

## Gen 1:3-13

We have been studying the book of Genesis and have noted it is divided into eleven toldots, or family histories that begin in 2:4. The idea of the toldot is, this is the account of \_\_\_\_, (or what became of \_\_\_\_).

We will get into these sections shortly, but in these first few weeks we are in the introductory section of Genesis 1:1 through 2:3 which deals with creation. We have divided this section using the following outline,

- a. The Original Creation, Gen 1:1.
- b. Chaos, Gen 1:2.
- c. The Six days of Creation, Gen 1:3-31.
- d. The Seventh Day, 2:1-3.

We first covered the original Creation in Gen 1:1 and last week we noted the subsequent Chaos in verse 2. We noted a gap between verse 1 and verse 2 and attributed the chaos noted in verse 2 to the fall of Satan as described in Ezekiel 28. Verse 2 noted the earth was formless and empty (or some of your translations may say waste and void). There was also darkness over the deep. It was a world of disorder, darkness, judgement, and chaos. But the next phrase gives hope, as the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. We noted the word *waters* denotes fresh life-giving water and the word *hovering* is a picture of a bird hovering over the nest waiting for the eggs to hatch. Literally the picture is of the Spirit of God hovering over the formless and void earth, over the waters, who eagerly awaits the work of the Son to create. Last time we concluded by extending the metaphor to our own lives. In God's mercy He sent his Spirit to hover over our own chaotic sinful state and to await and initiate, the Son's creative power to give us new spiritual life.

### **Introduction to the Six Days of Creation.**

Verse 2 can also be seen as an introduction to the next section, which is the Six Days of God's Creation which begins in verse 3 and ends in verse 31.

The Six Days of Creation respond and correct the problem found in Gen 1:2, and that is the problem of formlessness and emptiness.

Note the first three days of creation rectify formlessness as the first three days are ones of division: light from dark (the first day), sky from sea (the second day), sea from land (the third day-also note plants are created on this day).

The second three days rectify the problem of emptiness, as these three days are days of decoration. On the fourth day the sun decorates the day, while the moon and stars the night. On the fifth day fish fill the sea and birds fill the sky. On the sixth day man and animals fill the land.

Note the symmetry as the form of the first day (light and dark) is filled with the work of the fourth day (sun, moon, and stars). The second day (separation of sky and sea) is filled with the work of the fifth day

(birds and fish), while the form of the third day (sea and land), is filled with the work of the sixth day (man and animals).

Each of the six days of creation follows a similar pattern. There are seven steps that each day follows.

- a. The first step is the introductory creative word, *and God said*. This is vitally important as creation is a function of God's word. He says and it comes to be. Scripture illustrates this theme as Heb 11:3 says, *By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command*, or Ps 33:6, *By the word of the Lord the heavens were made*.
- b. The second step is the declaration of His will, *Let there be*.
- c. The third step is the fulfillment, *and there was*.
- d. The fourth step is the action itself, *and God made*.
- e. The fifth step is the act of naming or blessing, *and God called*, or *God blessed*.
- f. The sixth step is God's evaluation containing an expression of satisfaction, *and God saw that it was good*.
- g. The seventh step is one of termination, *and it was evening and it was morning* followed by a number.

The last thing to note is the Hebrew word, *yom*, which is used for day. Many have argued that when Moses wrote Genesis the word *day* must mean more than a 24 hour period. This reasoning exists to accommodate evolutionary or geologic theories to explain life and the origin of our world. However, the word *yom*, when followed by a numeral, always means a twenty four hour day. As used in Genesis, this meaning has not changed. It means 24 hours.

### **The First Day, 3-5.**

So, with this in mind, let's start with the First Day as described in verses 3-5,

Vs 3-5, *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.*

Vs 3a, *And God said,*

The work of the first day begins with the phrase, *and God said*. This phrase is replicated for all six days. This is the work of the Logos, the Word, as John notes in Jn 1:1-3. And as Ps 33:6-9 also notes, *The Lord merely spoke, and the heavens were created. He breathed the word, and all the stars were born. <sup>7</sup> He assigned the sea its boundaries and locked the oceans in vast reservoirs. <sup>8</sup> Let the whole world fear the Lord, and let everyone stand in awe of him. <sup>9</sup> For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command.*

Vs 3b, *"Let there be light,"*

The phrase, *let there be*, is the declaration of God's will. He wanted there to be light.

Vs 3c, *and there was light.*

Here is the fulfillment of God's will. Now note this light was different than the sun's light as the sun had not yet been created (the sun was made on the 4<sup>th</sup> day). Most agree this light was the Shechinah Glory light which provided light for the first three days of creation. Paul gives reference to this in 2 Cor 4:6, *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness,"<sup>[a]</sup> made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.*

Vs 4a, *God saw that the light was good,*

Verse 4 marks the result of verse 3. God spoke, He created, and he saw what he made and called it good. It was good because it began to correct the chaos of verse 2, and it was good because God is perfect and what he makes is perfect.

Vs 4b, *and he separated the light from the darkness.*

This is the first of the separations in this section. God separated the darkness of verse 2 with the light of verse 3. The idea is a division, where one realm is light, the other dark.

Vs 5a, *God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night."*

In verse 5a, God names the two divisions. Naming is an act of sovereignty. It shows you have authority and sovereignty over the object you have named.

5b, *And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.*

Verse 5b gives the completion of the first day. The evening comes first, as in Jewish culture the day is from sunset to sunset. Of note, in older translations the word "first" is in its cardinal form, one. All the other days are listed in their ordinal form, second, third, fourth, etc. There are many speculative answers as to why this is, but none are satisfactory.

## **The Second Day, 6-8.**

*Then God said, And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water."<sup>7</sup> So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.*

Vs 6a, *And God said,*

Verse 6 records the work of the second day. Note it begins like the other days do, *and God said.*

Vs 6b, *"Let there be a vault between the waters to separate the waters from water"*

Veres 6b starts with God's declarative will, *let there be*. The word vault comes from the Hebrew word to spread out. It is also used to mean overlay as if someone were hammering out a metal to a fine sheet to spread or stretch it out. This the word used to describe the formation of the atmospheric heavens. Its purpose was to divide and separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth. God separated the waters into the atmospheric heaven and the terrestrial waters (or from water vapor from water).

Vs 7a, *So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it.*

Verse 7a describes the result of verse 6. God separated the waters into the waters of the sky and the waters of the earth.

This event of forming and separating the sky from the earth is described elsewhere in scripture.

- a. Job 37:18, *can you, with Hm, spread out the skies, strong as a molten mirror?* (NASB).
- b. Ps 104:1-3 *Praise the Lord, my soul. Lord my God you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty. The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.*
- c. Ps 148:4, *Praise Him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies.*
- d. Is 40:22, *He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.*

Vs 7b, *and it was so.*

The modern Hebrew word for this phrase means yes. In biblical Hebrew it means “like an established thing.” God speaks and it is.

Vs 8a, *God called the space “sky.”*

The word sky is also translated heaven. If you use the word heaven, it means the first heaven, or the atmospheric heaven.

Vs 8b, *And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.*

Verse 8b marks the completion of the second day, but note there is an omission of God saying it was good. According to rabbinic tradition (from Fructenbaum), the reason is God did not complete the work of the second day until the third day as noted in verse 9 and 10. Note, after God had separated the land from the sea, He then called it good. In verse 11 God creates plant life and calls this good in verse 12. So, on the third day there are two acts of creation: the separation of land and sea, and the formation of plant life. They each receive their own “good.” Some rabbis also hold that Gehenna (or hell) was formed on the second day, and since this was not good, the word good is withheld from describing the second day of creation.

### **The Third Day, 9-13.**

*And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.*

Vs 9a, And God said, *“Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.”*

In verse 9 we have the third separation and that is the sea from the land. The phrase *gathered to one place* does not necessarily mean all the land was in one big contiguous mass. Rather it means land is in one place and the sea in another, no matter how many units of land or water there may be.

This event is also mentioned in Job 38:8-11, *“Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, <sup>9</sup> when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness, <sup>10</sup> when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place, <sup>11</sup> when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt’?”*

Ps 104:5-9, *He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved. <sup>6</sup> You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. <sup>7</sup> But at your rebuke the waters fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight; <sup>8</sup> they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys, to the place you assigned for them. <sup>9</sup> You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth.*

Jer 5:22, *Should you not fear me?” declares the Lord. “Should you not tremble in my presence? I made the sand a boundary for the sea, an everlasting barrier it cannot cross. The waves may roll, but they cannot prevail; they may roar, but they cannot cross it.*

Vs 9b, *And it was so.*

Again, verse 9b is the fulfillment of God’s desire in 9a.

Vs 10a, *God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.”*

God then names the dry ground, *land*, and the gathered waters, *seas*. Note, this is the last naming God does.

Vs 10b, *And God saw that it was good.*

After the naming, God says *that it was good*. This phrase completes the creative act begun on the second day, and marks the first use of the phrase *“it is good”* on the third day.

Vs 11a, *Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.”*

God now directs his creative energy to the land which brings forth plant life. Note this is the second creative act on the third day (the other being the completion of the work started on the second day) for it begins with *“Then God said.”*

Note, the creative act here is mediated by God but not immediately from Him, as God said, *let the land produce*.

Three categories of plants are mentioned; *vegetation*, which is a general term for grass and grain; *seed bearing plants*, which refers to herbs and vegetables; *and trees*; which includes those that bear fruit and those that do not.

Note they are *according to their kind*. This means God created many distinct species with the allowance of variation within a species; but not the ability to change species.

Vs 11b *And it was so.*

Verse 11b records the fulfillment of God's command.

Vs 12a, *The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.*

Verse 12a records the action of creation itself. The earth now brings forth all the myriad forms of plant life we see today. The diversity, creativity, and beauty of God's work is on display every time we walk outside.

Vs 12b, *And God saw that it was good.*

Verse 12b records the completion of His creative act and He again declares it *good*. God is satisfied with what He has made.

Vs 13. *And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.*

We now have the completion of the third day and next week we will discuss days 4-6.