a fish goddess and over the centuries some cultures may have adapted him to serve their seafaring needs.

Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." 1Kings 18:19

Who was Asherah and Baal?

Asherah as a goddess of fertility and was the consort of El, the high god of the Canaanite pantheon of gods and El is the father of Baal.

Ēl is called again and again *Tôru* 'Ēl ("Bull Ēl" or "the bull god"). He is *bātnyu binwāti* ("Creator of creatures"), *'abū banī 'ili* ("father of the gods"), and *'abū 'adami* ("father of man"). He is *qāniyunu 'ōlam* ("creator eternal"), the epithet *'ōlam* appearing in Hebrew form in the Hebrew name of God 'ēl 'ōlam "God Eternal" in Genesis 21:33. He is *hātikuka* ("your patriarch"). Ēl is the grey-bearded ancient one, full of wisdom, *malku* ("king"), *'abū šamīma* ("father of years"), and *'ēl gibbōr* ("Ēl the warrior"). (from Wikipedia)

Under Ahab Israel built temples to both Asherah and Baal. Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, who had Isaiah sawed in half, worshipped Asherah and offered his own son as burnt offering to Molech. Josiah later cleansed Jerusalem of these gods.

Baal worship involved many animal sacrifices and priests acting as intermediaries. Baal was also known as Baal-Hadad and was the god of thunder, lightning, storms and weather, the god of fertility. At their temples were "holy prostitutes" both male and female.

"The Hebrew noun *ba'al* means 'master', 'possessor' or 'husband'. Used with suffixes, e.g. Baal-peor or Baal-berith, the word may have retained something of its original sense; but in general Baal is a proper name in the OT, and refers to a specific deity, Hadad, the W Semitic storm-god, the most important deity in the Canaanite pantheon.

"Yahweh was 'master' and 'husband' to Israel, and therefore they called him 'Baal', in all innocence; but naturally this practice led to confusion of the worship of Yahweh with the Baal rituals, and it became essential to call him by some different title; Hosea (2:16) proposed 'îš, another word meaning 'husband.'" ⁱ



Baal was the son of El (i.e. El-ohim or El-Shaddai). He was the god of weather. Often called, 'Almighty' and "Lord of the Earth." Baal was the god who brought rain, thunder, lightning, who fertilized the earth, controlled the sun and brought the harvest. Baal fought the great serpent leviathan as well as battled against Mot, the god of death, who was his brother another son of El. And most amazing of all, it was taught that Baal died in his battle with Mot and was resurrected from the dead to bring life to earth. ⁱⁱ

Do you notice any common theme amongst all these pagan gods? What did they all claim? That they had power over life, fertility, produce, harvest, weather. In other words, they claimed they were creator. Thus we have God repeatedly reminding the people that he is the true creator.

Do you see the similarities between the true and the false? Do you see how Satan attempts to impersonate the true with his distortion of the true?

Does it bother you that these pagan religions have so much in common with the truth? Don't be bothered. Think about it, any counterfeit attempts to approximate or appear genuine – so are counterfeit dollars printed in pink? Why not? The closer to the genuine the better able to deceive.

So, what was the problem with worshipping a god who was the "husband and protector of Israel," the son of El, who was worshipped as the creator, who controlled the weather, who brought rain, sunshine, and fertility, who blessed with full harvest, who warred against the great serpent and death, who died and was resurrected to bring life to the earth? What was wrong with this god? What was Elijah opposing? What made Baal worship false? Was it that they had the wrong set of syllables? No, as they called Yahweh baal, husband and protector. Then why did God get so upset with this?

Was it only because they had fertility associated? Or was it something else?

Here is what one Christian writer identifies as the central distortion in Baal worship:

"Determined to keep the people in deception, the priests of Baal continue to offer sacrifices to their gods and to call upon them night and day to refresh the earth. **With costly offerings the priests attempt to appease the anger of their gods**;" (Prophets and Kings 124)

And the Bible confirms this:

"So the prophets prayed louder and cut themselves with knives and daggers, according to their custom, until blood flowed." 1 Kings 18:28

The root, core problem with all the false gods, is that they represent God's character falsely. They represent God as a being who requires payment, appeasement, sacrifice. This is paganism at its root.

So what is the problem with worshipping a false, punitive god-construct? Failing to remember God as creator, and the protocols of love upon which he creates?



But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers, who did not trust in the LORD their God. They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. **They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless.** They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, “Do not do as they do,” and they did the things the LORD had forbidden them to do. 2Kings 17:14-15

We become like the God we worship and admire. This is why God continually calls us back to the knowledge of him. It is not because he needs our worship, it is because we need to worship him! Satan is the father of lies, and as he gets us to believe lies about god, to worship false god constructs he has power over us and we destroy ourselves and become worthless.

Today, we don't have problems with fertility rites in the church, but do we have problems with appeasement theologies misrepresenting God?

If we want to gospel to go to the world, to do our mission so that Christ will return, we as members in the church must rise up and present the truth about God's character of love, lovingly meet with our pastors and leaders and show them the truth, but we must stop taking pagan God constructs to the world!

THURSDAY

Paul is in Athens and appeals to the philosophers there, on what basis does he approach them?

He reaches out to them with one of their gods, the unknown god, he uses one of their god constructs and then introduces the creator through that.

What does it say about his approach? Did he start by condemning their false gods?
How might we use Paul's approach today?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1-3

ⁱ Wood, D. R. W., & Marshall, I. H. (1996). *New Bible dictionary (3rd ed.)* (108).

ⁱⁱ Wood, D. R. W., & Marshall, I. H. (1996). *New Bible dictionary (3rd ed.)* (108).

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