

Genesis week 2-
A Creational Worldview
1:1-5

EX: Sound of Music – Do Re Mi – “Start at the very beginning, a very good place to start”

The text gets right into an account of Creation. It is a broad stroke perspective. The first five verses serve as a model as we are still in a bit of an introduction to the whole series.

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. 3 Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Last week we considered the context of the Five Books of Moses as they are known in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The Covenant People of God had been in bondage for 400 years. They had lost their sense of spiritual or social cohesion.

They went to Egypt and were given favor because they were the sons of Jacob and the brothers of JOSEPH. They had an identity and heritage that went back from Jacob to Isaac to Abraham.

Sadly, years of bondage followed when a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph Ex 1:8.

Egypt began to oppress the children of Israel and held them in bondage for 400 years.

That is a long time

They tried to keep up their sense of being a covenant people as they cried out to God, but their circumstances were not hopeful.

So, when God brings them out in the Exodus they now have the challenge of being a free people. They need something that will guide them in their corporate story and set some guideposts for how they are to live.

It was during the time in the wilderness that Moses began to write what we call the Pentateuch – the first 5 books of the OT.

How Moses received the information is not clear, nor is it that the primary issue of importance. What is most significant is the narrative flow of the story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.

The Pentateuch was designed to show them that the Promises to their Fathers were still in effect.

The People coming into the Promised Land represent a new layer of fulfillment of the promises – Land, Posterity, Presence of Yahweh.

The issues and topics we encounter in Genesis are SO RELEVANT TODAY.

Who are we and where did we come from – i.e. Alex Haley's series ROOTS; Ancestry.com , etc.

What's it all about? Are we just the result of some cosmic accident?

Do we have any meaningful purpose or do we just labor, toil, and die?

The dignity of human life as made in the image of God. Are we any different than the slug or the ape?

The importance of the husband -wife relationship

The significance of male and female distinctions as reflecting the image of God

Those are some common themes of headlines today.

You may be thinking, “Uh Oh, the preacher's going to meddle in social issues or politics.” WRONG.

If that seems to be the case, it is because Politics has been meddling with God's Creation ordinances and mandates for a long time, and things have intensified in our secular age.

God WAS HERE FIRST. These domains, issues, and questions are His to govern, not ours. He is the AUJTHOR of life, male and female, marriage, and work.

In Genesis, Moses was setting a Creational Worldview for God's people.

After 400 years in Egypt, they needed a worldview RESET.

DO WE, do YOU have a biblical worldview?

"Preacher, I don't know if I even have a worldview." YOU DO

We all have some sort of worldview, whether we recognize it or not. It is helpful to discover one's worldview. It is a big step toward self-awareness, self-knowledge, and self-understanding. If your worldview is not intentionally shaped by scripture, it WILL be shaped by the surrounding culture. No one drifts toward a clear Biblical view of God, life, and all there is.

Pdf James Sire – The Universe Next Door, p. 20

So what is a worldview? Essentially this:

A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) that we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.

Genesis presents a selected history of broad themes for those coming out of Egypt and for those who would come after them. And Moses is teaching a CREATIONAL WORLDVIEW.

Chapters 1-11 gives us an introduction to the one true God through the lens of four key events that impact all human existence: Creation, the fall by which sin entered the world, the great Flood, and the scattering of the nations at the Tower of Babel -ch 11.

These chapters are giving a broad-brush approach dealing with large scale foundational issues that show God's interaction with humanity.

EX: The Creation narrative is really broad in its approach. Moses is not seeking to lay out a textbook on the exact method of creation. He is driving home the point that God is the CREATOR.

The people in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land weren't all that concerned with the details of creation. They needed to know that there is a God who is sovereign and who brought Order out of Chaos. They had been living as slave for 400 years. That kind of life is very unsettling and confusing. Genesis 1-2 assured them that there is an order and purpose to life and to the world.

Chapters 12-50 zoom in on a key man and his family – Abraham. They give an overview of how God graciously and faithfully maintained covenants with His Chosen People. The Promises of a Land, a posterity, and the presence of Yahweh are proclaimed. Abraham gave way to Isaac, who had Jacob. Joseph, the son of Jacob is the reason that the whole tribe of Israelites end up in Egypt and suffer in bondage. What seemed to have been lost during the 400 years in Egypt is now restored as the people of Israel make their way to the promised land after their deliverance.

The Themes of Promise and Redemption continue through our Savior, Jesus, who is revealed as the promised Messiah and the church is seen as the continuation of the people of God.

The Bible is God's revelation of Himself. Without this revelation we would not know that much of God except what is seen by natural creation. Genesis is the fountainhead of this written revelation. This book sets up themes in the Bible which will finally culminate in Jesus.

NOW, let's get back to the opening verses which set up an account of The Beginning i.e. CREATION

As noted last week, God created 'out of nothing' by the Word of his power.

This sets up an immediate conflict with a secular view –

Why is there something rather than nothing? Or HOW IS THERE something rather than nothing?

Are we here because of creation or did we get something out of nothing.

Ex nihilo, nihil fit – out of nothing, nothing comes.

“Nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could...”

Don't bury the LEAD i.e. the main point that must be taken into any consideration of the origins of life.

God is central; He is the ONLY NECESSARY BEING.

Without God there would be nothing.

There must be something that has the power of being or else nothing would be for nothing could be.

The idea of spontaneous generation held by some proved to be fatally flawed because 'nothing comes from nothing.'

All through the ages people have said, “How can you know that God exists?” You might hear that from adults and kids.

Some in the modern world came to hold that the universe came into being 'by chance'.

Have you ever heard that view...”the universe is the product of random chance, all that we see is a cosmic accident.” Those professing to be wise have held that view for generations.

I find that language interesting because typically when you hear the term accident, what comes to mind?

A MESS, a pile up or a car in a ditch, something broken, someone injured, or some sort of mishap that has disrupted the normal order of things.

As we look around and see the structure of the natural world would we say it is a disorderly chaotic mess? I WOULDN'T.

Things seem to happen in a very orderly way. Soon the leaves will start changing color and falling i.e. Fall. That will give way to winter – it even has a start date. It also has an end date, i.e. the first day of Spring, which gives way to Summer.

We live in a part of the globe that has four distinct seasons, but even in other places, the climate is ordered and predictable.

For thousands of years, people have navigated oceans by the stars because they are fixed. The laws of nature enable planes to fly and rockets to orbit the earth because there is order and structure in the universe. The word “universe” implies some sort of ordered unity, not random chance.

Ex: HOLD UP YOUR HAND and wiggle your fingers and opposable thumb – that is NO ACCIDENT.

Ex: have you ever been boarding a flight and heard this announcement, “*We are sorry but this flight is cancelled because the natural laws that govern gravity, air speed, and motion are not in effect today. We live in a random universe, and we just can't rely on natural laws being consistent. They work randomly and we don't feel good about our chances today. Pick up your peanuts or pretzels on you way out. Keep a good thought and maybe we can do this tomorrow. Who knows?*”

Friends, based on what I can observe about the world, IT IS NO ACCIDENT. **If the world were the result of random chance or a cosmic accident, then why is there so much order to it all?**

Ex: that was a question that really bothered the philosopher David Hume – no friend of a Biblical worldview. He had a hard time getting past the obvious order in the world.

The idea of the universe being the result of random chance is irrational and certainly isn't consistent with

science.

Dr. Sproul has a great deal to say about this in his book, Not A Chance.

Friends, chance has no real existence; it has no being in nature; it can't do anything, it has no power because it has no being.

Chance is a mathematical concept that describes possibilities or probabilities. It is not an actual thing that has a capacity to create or do anything.

Existence by chance or out of nothing is like pulling a rabbit out of a hat when there is no hat and no magician. There is certainly NO rabbit.

Aligned with random chance is the theory of evolution, which has captured the mind of modern man. Many will ask or think, "What about evolution? Don't you accept that?"

Rather than immediately yield to the premise, we need to get some definitions on the table.

Dr. Gerstner notes that if we are to talk about evolution, we need to realize that there are at least two different meanings. It is important to know the distinctions.

1 CAUSAL evolution i.e. that **evolution is the cause and source of everything. It is that from which all things come.**

What qualification does evolution have for its own existence? What evidence is there that such a thing called evolution has within itself the power of being and causality?

If the answer is given as some other cause, then the definition of evolution as causality has already been abandoned.

If they argue that evolution doesn't come from anything, but is just there, then they are using the term in the sense of the essence of all things from which everything flows – existence, meaning, purpose, etc. One might want to call that evolution, but it sounds more like a DICTIONARY definition for God.

A being or power that accounts for the existence of all things is the language of religion. Science doesn't even have a capacity to verify or replicate the beginning of all things.

2. MODAL evolution – the more common usage which refers to the process by which all things are constantly developing and moving toward some sort of climax of realization.

If you can show that such a force exists then it may be a means by which an eternally existent God might bring things about in an ascending order. If such a process exists then there would have to be some higher power that is operating that process. This brings us back to GOD.

The reality is that Modern man faces the problem of CAUSALITY.

Did the universe cause itself to exist despite the lack of any sufficient or efficient cause to bring it about?
OR

Is there an eternal sufficient efficient power to do the job?

The obvious answer is that of a Creator, but that has implications that we don't like, so professing to be wise, we become fools.

Sproul...

There was a time when nothing existed, but there was never a time when NO ONE existed. God is not a thing, but He is a personal being who has within Himself the power of being.

The secular view is 'out of nothing and by nothing came everything'. Wow, that is a leap of faith for those who say, "How can we know God is real."

Ps 14- "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

*** APPLY

Note the generating power of God in v. 1-5 and the authority of God.
The word 'authority' is built on the root 'author'.
The one who is the author has authority.

Ever since Gen 3 mankind has been infected by an 'anti-authoritarian' spirit. In times of tyranny it serves us well, but when it is turned on THE AUTHOR of life, it is not helpful.

Underlying much of the debates about creation and origins is THE ISSUE OF WORLDVIEW. That is important as we consider scripture and the topics of Genesis.

What we find in the rest of scripture flows out of Genesis. It is the foundation of the Biblical narrative of creation, fall, redemption, and Restoration.

It all culminates in Christ..

JESUS IS THE CREATOR AND THE LIGHT – Jn 1:9/ 2 Cor 4;

Jn 1:9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

2 Cor 4:6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Has that light shone on your heart to know the glory of God in the face of Christ?

If you know him, are you pursuing Christ so that you might walk in the light?

Eph 5:8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light 9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

1 Jn 1:5

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Friends, this is Good News – We are not left in darkness, and through the light of Christ, we have fellowship with one another and with God Himself because Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

Let that shape your Worldview today.

Referenced:

John Gerstner 3 Faces of Adam - Ligonier Resources

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/three-faces-adam>

R. C. Sproul - Not A Chance

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/themes-from-genesis>

GROUP DISCUSSION:

Are the following “ancient” mythological beliefs or ‘modern’ beliefs?

astrology

materialism

polytheism

idolatry

sun worship

belief in the irregularity of nature

culturally approved perversion and violence

“chance” as the cause of life

Why was the Creation narrative needed for the people of Israel after the Exodus?

What is its impact on us today?

Is it hard to believe in Creation?

In light of the Genesis narrative, what would you say to a child who says, “How do you know that God exists?”

What are the implications of a secular view of the origins of life?

How does the Creation narrative point us to Jesus? (Jn 1)

Why is the darkness and light theme important for us in the NT days?