

Genesis week 5
Genesis 1
Creation and Christians

The “creation” issue is more than Gen 1-2 and how did God do it. The creation motif comes up over and over in the OT and NT. Can you think of places where the creation narrative carries over into the NT?

Brief review of last week: Gen 1:14-2:3

There was a purpose for the Creation narrative as it related to the people coming out of bondage in Egypt.

Creation is a pattern for what God is doing with Israel at that time – bringing them out of the disordered chaos of Egypt to a new Land that will be rightly ordered according to God's design in the Torah. In the Land of Promise the people of God will be able to know a measure of Rest and be fruitful and multiply.

Days 1–3	Days 4–6
Day 1: Creation of light & limitation of darkness (1:4–5)	Day 4: Lights created: sun, moon, stars (1:14–19)
Day 2: Creation of sky (heavens) by separation of the waters (1:6–9)	Day 5: Birds and sea creatures created (1:20–23)
Day 3: Creation of dry land by limiting seas; creation of vegetation (1:10–13)	Day 6: Domesticated animals, insects, wild animals created; man created in image of God (1:24–31)
Day 7	
God rests from his creative work (2:1–3)	

Last week I mentioned the Creation connection to the fourth commandment regarding the Sabbath. It is worth noting that the first three Commandments are also connected to Creation.

You shall have no other gods before me

You shall not make any graven image for worship

You shall not take the Lord's Name in vain

Those commandments make perfect sense in light of the Sovereign Creative act of a good, wise, powerful, and gracious God. Only such a God deserves the exclusive worship and commitment given in the commandments. Bowing in reverent humble worship before such a God is the proper response.

Pratt – Meaning for Us

The NT writers appealed to Genesis as a pattern for what God is doing in this present age initiated by the coming of Christ. This age is divided into three epochs:

Inauguration – the first coming of Christ, his life, ministry, death, resurrection, and Ascension

Continuation – this current Church Age in which God sent forth His Spirit on His people who are called to proclaim the Good News and to make disciples of all the nations

Consummation.- the fullness of salvation is revealed at the consummation of the kingdom when Christ returns in glory

The NT writers applied Creation themes to Christ and His work. The creation account of Genesis was not only a pattern for the people of Israel, but it was a pattern for a greater Re-Creation and redemption narrative to be accomplished by Christ. The NT authors saw the Genesis account through the lens of Christ. And they saw Christ in light of creation.

Let's look briefly at those categories.

Inauguration – the first coming of Christ, his life, ministry, death, resurrection, and Ascension.

On of the more obvious passages that connects the Genesis creation to Jesus is John 1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made (John 1:1-3).

Does that remind you of anything? This was not accidental, nor was it plagiarism. It is connecting the Biblical dots from Genesis to Jesus. John is putting the readers in the framework of Creation, and Jesus, the second person of the Trinity is the author of all things. He is the Word of God by whom the world was made i.e. God spoke the world into being and Jesus is the Word made flesh.

Then John follows up with another Creation theme – “light”

In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it (John 1:4-5).

At this point John continued to draw upon the themes of Genesis 1, especially the theme of the *light* which God brought to the dark chaotic world on the first day. Yet, instead of simply speaking of Jesus as the light of Genesis, John pointed to the incarnation of Christ as the light shining into the darkness of the world caused by sin. (Pratt)

John reveals the darkness of this disordered world as he notes how men love the darkness.

3:19 This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

By sending Christ as the light of the world, God is moving against the chaos of darkness as he did at the beginning of in Genesis.

The INAUGURATION of the kingdom of Christ is best understood when it is related to the prototype of God’s original creative work. In each case God displays His glory by sending light into a world of darkness. Genesis 1 is not just a pattern for the deliverance of Israel from Egypt; it is a pointer to the light of Christ in his first coming to inaugurate His kingdom.

The children of Israel experienced the deliverance of the Exodus and soon began to forget the grace and power of God. They began to grumble and question the wisdom and goodness of God.

Aren’t we like them? We’ve experienced the grace of eternal salvation and newness of life, yet too often we grumble and question the wisdom and goodness of God.

The OT is filled with the exhortation to ‘remember’ the benefits we have from God just the NT reminds us to set our minds and affections on the things above, where Christ is.

Are you ever tempted to think that what Christ did was just not that significant? It is easy for spiritual reality to get overlooked in a world oriented toward what we can see, taste, or feel. When we wake up in the morning we can’t reach out and touch a spiritual reality. The Christian life is nourished and sustained by faith and by the Spirit working through His Word.

It is easy to forget the NT perspective that Christ came to begin God’s final re-ordering of the world of darkness. WE are NEW CREATIONS in Christ through faith. As such we are designed to abide in Christ in order to bear fruit to the glory of God, which works out for OUR GOOD as well.

**There is much good in living according to the CREATOR’S DESIGN. Sadly, this has been ignored since the days of Gen 3 when sin entered in.

The CONTINUATION of the kingdom is also seen as part of the new creation narrative: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Paul’s perspective is that those who come to Christ in saving faith become part of a new realm or a new

creation. As new creations in Christ we take part in the re-ordered world that God has for us.
Eph 2: 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.... 1 OFor we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Paul also described the process of an individual's salvation in another way that drew upon Moses' creation account. In Colossians 3:9-10 we read these words:

You have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator (Colossians 3:9-10).

As believers we are renewed in the image of our Creator. This is creation language that is carried into the current church age of the continuation of the kingdom.

The creation language and imagery of the NT ALSO points to the final CONSUMMATION of the kingdom. The Day 7 issue of REST is used to encourage the people of Israel in the OT, but that theme carries into the NT as well.

Hebrews 4 refers to Christ's return in terms of Moses' creation account:

For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "And on the seventh day God rested from all his work" ... There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest (Hebrews 4:4-11).

The true Sabbath rest and joy of Gen 1-2 is fully realized when Christ returns to bring in the New Heaven and New Earth, i.e. the perfectly ordered world

John, who wrote the gospel and the book of Revelation, applies the creation theme to the return of Christ: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea (Revelation 21:1).

This is language that connects with Genesis 1: "new heavens and new earth", "no sea". With the return of Christ, the final re-ordering will take place as He makes all things new.

Too often our eternal existence is portrayed as sitting around on clouds playing harps. That would be pretty cool, but the true picture is of a new earth where we will enjoy the presence of God and other saints and angels.

From the viewpoint of the NT we see that the Genesis account of creation had a teaching purpose for the people of Israel leaving Egypt, and it has a teaching purpose for us – it shows us what was done in the coming of Christ, what He is doing now in our age, and what He will do in the future.

We see an overall picture of Christ working against the chaos of sin and death. He came to destroy the works of the devil and to save a Bride for Himself.

Albert Bayliss gives a helpful chart that summarized the Creational flow from Gen to Revelation.

Initial Chaos	Creation	New Creation
Darkness	Darkness limited to nighttime	No night (Revelation 22:5)
Darkness	Light and darkness controlled by sun and moon	No sun and moon (Revelation 21:23)
Covered by waters	Waters limited to the sea	No sea (Revelation 21:1)

NO SEA = NO CHAOS.

The New Creation is only possible because of the work of Christ who defeats the darkness of sin and death.

Through faith in Him, we are children of light and are beloved children who are called to walk in the light.

Eph 4:8 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. 11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

Jesus, the Light of the World, said, "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Matt 5:16)

When we follow Him, we will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life – Jn 8:12

Because of Christ our eternal future is bright, literally.

In the future, Jesus is also the one who will illumine the final habitation of believing men:

"And the city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp" (Rev. 21:23).

These elements of the TABLE reflect the Light of the glory of God and of the Lamb. The glory of God's justice and grace are seen in the death of Christ

This sacrament is given so that our hearts might be fed and encouraged with the goodness of our Creator God.

COME TO THE TABLE:

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