

Genesis week 1
Order not Chaos

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

We’ve done a series of the end of the movie – Revelation. Now, we rewind to the beginning. I don’t plan on doing the whole book, but who knows.

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.

The title of the book in Hebrew is B’RESHEET =- in the beginning
The word Genesis is not Hebrew but comes from the Greek word meaning “to be, to become or to happen.”
That is what the author of Genesis is trying to teach those delivered from Egypt, and their history is also our history.

Genesis is the story of beginnings, and it is the beginning of the story of Jesus. While Jesus is not mentioned by name, He is alluded to in ch. 3 as the one who would crush the head of the serpent. That connection is demonstrated in the opening scene of The Passion of Christ where Jesus is praying in the Garden and we see a snake coming up. Jesus stomps on his head to crush him.

That was not put in the movie as a warning about praying outside in a garden at night. It was there to connect Jesus back to Genesis 3. It serves as a reminder that the story of our redemption through Christ goes all the way back to Genesis.

Genesis is a flashback story told by Moses to a people who were coming out of slavery. Their ‘Exodus’ was not just a new beginning for them, it was a continuation of a story of God with his Covenant people – the children of Abraham – Isaac, Jacob, and his twelve sons, especially Joseph. The Joseph narrative in the last part of Genesis explains how the people of God ended up in Egypt and how they became slaves when there arose a king who knew not Joseph.
Childs P. 150

WHAT DID THIS NEWLY DELIVERED PEOPLE NEED?

An Identity and a Hope in their God.

They needed to know the true God who had heard their cry and had delivered them. In Egypt they were surrounded by various false gods and religious mythologies. As a people in bondage, they were without hope. The Genesis narrative fills in the backstory and explains who they are and how they got to where they are.

The people of Israel were like teens or young adults being sent out into the world for the first time. Their lives had been ruled by the whims of Pharaoh and by the schedule of their taskmasters. Coming out of bondage meant that they weren’t used to running their own lives. How would they structure their corporate life? How would they resist the temptations they would face with their newfound freedom? They were entering a land inhabited by nations and tribes that worshipped strange gods whose stories were filled with murder, deceit, and immorality.

How do you lay a foundation for a wise and worthwhile society? THE ANSWER IS TORAH. The Hebrew word means ‘instruction.’

At the beginning of this instruction is a broad reflection on how and why they even exist – The Creator who rules over His creation.

PEOPLE BECOME LIKE THE GODS THEY WORSHIP, so it was important to give the ISREALITES a clear

understanding of the TRUE God.

THE MOST IMPORTANT WORDS IN THE BIBLE?

1:1 In the beginning God...


This verse unlocks an important truth for ALL OF US – there is a God, and we are not him.

From the first verse scripture is on a collision course with other views, especially secular views, regarding the nature of our reality.

God is eternal and transcends time, but ‘in the beginning God’ gives us the advent of cosmic history. The ancient Greeks had a circular or cyclical view of time. The Hebrews had a linear view. The worldview of the Greeks was endless repetition – no beginning and no destiny.

Their worldview was a cyclical bridge to NOWHERE. This worldview gives us lyrics like these from 1965

Ex: Nowhere Man – Beatles 1965 Rubber Soul album

[Verse 1: 

He's a real nowhere man Sitting in his nowhere land
Making all his nowhere plans for nobody.

[Verse 2:

Doesn't have a point of view , Knows not where he's going to
Isn't he a bit like you and me?

Those lyrics suggest a world without any sort of clear purpose or direction. It is not what the Bible teaches.

The Hebrew view is moving toward a destiny established by our Creator. We have key moments of redemptive history, but time keeps moving toward its ultimate destiny.

The first Key moment is here is Gen 1 – God created the heavens and the earth

“Heavens and the earth” – the entire substance of what is – created out of nothing.


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?

Science can't answer those questions.

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...” 

BECAUSE there is a creator God, we have substance rather than nothing.

v. 1 the act of creation defines human history and sets the parameters of our existence. The creation narrative informs our understanding of who we are and whose we are.

v. 2 sets a different tone – void and darkness

EX: If there were a soundtrack it might be like the movie JAWS. There are two motifs in Jaws – one is the upbeat swashbuckling music of the guys going after the shark. The other is that scary couple of notes that indicates danger from the darkness of the ocean.

v. 1 is swashbuckling; v. 2 is ominous.

The text is not teaching that God is in conflict with some co-equal evil power, but that God is sovereign over all creation. With Him there is no possibility of ultimate chaos.

There is an unshaped earth and universe, and it is formless, but God moves in to mold and shape things according to his divine plan.

A world without God is left without form and is void and dark.

Sadly, we hear secular voices telling us that we never got past the chaos and void, that life has no purpose, no meaning, and all is chaos.

EX: the Existentialist movement, the nihilist movement – nothingness-ism.

The messengers of despair see meaningless everywhere as if the universe got stuck in v. 2 and God never moved to bring order out of chaos.

EX: Remember the Jeff Goldblum character in Jurassic Park. He's likeable and witty, but he is really tied into the chaos theory of the universe.



THE MONSTER SQUAD Nihilistic

In the world of today Don't have much to say
Life's taken a turn for the worse Is this path i follow cursed
Nihilistic, sadistic Don't wanna live in a world so simplistic
Don't wanna be around In a bottle i can be found
Does life have to be this way? *&% tomorrow ,live for today

IS LIFE CHAOTIC at times? YES, but that is a distortion that entered in by the Fall. It is not the state of things as designed by God in Creation.

What comes next separates the Christian believer from the secularist, nihilist, apostle of despair.

“The Spirit was moving over the surface of the water”.

Brooding, hovering, or sweeping over the water.

The Hebrew word used is not common, but does describe eagles over their nests. Deut 32

God calls substance into being and before it is turned into harmony and order, the Spirit of God comes upon the threat of chaos and fills the emptiness and forms the formless and banishes the darkness.

v. 3 Let there be light and there was light.

There is no description of the means by which this happens. What we have is the Divine fiat – a command. God speaks and it comes into being.

All through scripture the word and voice of God is seen to be powerful. Ps 29

3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;

The God of glory thunders,

The Lord is over many waters.

4 The voice of the Lord is powerful,

The voice of the Lord is majestic.

5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars;

Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

How did Jesus raise Lazarus? Not by CPR. He called out “Come Forth”. The word or command of Christ brings life out of death.

*** APPLY

What does this teach US even AS IT TAUGHT THEM?

That 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.

We do not have in ourselves the power of being.
We are NOT the necessary being. God IS.

The original audience – Israel in the wilderness needed to know this. They left Egypt where Pharaohs were absolute and various gods were worshipped.
They needed a great spiritual reset, as do we – EVERYDAY.

One of the easiest things to get distorted about is the question, “Who is at the center of the story?”
Our culture sends the message that the center of the story is YOU.
That creates a problem when each of us is at the center of the story.
“YOU’RE THE CENTER OF THE STORY, and YOU’RE THE CENTER OF THE STORY”, etc.

This sets us up for conflict because we’re all tempted to believe that “Yes, I am the center of the story.
Tant pis pour vous..”

EX: we do this at an early age - 3 yr old “You’re not the boss of me.” KATIE re: Bonnie “Don’t you dare.”
NO ONE TEACHES A CHILD TO SAY THOSE THINGS – it is hard wired in our sinful nature.

God is not ONLY the Eternal necessary Being, but He is also the Sovereign Creator.

His ways are right. He is the standard and the fixed point of the Universe. We ignore Him at our peril.

Once we step into the role of God, life becomes shifting sand. When we all step into the role of God at the same time, the result is social chaos.

The thrust of these opening verses is that God makes something good out of chaos.
We take what is good and turn it into chaos.

The Creation account of Genesis is the work of the Triune God.
We see the Spirit hovers over the water, and the NT tells us of the creative power of Christ.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Col 1:15-17

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Tripp: Genesis has three acts of Redemptive Drama

Act I – CREATION

ACT II – THE FALL INTO SIN

ACT III – REDEEMING GRACE

Jesus is the God of Creation; He is the Savior for sinners; He is the central figure of the story of Redeeming Grace.

The God who creates us also saves us and sustains us. He is mindful of our frame; He knows that we are but dust.

He created us for His purpose, and He even uses our sin to demonstrate the supreme value of His love and grace for our good and His Glory.

COME TO THE TABLE

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