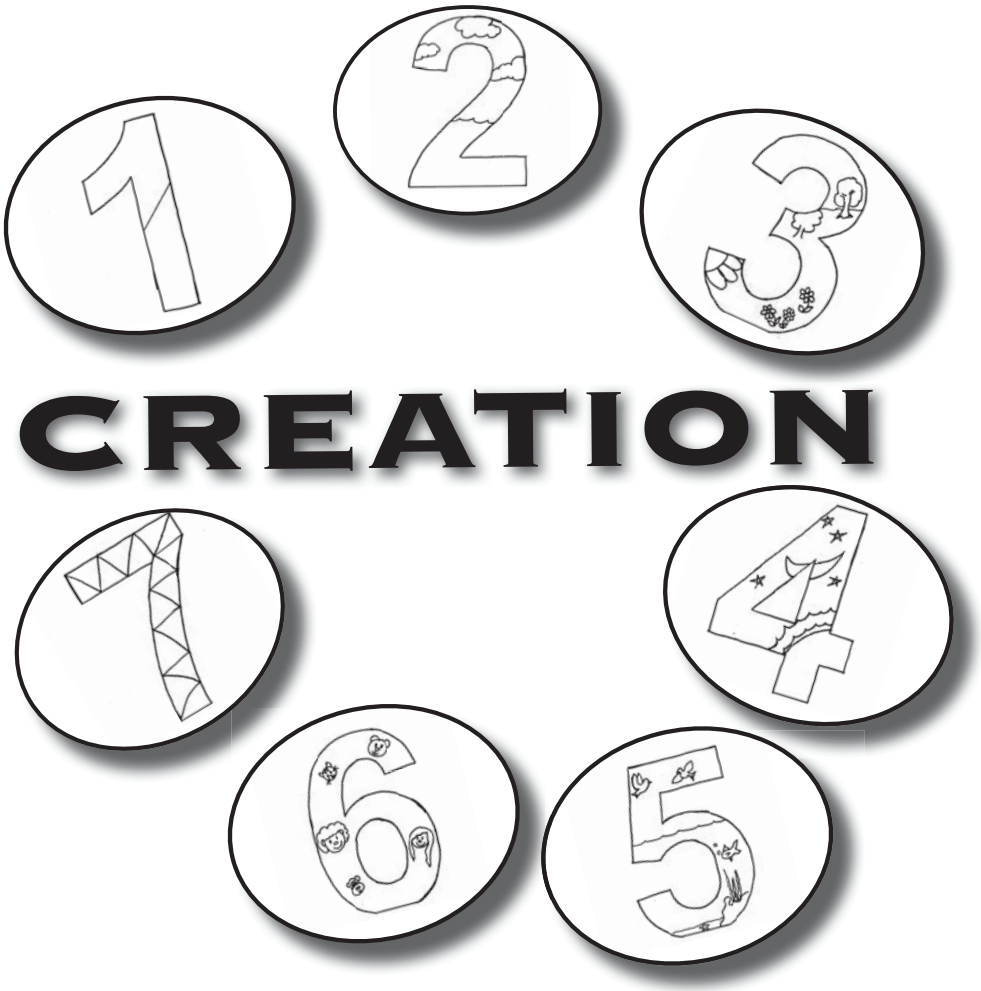

CREATION

Adult

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Hebrews 11:3

The Missionary Baptist
Vacation Bible School Literature Committee presents

CREATION

Vacation Bible School Lessons for ADULT
Written by Brother Clifford Hayes

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LESSON ONE

IN THE BEGINNING ...

LESSON TEXT
Genesis 1:1-13

WRITTEN BY
BROTHER CLIFFORD HAYES

Genesis 1
1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.
5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.
6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.
7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.
8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.
9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.
10 And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.
11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.
12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.
13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

INTRODUCTION TO THIS YEARS STUDY

Nowhere in its sixty-six books does the Bible attempt to prove the existence of God. Its opening words are, "*In the beginning God,*" making the assumption that the reader knows there is a supreme being. The closest the Bible comes to proving God is in Exodus 3:14 when God says, *"I am."* This phrase is repeated numerous times when God or Jesus is speaking. If we, as believers, have a difficult time convincing a non-believer who might have a hard time realizing the reality of God, we only need to tell them of the creative work He has done in our hearts. Also, scriptures are replete with His miraculous power and His creative genius. We, and also the non-believer, only have to look about us to realize that all we enjoy is the result of His actions. Psalm 19:1 reads, *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."*

There is order in the Creation. Look at the way He did it. God did not make anything unless there was something, previously created, to support it. Therefore, the orderly and logical mind of God earlier made the dry land before He created the trees and grasses that would grow there, even as He had previously brought forth light that would be needed in the natural functions of the plants. This order in creation continued throughout the process until He fashioned man. In the creation of man, we find the answer to the question: why did God create? Everything that was made was done in order that God's crowning achievement would have a world to sustain him. Some of the order and symmetry of God's creation is seen with two of science's greatest inventions.

> If, by the aid of the telescope, we bring the planets within the range of our observation, and by the aid of the microscope view particles too minute for the eye, unaided, to behold, we find them all pursuing the several objects of their creation in accordance with the fixed plan of the Almighty.
> Copied from Kentucky Monitor by Henry Pirtle

The Internet is filled with questions as to why God created the world, the universe and man. The answers run the gamut from the ridiculous to the truth. Some say He was bored, had nothing to do. Make no mistake, God has no unmet need. He is sufficient within Himself. Others say that He wanted company, He was lonely. God, who knows all things from the beginning, would never have created such an unruly creature as man for companionship.

The short answer to the question "why did God create us?" is *"for thy pleasure."* Revelation 4:11 says, *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."* Colossians 1:16 reiterates the point: *"all things were created by him and for him."* Being created for God's pleasure does not mean humanity was made to entertain God or provide Him with amusement. God is a creative Being, and it gives Him pleasure to create. God is a personal Being, and it gives Him pleasure to have other beings He can have a genuine relationship with.

This is a short answer. Perhaps a more detailed answer will be given in future lessons.

"IN THE BEGINNING…"

For us, one of the wonders of Creation is the realization that God had no materials with which to create. If a man wishes to construct a table, he goes to his workshop and uses materials (saws, planers, wood, nails, screws, glue and finishes) previously purchased and the finished product is a table. God had no construction materials on hand. He had no Home Depot or

has to be careful to remove such prejudices from his mind before interpreting data. If he doesn't, he may end up making conclusions that are incorrect and one of the goals of science is to make correct conclusions.

Ten thousand years from now, if an archaeologist finds a perfectly preserved Ford automobile, he could bring in all types of special knowledge to work on it. From this work, he might gather enough data to know exactly how the car works. There are a lot of physical disciplines involved in the working of a car, but science could dismantle the processes that make it work. What would be subject to interpretation is where it came from and how it got to where they found it. Barring any labels referring to a place of manufacture, it would be at best an educated guess. If this archaeologist held the idea that there was never a place called Detroit and that the manufacturing capacity that existed there was a myth, he would theorize that the car came from anywhere else but there, no matter how much evidence pointed to the motor city.

If a scientist not only does not believe in God, but is prejudiced against the belief in God, he will be sure to interpret scientific data in a way that leaves out God's work in the creation of the universe. We who are writing these lessons, of course, do believe in God and that the cosmos is the work of His hands. We believe that the data gathered impartially as evidence relating to the origins of everything will either back up a belief that God created it all or will not contradict that belief.

It should be noted here that where you begin in this search for an answer is important. Although it is possible, gathering data about the origins of the universe won't necessarily lead a man to the conclusion that God made it if that man has had his mind trained in such a way as to doubt the existence of God or at least His involvement in creation. The proper place to start is with not just a belief in God, but knowledge of Him. If we know God, then of course, belief is implicit. We have not just belief, but knowledge of His great power and capacity. We have knowledge that His word is truth and that He will never mislead us. Having this knowledge and His witness to our hearts through His indwelling spirit, it is not hard for us to have confidence that He created everything just as He said He did.

Believers don't say that there was no big bang. They only say that whatever the mechanisms were in the beginning, God created, initiated and controlled them all. The secular scientists can make their own conclusions, but they weren't there. Believers know the One who did it all.

In this series of lessons, we ask that no matter what your background is or what your current beliefs are, that you keep an open mind as you read through them. The fact is that God's word on this subject was recorded thousands of years ago –

long before science as an institution ever got involved. He did not give a scientific analysis because even though He created everything that science now studies, the science was just a means to an end and not even close to the most important thing. God was speaking to man to answer our simple question: "Where did it all come from?" His answer was that it all came from Him. He knew that man was capable of working out many of the details as we have done. He also knew that the most important thing was not the how, but that it is all here because He put it here and did so because He wanted to, that He is our God and we are His creation.

So let's look at God's record of creation, not to try to solve scientific mysteries, but to see what He said about the beginnings, and to get a sense of what He placed importance upon.

Day Minus One – God Was

Before there was anything, there was God. Nothing else. There wasn't even time, so our subtitle of "day minus one" is really a misnomer, since there couldn't have been days. Although we see indications in scripture that the universe was preceded by the creation of angels and other spiritual creatures, God was first.

So our universe was non-existent just before God created it. There was nothing – no raw materials of any kind. Man gives himself a lot of credit for being creative and we are indeed, up to a point. But any creation on our part involves taking matter that already exists and changing it's form or properties. It's true that we conceive something that we may not have seen before and then make it, but it's not on the level that God creates. God didn't start with rock, wood, molecules, atoms, or even subatomic particles. He simply decided that where nothing had been, there would be matter.

Day One – Foundations: Matter and Light

In verse 1 of our lesson text, we are told that God "...created the heaven..." We shouldn't mistake this as the dwelling place of God because He preceded everything and His dwelling place would have long been with Him. The Hebrew indicates that this would refer to that which we see when we look into the sky at night – the universe, but only the expanse of it and not the contents, which were yet to be added.

Verses 1-2 speak of creation of the Earth and that "...the Earth was without form, and void". Now the Hebrew word "bohu', which is translated as void means a vacuity or emptiness. That would mean that there was no Earth there, but verse 1 says that God created the Earth, so how do we reconcile that? If God had created it, but it was without form and emptiness, it must mean that God had created the raw materials for the Earth, but had not yet given it form. By Earth

He choose to do this first?" We will have more on this later. But this is only a problem if we fail to take into account an infinite and omnipotent God. God does not need the sun, moon, and stars to provide light. God is light. 1 John 1:5 declares, *"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."* God Himself was the light for the first three days of Creation, just as He will be in the new heavens and new earth: *"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever"* (Revelation 22:5) .

THE SECOND DAY OF CREATION

Evidently, at the beginning of the second day, the world was much the same as it was at the start of the first day. The only thing that had been added was light. Not that that was insignificant; we have already established that the light emanated from God. Verse two informs us that the earth had no shape and was covered with water. Then the creation process began and verse seven says that God made the firmament. A footnote in my Bible defines firmament as an expansion. Others call it a sky. God called it *"Heaven"* (Verse 8). God divided the waters on earth so that some were suspended above the atmosphere. The atmosphere of earth was called the expanse, but it was also called *"heavens."* These heavens that were under the upper waters were obviously different from the heaven of verse 1, which was obviously the universal heaven created simultaneously with the formless and empty earth. These waters above the earth were the ones God unleashed when He sent the flood upon the sinful world. From the days of the Creation until the day Noah and his family entered the ark, rain did not fall. A mist rose up from the ground and watered the earth. Now, with God's judgment on man's activities brought on by his sinful nature, God released His wrath in the form of this stored-up water. *"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights"* (Genesis7: 11,12).

The downpour of rain and the spewing of water by the great fountains of the deep lasted for forty days, but the flood level continued to be above the highest mountain for 150 days. The deluge of the waters continued for forty days, at the end of which the *"fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained"* simultaneously. The *"waters which were above the firmament"* were spent, never again to flood the entire world. This was a vow God made to Noah and as surety He placed a token in the sky.

By the way, after every day of the Creation was completed, God pronounced His work good, except for the second. Can anyone tell us why? It is only supposition, so guess away.

THE THIRD DAY OF CREATION

At the beginning of the third day of Creation, the Bible tells us that God gathered all the waters under heaven into one place. By doing this, the dry land appeared and God called the dry land "earth" and the waters He called "seas". Prior to this point in the creation process, the waters below still constituted a shoreless ocean. The surface of the earth was most likely smooth with a relatively uniform covering of water.

This is also the time that God set the foundations of the earth; that is, the original surface features. His exact process of doing this is unknown. What is important is that He did it! Speculating again, perhaps He caused part of the land to rise slightly, and other parts to sink down, so that there would be some deeper waters, and some dry land. The present-day topography of the earth was set during the time of the Flood. Also on the third day God decreed that each plant would bring forth seed after its own kind. This concept that the living things, created by God, reproduce, each after its own kind is important. It is basic. By keeping the plants separated after their own kind God allows us to recognize edible plants from non-edible plants, building materials from non-building materials.

Plant scientists have sought to improve on God's principles and have developed hybrids. Hybrid plants, or cross bred plants, cannot produce seeds that can reproduce. That's why seedless grapes are seedless. That's why hybrid wheat seed cannot be replanted and grown. Production is increased and perhaps flavor is improved, but hybrids are against God's plan that each species reproduce itself.

On this third day of Creation, God begins to lay the groundwork for man's habitation. The Bible is silent as to whether God created oxygen other than what the plants, both grasses and trees, could provide. This process of plants producing oxygen is called photosynthesis and in its simplest explanation, the plant takes in carbon dioxide and water and IN THE PRESENCE OF LIGHT (emphasis mine) produces sugar, for the growth of the plant and nutrients for man. This chemical reaction also produces oxygen, for the benefit of man and animals. Man and the animals, in turn, exhale carbon dioxide for the plants to take in, and the process continues. Now the planning and the orderliness of the Creation in the mind of God becomes apparent.

As stated before, Bible critics ask why God created light on the first day, when He was going to create the sun on the fourth. It was also in the mind of God that He would create man as His last act. Man must have oxygen and God wanted man to have an abundance of oxygen to sustain him. On God's first day of Creation God brought

LESSON TWO

THE HEAVENS DECLARE ...

LESSON TEXT
Genesis 1:14-19

WRITTEN BY
BROTHER CLIFFORD HAYES

Genesis 1
14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:
15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.
16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.
17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,
18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.
19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

INTRODUCTION

On the fourth day of Creation, God created the sun, moon, and stars and then set them in the sky. They are to divide days and nights, seasons, days, and years, to serve as signs, and also to give light to the earth. God even says they are to *"rule"* the day and the night, but He does not mean they are to be objects of worship. In some cultures it is the practice to worship both. In themselves they have no power and their object is to manage or administrate the day and night. These heavenly bodies have other functions, and by understanding them we can look somewhat into the mind of God and realize that He had set a great plan into operation. God sees that it is good and He calls it the evening and morning of the fourth day.

"…TWO GREAT LIGHTS…"

God created these two great lights and placed them in the sky for the benefit of man. The greater light, the sun, was placed there to give light to the earth and to warm its surface. The lesser light, the moon, was to give light to the earth at night. God said of the sun and moon, *"And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and it was so"* (Genesis 1:15).

This passage raises a question. Why does God say the moon gives light when it only reflects light? Since the Bible is God's Word and is inerrant, this cannot be an error. So we must take into account the author and His intent. The statement *"to give light upon the earth"* does not in any way contradict what we observe about the sun and moon. The sun gives light on the earth by the nuclear fusion of gases and the emission of high energy photons of light, whereas the

moon gives light on the earth by reflecting the photons of light. The sun and moon both give light, just by different means.

By way of an analogy, when I was a young boy I wanted to give my dad a rifle for a Christmas present. Unfortunately, being a young teenager and jobless, I didn't have any money to buy one. So my mom gave me the money and I bought the rifle and gave it to him on Christmas Day. Now, did I really give the present even though I didn't have the money to buy it? Of course. Even though I did not buy the gift, I was still the one who gave it to my father. And even though the light does not originate from the moon, the moon still gives light on the earth by reflecting light from the sun.

It is my opinion that when Jesus was preaching the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:1 through 7:27, He was preaching the organizational sermon of the Church which He was establishing. Here we have the words of Jesus as to how we, as a collective and also as individual members, are to conduct ourselves in the Church. In the 14th and 17th verses of Matthew 5, Jesus makes the following statement: *"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick and it giveth light unto all that is in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* Many sermons have been preached and many words have been written on these verses, but as the saying goes, bottom line: Jesus intends for us to lead lives that would draw the attention of a sinful world, that they might be influenced to live for and praise God.

Yet, even though Jesus instructs us in this, we have a problem. Isaiah 64:6 reads: *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* Can we, who have no righteousness within ourselves, have enough light to influence men to turn from sin and turn to God? No, the only light that shines from us is that light which comes from our Savior and is reflected by us to the world.

In another place Jesus said, *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"* (John 8: 12). This is one of the *"I am"* statements that we spoke of in the first lesson. On the first day of Creation, God proclaimed that there be light. We have already dealt with that. The only other light of the world that comes to mind is the sun, the star that made possible life on the planet Earth and still supports it. In fact, without the sun, and at the right distance from the earth, life would be impossible.

But that is physical light. Jesus is the spiritual light of the world.

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But that is physical light. Jesus is the spiritual light of the world.

The appellation *"the light of the world"* is true for Jesus, perhaps more than any other, not only in the moral and spiritual sense, but also in the realistic sense. When, in fact, the Bible declares Him as the embodiment of God's creative Word, it says: *"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"* (John 1:3-5). So we can freely also say that God, in Christ, made life possible on the planet earth, because He created the sun and the earth and put them at the right distance, making the earth a suitable habitation for us! For this reason, as Christians, we thank God and honor and trust His Son Jesus Christ.

I will try to get back to the subject. As easy as it is for me to go off in a different direction while writing, I can see how Preachers can get off their subjects while presenting God's word. But, to me, the important thing is that the light from the moon is light reflected from the sun. The spiritual light that comes from our unrighteous and sinful bodies is light reflected from the only Son of God, *"the light of the world."*

However, the moon has other functions and purposes as affixed by the creative genius that is God.

THE MOON

The moon affects the earth in two ways. Its position around the earth allows it to reflect the sun's light into our sky. The moon's orbit around the earth lasts about a month, giving us different levels of this light. The new moon has little light to offer and the full moon provides us with the best lighting. The second effect comes from the moon's gravitational pull on the earth. As the earth rotates, the moon's pull causes the world's bodies of water to experience tides. At a given time there are two high tides and two low tides on earth.

The gravitational forces between the Earth and the Moon cause some interesting effects on our oceans. Tides are caused by a gravitational tug of war between the sun, moon and earth. All objects exert a gravitational pull on each other. The closer they are, the larger they are, the greater the pull. All of the planets exert some gravitational pull on the earth. However, the sun and the moon exert the greatest pull because the moon is so close and the sun is so large. We all know that it takes 365 days for the earth to orbit the sun. As it moves around the sun, it rotates on its axis once every 24 hours. At the same time, the moon moves around the earth once every 29 days.

As a result of the attraction between the earth and the moon, the side of the earth facing the moon is pulled toward it. Solid objects like the ground and buildings are not as affected as are the oceans. A bulge of water occurs on the side of earth facing the moon, where gravity's pull is the greatest. On the opposite side, gravity's pull is weakest,

and the ocean on that side "lags behind", creating an equal bulge on the opposite side of the world. Water is pulled away from these two sides of the earth to form these two bulges, or high tides. This leaves a depression or low spot in the oceans between. These are areas of low tides. Keep these seemingly simple phenomena in mind for future reference.

THE SUN

Scientists tell us that the sun is in the neighborhood of 93,000,000 miles away from the earth. The exact distance between earth and the sun varies with its position in its orbit, which is elliptical. From science we learn that the sun is composed of burning hydrogen and helium gasses and will melt anything that comes close to it. Science also tells us that the temperature of the sun on its surface is 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and in its core the temperature reaches 27,000,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Somehow science has devised instruments to measure and give us these values. We take these values as fact and have faith that the scientists know what they are talking about.

However, there are other bits of scientific information with which we take issue. They say that the sun was formed 4.5 billion years ago by a cloud of gas that began collapsing by the pull of gravity.. One writer said, "From start to finish, it took something like 10 million years to form the sun and planets from a collapsing cloud of gas, and this is not very long at all!!" I have news for that man; 10 million years is a long time. Not in God's time, but he is speaking of man's time. Also, this same writer makes the statement that the collapsing cloud has been proven by the observance of other stars in their life cycle's and this is no longer a theory. These people have written the Word of God off as fantasy, a myth, and a fairy tale. They have their science, but we have another voice that speaks to us. *"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear"* (Hebrews 11:3).

THE EARTH

When God placed the lights in the heavens, He said, *"…let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:"*

The earth travels around the sun once each 365 days, making one year. All the time it is orbiting the sun, it is rotating on its axis, one rotation each 24 hours, delineating one day. The earth is not in an upright position during its orbit around the sun, but is tilted 23.5 degrees on its axis. This tilting of the earth on its axis is what causes the seasons to change. During the year, the seasons change depending on the amount of sunlight reaching the earth as it revolves around the sun.

The seasons are caused as the earth, tilted on its axis, travels in a loop around the Sun each year. Summer happens in the hemisphere tilted towards the Sun, and winter happens in the hemisphere tilted away from the Sun. As the earth travels around the Sun, the hemisphere that is tilted towards or away from the Sun changes.

The hemisphere that is tilted towards the Sun is warmer because sunlight travels more directly to the Earth's surface and the sunlight is more concentrated in that hemisphere. That means that when it is summer in the Northern Hemisphere, it is winter in the Southern Hemisphere. The hemisphere tilted towards the Sun has longer days and shorter nights. That's why days are longer during the summer than during the winter.

In general, the further away from the equator you travel, the cooler summer and winter temperatures become. At the equator there are no seasons, because each day the Sun strikes at about the same angle. Every day of the year the equator receives about 12 hours of sunlight. The poles remain cool because they are never tilted in a direct path of sunlight. Much light is scattered by the atmosphere before reaching the Earth's surface at the poles. During midwinter, when a pole is tilted away from the Sun, there is no daylight at all. The sun never rises! However, during the summer, a pole receives sunlight all the time and there is no night.

All these things mentioned are well-known facts. It was really not necessary to mention them, except to acknowledge God's greatness in the Creation.

SCIENCE vs GOD

I do not intend that this writing to be all-inclusive, as pertaining to what science has determined to be the origin of the universe and man. There are several theories related to this subject, ranging to the aforementioned collapsing cloud of hydrogen to the big bang theory and a combination of both. I am in no way qualified to discuss this hypothesis, but putting this in the simplest terms, they say billions of years ago, there was a giant explosion in space and all the planets, sun, moon and stars were flung outward toward their present positions. When scientists speak of the origin of life, their ideas become more fanciful. Since the days of Aristotle there have been many theories as to how life came to this planet. Aristotle's idea of Spontaneous Generation (that organic life could and does arise from inorganic matter) clung around for better than 2000 years. There have been other scientists who have advanced their own ideas as to how life began, but for all of their studies and finding fossils, they have never been able to prove the link between lower life forms and modern man. According to Scripture, the universe is only about six thousand years old for in *six days God made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is* (Exodus 20:11).

This universe in which we live is

complex. It would be ridiculous to believe that all this happened by chance. Consider the heavenly bodies. Can anyone really believe that after the big bang, all these stars, planets, and sun came to rest in such an orderly manner so that they all occupy their space, without interfering with one another? The circulatory system of plants is so complex that it would be impossible for it to develop without a superior intellect to guide it. We have already talked about the role of plants in providing oxygen for man's existence. Consider man himself, fashioned by God, given a mind and conscience and having the breath of life breathed into his nostrils. Man was placed into this newly-created world that he might worship his Maker and bring honor to Him.

LESSON THREE

Be Fruitful And Multiply...

LESSON TEXT
Genesis 1:20-25

WRITTEN BY
BROTHER CLIFFORD HAYES

Genesis 1
20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.
21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.
22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.
23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.
24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.
25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson we will be studying the fifth day and the first part of the sixth day of Creation.

The stage is set. In four days God has brought His light to the earth, divided the waters, made the dry land and the seas, brought plant life to the earth, and has hung the sun, moon and stars in the heavens. In short, in four days He has created all that is necessary to sustain animal life.

In the first lesson we spoke of God's order in the Creation. Now, as Creation progresses, that order is beginning to become more meaningful. Just think what would have happened if God had made the fish before He made the water. What would have happened? No, everything that was made was carefully planned by God and was made at the right time. Each act of Creation is predicated on the fact that there is something to follow that will use that which has just been created. It was a natural progression where each act was built on the previous one. When we think of this, we are reminded of sanctification, which starts with faith and ends in love. *"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."* (2 Peter 1:5-7)

ANIMAL BEINGS

Now we come to day five. This is

the day when God completes the home for man and He creates the first animal beings. Verse 20 reads, *"the moving creature that hath life."* That is the first time anything is said to be living. Plants aren't so designated. They are organisms that have a kind of life, but it is not a conscious life. The first living beings created by God came on day five.

The newly- created earth is ready for an amazing cast of characters to be introduced. By now the land and the sea are full of all sorts of plant life, big and small. Habitats have been created to support that which God will create next. Just think of the minute details that had to be right, such as the temperature of the water to support particular kinds of fish. Also, fish were created with the ability to extract oxygen from the water. Consider the birds, which were created with hollow bones so that they are lighter while in flight. What a genius is our Lord!

Now, consider this because it is a very important thing. When God created all those animals, whether you're talking about fish or whether you're talking about whales or eels or birds, or whether you're talking about plankton or anything else in the food chain, when God created all of that, there was no evolutionary process. He literally in a moment spoke into existence all the creatures that swim and fly and walk upon the earth. Instantaneously, at the same moment on the same day that the call came, they were brought into existence. They were not somehow in a process of development as species that evolved into other species and mutated into others. They were all instantaneously created in huge numbers, moving through the seas and the air and walking on dry ground.

God did not just create one or two kinds of birds and a couple of types of fish. Genesis 1 says the waters were teeming *(brought forth abundantly)* with fish. God demonstrates His infinite creativity in the creatures of the sea and the birds of the air. All kinds of creatures live in the sea—some of the smallest and some of the largest, some that are very beautiful, and some that are bizarre, or odd. The smallest creatures that live in the sea are tiny, microscopic, single-celled forms of life, such as bacteria, protozoa, and algae. All sorts of fish live in lakes, rivers, and seas. Many mammals live in the sea including dolphins, whales, porpoises, seals, sea lions, and sea cows. Consider even the ancient marine reptiles, which are now extinct. God created all of these.

All sorts of birds now filled the skies. Remember the age-old question: "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" Genesis is clear that God created the birds and then they reproduced after their own kind. Remember, scriptures tell us that God created everything after its own kind.

Verse 20 also reads, "*…fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven."* He doesn't

talk about great numbers of birds because there wasn't such a dense population of birds created. If you look in the depths of the sea you will find an almost uncountable and limitless amount of life. You look into the air and, of course, there are fewer birds.

DIVERSITY IN THE CREATION

Back to the created order itself. Again, the complexity and diversity of Creation leave you with no other possible explanation than divine intelligence and divine power of proportions beyond our comprehension. I just pick out little pieces of the created order that speak to this complexity and diversity and share a few of them with you.

In researching for this lesson, I found that some birds navigate by the stars when migrating. How do they know how to do that? In fact, birds raised from eggs inside a building where they have never seen the sky can orient themselves toward home when shown an artificial sky representing a place they've never been.

Moths have two ears. Mites, little microscopic bugs, like to live in a moth's ear. But interestingly enough, mites occupy only one ear of a moth. If mites get in both ears, the moth can't fly, so scientists find mites only in one ear. How do the mites know that one ear is occupied?

And then the fascinating bombardier beetle has two chemicals in his little body which mix perfectly and at the right moment, when he is attacked, they combine outside his body and explode in the face of the enemy. That's why they're called bombardier beetles. However, the two chemicals that create an explosion outside the body never combine prematurely to blow up the beetle. And by the way, how could the beetle evolve those explosives and keep them separate?

Everyone knows of the struggles salmon endure to reach the waters where they were hatched in order to lay eggs that the cycle might continue. Instinct? Where did the instinct come from?

Also, while reading for this lesson, I came across this bit of information and I copied it as it was written. December 1996 brought the death of an evolutionist and astronomer by the name of Carl Sagan, probably the most well-known astronomer in the world. His perception was that life just sort of happened. And he ended up his life with absolute emptiness, absolute hopelessness. Near the end of his life he was interviewed by Ted Koppel on television. Koppel asked Sagan, realizing he was at the end of his life, that he had spent his life in science studying the universe as an astronomer, he said, "Do you, sir, have any words of wisdom for the people of the world?"

To which Sagan replied, and I quote: "We live on a hunk of rock and metal that circles a hum-drum star that is one of 400-plus billion other stars that make up the Milky Way galaxy, which is one of billions of other galaxies, which make up a universe which may be one of a large number, perhaps

an infinite number of other universes. That is well worth pondering,"

He thought about it and he thought about it and he thought about it, and he never let God be a reality. In the end, the most brilliant evolutionist only knows that the universe exists. He doesn't know how, he doesn't know why, and most importantly, he doesn't know who the creator is. How sad. Everything in the universe points to God the Creator. Even Albert Einstein said, "Of course there is a massive intelligence behind the universe, a man is a fool who doesn't believe that,." but then went on to say, "But we could never know Him." The humanistic evolutionist refuses to see what is obvious, refuses to meet the God who wants to be known.

"BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY"

We see that day five first brought the creation of conscious life. Then, from a command from God, they had a reproductive life. The plants and trees have the capacity to reproduce themselves, but were not commanded to do so. Now God has created that which is alive, with life-sustaining systems, one of which is a reproductive system.

It boggles the mind to imagine the complexities of the human reproduction system, and then we realize that God has placed such systems in every living creature that He created.

Even the most small, tiny, microscopic kind of creation all the way to the largest land mammals and sea-going mammals, all have reproductive processes of varying complexities, all designed by the Creator of all things. God blessed them in their multiplying. In verse 22, *"And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth."*

"Be fruitful and multiply" is a common Old Testament phrase for reproduction. In chapter 1 of Genesis verse 28, when God is creating man, it says,*"And God blessed them,"* that is, male and female. *"…Be fruitful and multiply."* That was His command for them to procreate.

In chapter 9 of Genesis, God blessed Noah and his sons and said to Noah and his wife and their sons and their wives, "*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth*".

In chapter 17 of Genesis verse 16, *"I will bless her,"* God said of Sarah, "*And give thee a son of her: yea, I will bless her and she shall be a mother of nations, kings of people shall be of her."*

There are other scriptures in the Old Testament that teach that God blesses those who reproduce after their own kind, but these cited should be sufficient.

THE FIRST PART OF DAY SIX

Genesis 1: 24-25 reads, *And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, And everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*

Now we've already been through the first five days of creation. In the first five days God was perfecting the habitat in which man would live. Man is the climax of God's creation, created in God's image. All the rest of the creation simply provided the place in which he would live. Even on day six, there was a finishing touch in creation. On day five, you remember, God had created all the animals in the sea and all of the birds in the sky, and so at the beginning of day six it was necessary to create the earth creatures who are identified in verse 24 and 25 in three categories: cattle, creeping things and beasts of the earth.

Now the pattern of creation is the same. Verse 24, "*Then God said,*" verse 25, *"And God made."* God creates literally by speaking things into existence. These are land animals. The sea animals were already created on day five; the air animals, the birds and those that fly were created on day five. Only the land animals remained. By the way, they didn't evolve. They were created instantaneously. They were created living creatures and He refers to the land animals in three categories: cattle, creeping things and beasts of the earth.

When we think of cattle, most likely we are thinking of animals which can be tamed and domesticated for man's use, such as horses, sheep and goats. The second category is creeping things. What immediately comes to mind are snakes and lizards and things like that, but creeping things probably stretches beyond that. It would include anything that creeps or crawls on the ground. That would include a whole world of insects, as well as small animals with short legs. One writer says, "Animals with short legs whose bellies are not far from the ground." That's probably a pretty general category for creeping things, generally not tamed. And then the third category, the beasts of the earth, would be four-legged animals of some size which are generally not tamed. We think immediately of lions and tigers, giraffes and elephants, rhinos and hippos and animals like that that are not domesticated for any purposes of man.

There are domestic animals and there are non-domestic animals. There are those that are above ground and there are those that are creeping and crawling around on the ground. Those are the categories.

As God has continued in His creative works, everything has become more complex. .For one thing, when He brings them forth, they're called "*living creatures.*" God created all vegetation on the third day but they're never called "*living creatures*". The first time "*living creatures"* are mentioned is when God worked on day five in creating the creatures of the sea and air.

Another way the creation has become more complex is that the *"living creatures"* move. There is no

movement of the grasses and trees. This movement allows the *"living creatures"* to search for food or move to a more comfortable environment. These creatures also have very complex systems within their bodies that govern their well- being. These systems, similar to those found in man, regulate their bodies and interact with the other systems so the whole organism functions as God intended.

ODDS AND ENDS

Notice the scripture repeats the phrase *"after their kind"* a couple of times in verse 24, and three times in verse 25. That is becoming very familiar to us. This indicates limitation of variation. In each case there is a genetic code. In each case there is DNA, a chromosomal strip that is coded in every cell of every living thing that determines that living thing's nature. And it will be true to its nature. It cannot become something other than what it is. It is controlled, as we've learned many times, by DNA and that's implied by the concept of *"kind."*

God created these creatures the way they are. Dogs were dogs, horses were horses, dolphins were dolphins, and so forth. Although there are variations, there are limitations on that variation. One doesn't evolve into the other. And that's repeated ten times in Genesis chapter 1 as if God knew somebody would come along and try to tell a lie about one kind becoming another kind with no existing limitation on variation.

It says at the end of verse 24, *"and it was so."* Now we've heard that before. That's an important little phrase, it's not just thrown in there to fill space. When God did it, it was so. We read that in verse 7, again in verses 9, 11, 15, and in verse 24. It means it was fixed, it was firm, it was permanent and that's the way it stayed. When in the very beginning God said *"Let there be light,"* it doesn't say *"and it was so,"* because that light was the light of God. It was not created. It would be just as easy to say that God was created, which in itself would be a ridiculous statement. When God did create the sun, moon and stars, scripture says, " *and it was so.*" They were fixed in that way. They are still that way. It was so, fixed, firm, permanent and has remained that way even till today. And they will remain that way until our Lord Jesus returns.

LESSON FOUR

...In His Own Image

LESSON TEXT
Genesis 1:26-31

WRITTEN BY
BROTHER CLIFFORD HAYES

Genesis 1
26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.
29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.
30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.
31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

INTRODUCTION

Being made in the image and likeness of God, human beings have the ability to know God and therefore love Him, worship Him, serve Him, and fellowship with Him. God did not create human beings because He needed them. As God, He needs nothing. In all eternity past, He felt no loneliness, so He was not looking for a "friend." He loves us, but this is not the same as needing us. If we had never existed, God would still be God—the unchanging One. The I AM of Exodus 3:14 was never dissatisfied with His own eternal existence. When He made the universe, He did what pleased Himself, and since God is perfect, His action was perfect. *"It was very good"* (Genesis 1:31).

Also, God did not create "peers" or beings equal to Himself. Logically, He could not do so. If God were to create another being of equal power, intelligence, and perfection, then He would cease to be the one true God for the simple reason that there would be two gods—and that would be an impossibility. *"The LORD he is God; there is none else beside him"* (Deuteronomy 4:35). Anything that God creates must of necessity be lesser than He. The thing made can never be greater than, or as great as, the One who made it.

Recognizing the complete sovereignty and holiness of God, we are amazed that He would take man and crown him *"with glory and honor"* (Psalm 8:5) and that He would condescend to call us *"friends"* (John 15:14-15). Why did God create us? God created us for His pleasure and so that we, as His creation, would have the pleasure of knowing Him.

God is the giver. Man is the receiver. Scripture says that it is God who gives *"life and breath and all things…."* God does not need humanity, but humanity needs God, *"…for in Him we live, and move, and have our being…."* (Acts 17:28)

WHY DID GOD CREATE MAN?

The answer to the above question has to be because He wanted to. He did it for His own gratification. However, there are underlying reasons for His creation.

If any of you ever had doubts as to your importance to God, you would only have to look at the account of the Creation in the book of Genesis to ease your mind. The very first words in the Bible, *"In the beginning,"* signify many things relative to the Creation, but they also have to do with the beginning of the plan of God for man. In the council halls of Heaven, before this world ever existed, God had a plan for you. This eternal plan was formulated by the Godhead in eternity past. When Peter was preaching on the Day of Pentecost, he told the listeners, *"Him, being delivered by the determinant counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:*" (Acts 2:23)

God had a complete plan for all time before He spoke His first words of creation. The plan that He put into effect is the single most effective plan that could have ever been because of who He is. At certain times and to certain people of His choosing, God has revealed a portion of that plan. In very special instances, God has revealed His plan by way of a promise, and God has chosen to be bound by every promise He has made. Some of these promises have been in the form of agreements whereby some conditions must be met in order for the promises to be kept. Most have been without condition, promises given completely by His grace, dependent on nothing else. Such is God's plan of salvation.

When the question "Why did God create humanity?" is asked, the same answers seem to surface. Some say, "God was motivated to create humanity so that they would love Him." Their belief is based upon the greatest commandment, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"* (Matthew 22:37). Others say, "God created humanity to serve Him." And they usually quote the Great Commission. Thus, we often hear it said, "We are saved to serve." Along with God creating humanity to love and to serve Him, some add, "God created man to obey Him." Still others say that God created man that He might be glorified, and quote 1 Corinthians 10:31b: "*…whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God."*

To glorify God is to acknowledge His greatness. It is important that we love God, because loving God is something humanity was designed to do. The ultimate reason that God created humanity is a composite of all these things. God commands us to love, serve, obey and glorify God for our benefit. The only way we can experience spiritual health and wholeness is by simultaneously loving, serving, obeying, and glorifying Him.

There is another aspect of God that must not be overlooked, else we will miss the entire reason for God's Creation. God is love. We have already mentioned God's greatest commandment, *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."* At the same time Jesus stated the second great commandment and said it was *"…like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"* (Matthew 22:39). Man was created that he could love, not only love God but all mankind. In the great love chapter, the Apostle Paul says that true love *"seeketh not her own."* This means that love is not selfish or self-centered. God did not keep His life and love to Himself, but He shared it. He breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul. God created humanity because He is love.

And what did the God who is love do with selfish humanity? He continued to love them because love "*is not easily provoked.*" We see this love displayed in John 3:16 which says, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* Because God is love, He gave humanity life at Creation. And after humanity rejected God's love, He then offered humanity life again through Christ. God continues to offer humanity His life because He still is love - perfect love. He never changes.

We see this clearly through the words of the Apostle Paul when he says, "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?…. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 8: 35, 38-39)

THE CREATION OF MAN

It must be noted that on the previous days of Creation, God spoke and whatever He wished appeared. The design of the world is not accidental. It is here because of the will and purpose of God. We see this awesome power illustrated in Genesis 1, verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, and 24. God said, *"Let there be…"* and it was so, because God willed it. Both the arrangement and magnitude of the events contained in these verses affirm that God is the maker of all creation. Even though God's final act in the beginning of all things was yet to come, God has His own relation with the rest of Creation.

Although the first five days and part of the sixth day were devoted to that which would support the life of man, God the Creator is not totally preoccupied with the coming of man. The others of His Creation have great value to Him (Jesus spoke of some of them in Matthew 6:26-28, 8:20 and 10:29-31). It is important to note that in the book of Genesis, God would survey His handiwork each day and pronounce *"that it was good."*

The pattern of God's work from verses 3 to 25 is one of command and execution. This pattern changes in verse 26. Here, we begin to see the creating hands of God as He adopts a more "hands-on" attitude. The verse begins, *"Let us make man…"* indicating that the creation of man is the result of God the Father consulting with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. There is no word of command as in the previous verses, but only a word of communication. Also, *"make"* indicates that God intends to take a more proactive role in this creature. Indeed, God made man Himself as told in Genesis 2:7, *"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul."*

"In our image, after our likeness"— Man was unlike any of the other creatures previously created. He had an intellect; although not as God, man nevertheless could maintain knowledge and reason. He had a will that he might make choices. He could worship and commune with God. He had a conscience, a sense of right and wrong. Man had the gift of speech, which in itself was a marked difference between himself and beast. In short, in the words of B. H. Carroll, man was and is "…a rational, moral, spiritual being."

It is important to note that of all the creatures of God's creative acts, God speaks only to man. The others have no speech directed to them at all. In Genesis 1:28, God speaks directly to the human creatures and in the 29th verse, He twice addresses them directly as *"you."* By having an intimate relationship with the Creator, this creature has not only the gift of being spoken to by God, but also the marvelous freedom, granted by God, that he might respond.

CONCLUSION

We must note that after each day of Creation, God observed *"that it was good."* At the end of the sixth day, after He had made man, He surveyed all that He had made and pronounced that "*it was very good."* Everything that God made was for His own gratification. All of Creation speaks of the glory owed to God. Nothing but the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God could have brought such a complex world into existence.

Man was made to bring honor and glory to God. "*Even everyone that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him: yea, I have made him"* (Isaiah 43:7). After God has re-created us as a new creature, as one of His children, Paul says, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God , which is your reasonable service"* (Romans 12:1). Psalm 100:4 tells us that we should be thankful to Him, bless Him and praise His name. When the twenty-four elders bowed before God and worshipped Him they said, *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."*

LESSON FIVE

God Ended His Work

LESSON TEXT
Genesis 2:1-3

WRITTEN BY
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Genesis 2
1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.
2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.
3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

DID GOD NEED TO REST?

Critics of the Bible in general, and of the Creation in particular, point out that it is incongruent to say that God is omnipotent, yet He needed to rest on the seventh day of Creation. It is true that in many verses of the Bible, God is described as omnipotent or all-powerful, yet in Genesis 2, the Bible plainly says that He "*rested"* on the seventh day. Make no mistake, God is omnipotent. In Genesis 17:1, God describes Himself to Abraham by saying, "I am the Almighty God." Abraham's son, Isaac, in blessing his son Jacob, said: "May God Almighty bless you…." The omnipotent nature of God can be seen throughout the Bible. The psalmist wrote: "*Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite"* (Psalm 147:5). From such verses, we get the idea that God can do anything that can be accomplished with power. We also get the idea that God's power never runs out, and He does not get tired. As Isaiah wrote: "*Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"* (Isaiah 40:28).

But, if God does not get tired, why does the Genesis account of Creation say that *"on the seventh day God ended His work, which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made*" What does the Bible mean when it says God rested? Were the rigors of creating the Universe so difficult for God that He needed a break? Did His creative power need to be rejuvenated? And, does this *"resting"* not oppose the idea that God *"fainteth not, neither is weary?"* The answers to these questions are really very simple.

I am not a Hebrew scholar, but in researching for this lesson I found the following information: when we hear the English verb "rest" most of us immediately think of being tired or needing to recuperate used energy, but the Hebrew word translated as "rest" in Genesis 2:2 does not always carry that same idea. In fact, the first two definitions given for the Hebrew word translated "rest" (*shābat* or *shābath*) are to "cease, desist."

The *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* documents that, of the 71 times it is used, 47 of those times it is simply translated "cease," and only 11 of those times is it translated "rest." The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* states: "The translation 'to cease, desist' can be illustrated in the following verses: '*day and night shall not cease*' (Genesis 8:22)…."

A brief look at the original word translated "rest" or "rested" shows that God did not get tired, nor did He need a day to recuperate or build up His strength. He simply stopped creating the Universe. He had everything just as He wanted it. *"It was very good."* He finished in six days and stopped on the seventh day to set a pattern for a seven-day week. God does not need to rest or relax, because He *"fainteth not, neither is weary."* In dealing with questions like this, sometimes a brief look at the original language can go a long way.

Another lesson not mentioned is the one He taught the newly created man and woman. Work hard for six days, but rest on the seventh that the body may be rejuvenated and most importantly that the spirit of the inward man might focus on his Creator and also be revitalized.

THE SABBATH INSTITUTED

"And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27-28).

In a manner of speaking, God continued His creative work into the seventh day in that He made the Sabbath. The Sabbath was not just created; it was made with someone in mind. The prevalent idea today is that the Sabbath was made "for the Jews"--but that is not what Christ says! Christ says it was made "*for man"*! It was something created for the benefit of all of mankind, not just for a certain group of people. God created the Sabbath immediately after He created the human race--not at the origination of the Jews:
Verse 31 of chapter 1 shows that man was created on the sixth day of Creation week. Further, man was the very last thing or being created on that day. Man came into being, then, probably in the late afternoon of the sixth day, "*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them"* (Genesis 1: 26-27).

"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all His work which God created and made" (Genesis 2:2-3).

Notice that He did not complete His creating on the sixth day, but it continued through the seventh day: *"And on the seventh day God ended his work which He had made."* God ended His work, but the Creation week was not yet over! Creation week was a full seven days of creation.

What did He create on the seventh day? He made the Sabbath! However, He made the Sabbath, not by work, but by ceasing from it. On the seventh day He ended the work of creation--what was created by work. He rested on the seventh day, and by doing so, created the Sabbath. He then blessed and set apart the seventh day as a day of rest and worship for mankind.

THE SABBATH REMEMBERED

The fourth commandment that was given to Moses on Sinai states, *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy"* (Exodus 20: 8). There follows in the tenth verse the commandment that on that day they shall not do any work, nor any of their children, servants nor even any of their livestock. This work restriction was strictly observed by Israel when the nation was close to God and walking according to His precepts. Like any other of His laws, they ignored this commandment during periods of apostasy. For the Jews this Biblical Sabbath is a weekly day of rest and a time of worship. The instructions given by God when He supplied Israel with manna is an example of how God viewed this day. You will remember that He told the people that they could gather no more than a person could eat (about an omer, roughly 2 quarts). If they gathered an excess, it would attract worms and would stink. This was the rule except for the Sabbath. Then, on the morning before the Sabbath, they could gather and prepare a double portion that there would be no gathering on the Lord's Day.

There seems to be some disagreement among the Jewish community on certain points concerning the Sabbath. An example is found in the following excerpt, which is copied as written.

> *Modern inventions have produced a host of new questions regarding Sabbath observance. Orthodox Judaism forbids travel by automobile on the Sabbath, Reform Judaism permits it. Conservative Judaism has differing views on this question, but generally permits travel by automobile on the Sabbath solely for the purpose of attending synagogue. The basic legal question regarding the switching on of electric lights is whether the non- combustive type of burning produced by electricity falls under the prohibition of making a fire or any of the other prohibitions listed above. Orthodox Jews refrain from the use of electrical appliances on the Sabbath, with the exception of the refrigerator, which may be opened and closed on the grounds that any electrical current produced in the process is incidental and without express intention. It has, however, become the practice for observant Jews to use electrical appliances on the Sabbath which are operated by time switches set before the Sabbath. Israel also has local bylaws forbidding certain activities on the Sabbath. There is, however, no comprehensive law covering the whole country. Thus, whereas public transportation does not operate on the Sabbath in Jerusalem and in Tel Aviv, it does in Haifa. Except for specifically non-Jewish sections of the country, the Sabbath is the official day of rest on which all business and stores must close, but there is some doubt as to what is a business for this law.*

In addition to the weekly Sabbath, Israel observed many other Sabbaths and most of them were connected with feasts. In addition to all these, every seventh year was to be the Sabbath of the land, and every fiftieth year the year of Jubilee. In the former, the land in Israel was to lay fallow every seventh year. When the year ended, all debts, except those of foreigners, were to be forgiven (Deuteronomy 15: 1-11). In similar fashion, this year of release requires a slave who had worked for six years to go free in the seventh year. In the latter, the year of the Jubilee, the land was to be kept fallow and debts forgiven but also land reverted to the original owner (Leviticus 27: 24).

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

There is no direct command from God that the infant Church should meet for worship services on the first day of the week. Because of this there has been a controversy of sorts, over which day should be the Christian Sabbath. This disagreement has been fueled by the observance of the fourth commandment and the dedication to seventh-day worship on the part of the Hebrews. Added to this was the charge that the Christians were practicing sun worship like the pagans, a charge that the Christians vehemently deny.

Most Christians adopted the first day for their worship services because the greatest happening of all time occurred on the first day of the week. Christ arose. All four of the Gospel writers report that on the first day of the week, when the women went to the tomb of Jesus, He was gone. He had arisen, as He had said. Since that day, ungodly men have tried to deny that the Messiah had come, was crucified and arose from the dead.

Another first day reference is found in Acts 20:7, *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."* These Christians met on Sunday for the purpose of worshipping God and while they were there they observed the Lord's Supper. Both A.T. Robinson and John Gill agree on that. Matthew Henry agrees and said this occasion was "*the Christian Sabbath. Celebrated in honor of Christ and the Holy Spirit, in remembrance of the resurrection of Christ…."* and *"They came together to break bread, that is, to celebrate the ordinance of the Lord's Supper…."*

In 1 Corinthians 16:2, Paul was giving instructions to that church concerning the collection for the relief of the church in Jerusalem. He wrote, "*Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come*," indicating that their regular meeting day was the first day of the week.

In concluding this series of lessons, I would like to say that such a world, no, such a solar system in which we live could hardly have happened by chance. Many of us have faith that God designed all of it and orchestrated the entire creative process to completion. We also believe that He accomplished all of it in six literal days. Therefore, all other theories as to the origins of the universe, animals and man are rejected, like so many others of man's and Satan's works.

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