

DAYS 1-3: DIVINE SEPARATION

Genesis 1:3-13

INTRODUCTION

The Master's College participates in the Christian College Coalition, a group of 110 Christian colleges, and out of those 110 colleges, there are only 5 or 6 take a literal understanding of the Genesis account → over a hundred of those Christian colleges do not have a Christian world view.

The following quotes decry the anti-intellectualism within Christianity:

“. . . the Christian Mind has succumbed to the secular drift with a degree of weakness unmatched in Christian History.”

—Harry Blamires

“The contemporary Christian mind is starved, and as a result we have small, impoverished souls.”

—J. P. Moreland

“The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind.”

—Mark Noll

God doesn't urinate on pre-existing matter to create the universe. God doesn't hover over eggs out of which hatch monsters. Both pagan myths, the latter very close to the evolutionary theory of Punctuated Equilibrium – Hopeful Monster theory. All of these myths fall by the wayside when we take the straightforward truth that God gives us in Genesis.

Recall from **Gen 1:2** – Centerpiece, Construction Materials, Controlling Calm

- *tohu wabohu* – “formless and void”

God created the essential elements of time, space and matter – the elements are created and they're left in a shapeless and uninhabitable form and enveloped by darkness.

Gen 1:3 - God now forms the formless and fills the void

Days 1-3: Divine Separation

Days 4-6: Divine Population

READ Genesis 1:3-13

Proposition: Days 1-3: God Creates:

- 1. Light to Shine**
- 2. Air to Breathe**
- 3. Land to Live**

So That: We would have receptive ears and responsive hearts

Grammatically speaking, on days 1-5, there is only one Subject in these verses: God Himself. Everything else is object. Objects are acted upon: light, air, water, dry land, plants – all are objects in a creative process where God alone is Subject.

Application– Pagans worship the object. Believers worship the Subject.

1st Day ...

I. Day 1 – God creates Light to Shine

A. God Speaks.

Point – God speaks light into existence. Divine fiat - according to God's will. He has a **purpose** and a **plan**. It reflects His mastery and ability in all things.

Proof – **Gen 1:3** – “**Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.**”

God addresses what is formless and void. He speaks, and there is instantaneous transformation. He says two words in Hebrew; “Be light!” and there is light from one end of the universe to the other.

“**light**” = essential prerequisite for **life** and **existence**.

There was “**light**” → with that, instantly, there was heat, gravity, and electromagnetism, and nuclear forces, and elementary particles. We are suddenly introduced to an unimaginably vast universe all perfectly positioned for the creation of the stars and the galaxies.

Illustration – Some skeptics complain that light was invented (Day 1) before the sun (Day 4). Shows vapidity of their thinking – the sun is just a source. Imagine you have a flashlight and make the claim, there was no such thing as light prior to the invention of this flashlight ... ridiculous. In the same way, God created light with all of its amazing properties, behaving usually as a wave, but also as a particle (photosynthesis), etc. Then, 3 days later, He created a source.

Application – We have God’s speech recorded.

- This is totally different from pagan myths.
- Nothing was spoken into existence in pagan mythology.
- In fact, the gods of mythology rarely spoke.
- When they did speak, they were usually arguing.

Application – Destroys myths of origin of the universe by:

- accident
- chance

- self-existent, self-sustaining material

Heb 11:3 – “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

- Biblical faith opens the eyes so that we don't reject the obvious

B. God Sees and Evaluates.

Point – God Sees/Assessment/Verdict/Evaluation

Proof – **Gen 1:4a – “And God saw that the light was good;”**

raah – seven times in **Gen 1** – God's Word tells us that God “saw that it was good” (“very good” – **1:31**)

When God pronounces His creation “**good**” means more than just morally good. It means **perfection** and adequate in every sense for God's **purpose**

- both externally & internally

We read Genesis Chapter 1 and are taught that this physical universe is good and worthy of study. It is rational and orderly, and what we find to be true one day will also be true the next

Application – Provides backdrop for the rest of the Bible – for His pleasure, according to His standard

C. God Separates.

Point – **Separates** - this demonstrates:

- God's sovereignty
- God's authority
- God's power
- God's dominion

Proof – **Gen 1:4b – “and God separated the light from the darkness.”**

God sets boundaries - **Psalm 104:1-9**

This demonstrates sovereign control

- light, darkness -> day and night
- waters, seas -> above and below
- dry land -> waters below into one place
- vegetation, animals -> “after their kind”

Illustration – even the **Sabbath - Genesis 2:1-3**

- “**blessed**” and “**sanctified**” - again separate, boundaries

God establishes a boundary as part of His sacrificial system in the Old Testament

- Holy and Profane (Leviticus)

- Holy Place and Most Holy Place (Exodus)
- Israel and the Nations
And in the New Testament - separation of tares and wheat and sheep and goats.

Paul makes an application:

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

D. God Names.

Point – God names things - names in Scripture have great significance

Proof – **Gen 1:5** – “**And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night.**”

Before there were any men or women, God gave names to the light and darkness. It is a mark of His ownership and authority.

Illustration – The act of **naming** in Ancient Near East was act of sovereign dominion. In the Babylonian mythological account, *Enuma Elish*, when the writer wished to state that nothing existed, he said nothing was named.

“**And there was evening and there was morning, one day.**”

There was “**evening and there was morning.**” There was a 24-hour day, this is clear. These terms, “**evening and morning**”, are used more than a hundred times in the Old Testament and they always refer to a 24-hour day.

Illustration: Dan 8:14 – “**For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored.**”

God fixed “**evening and morning**” separately for their purposes.

Application – What kind of “**day**” (from Hebrew word *yom* – **Gen 1:5,8,13,19,23,31**) is this?

- 1) evening and morning
- 2) numerical adjective
- 3) **Exodus 20:8**

Application – This beginning of the cyclical “**evening and morning**” arrangement means the earth is now rotating on its axis.

The rate of the earth’s rotation is exactly right. If it were slower, life would burn during the day and freeze at night. If it were faster, wind velocities would rise to catastrophic levels. Jupiter, for example, has a 10-hour rotation period and thousand mph winds.

As day two begins, when the dawning of the day comes, the universe is light and dark, the earth

is an undifferentiated mass of elements completely engulfed in water.

2nd Day.....

II. Day 2 – God Creates Air to Breathe

A. God Speaks.

Point – God speaks the sky into existence. God makes the atmosphere and places it in-between the vast oceans below and a vast expansive canopy of water above.

Proof – **Gen 1:6** – “**Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”**”

“**expanse**” – Hebrew word for expanse means 'to beat, stamp, spread out'

Exod 39:3 – same word is translated as 'hammered out' - “**they hammered out gold sheets**” – spread it out into thinness

Isa 40:12, 22 – v. 12: “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, And marked off the heavens by the span, And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, And weighed the mountains in a balance, And the hills in a pair of scales.”
v. 22: “It is He who sits above the vault of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.”

This “**expanse**” which God made absorbs or deflects incoming cosmic and ultraviolet rays. This atmosphere extends up:

- Troposphere about 10 miles up (80% of the atmosphere’s mass and 99% of its water)
- Stratosphere, up to about 30 miles
- Mesosphere, up to about 60 miles...and finally ...
- Ionosphere, up to about 350 miles (thermosphere and exosphere).

The air we breathe has the correct mixture of gases: 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen, .93% Argon, .035% carbon dioxide and .035% other gases. If the atmosphere had 25% oxygen or more, spontaneous fires would break out. If the atmosphere had 15% oxygen or less, we would suffocate. If the atmosphere had more carbon dioxide, the earth would become warmer. If the atmosphere had less carbon dioxide, plants would starve.

B. God Separates.

Proof – **Gen 1:7** – “**And God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so.**”

“**the waters above the expanse**” were like a canopy that enveloped the whole earth and created a tropical environment.

The Antediluvian earth maintained uniform temperature, and uniform humidities. The

combination of warm temperature and adequate moisture everywhere supports lush vegetation over the world, no barren deserts and no ice caps. A vapor canopy was effective in filtering out ultra-violet radiation, cosmic rays, other destructive energies and it goes on and on and on. This is one reason people lived so long and dinosaurs thrived.

2 Pet 3:5-7 – “For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”

Current – There are about 300 million cubic miles of water on Earth. 97% of all the water on Earth is in the seas, the greater part of it in the Pacific, which is bigger than all the land masses put together. Of the 3% of Earth's water that is fresh, most exists as ice sheets. Only the tiniest amount, 0.036%, is found in lakes, rivers and reservoirs, and an even smaller part in clouds or as vapor.

Most liquids when chilled contract by about 10 per cent. Water does too, but only down to a point. Once it is close to freezing, it amazingly begins to expand.

- because it expands, ice floats on water → nice for drinks
- without surface ice to hold heat in the oceans, warmth would radiate away, and the oceans would freeze

C. God Names.

Point - demonstrating His ownership; His authority

Proof – **Gen 1:8 – “And God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.”**

When we look at the entirety of Scripture, there are three kinds of heavens - the word heaven appears in three different ways:

- atmosphere - what God names this expanse in between the waters above and the waters below
- space - the Heavens which go out to the remotest stars, galaxies and beyond
- "Heaven" - in **2 Corinthians 12:2**, Paul talks about being caught up to the third Heaven - which is the dwelling place of God - the spiritual Heaven

God Created the Light to Shine, Air to Breath, ...

3rd Day.....

III. Day 3 – God Creates Land to Live

A. God Speaks.

Point – God speaks dry land into existence.

Proof – Gen 1:9 – “Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.”

God commands the waters that cover the earth to be collected into one place. There are 300 million cubic miles of water! The Septuagint uses the word “synagogue,” a gathering place. All of the water surrounding the earth is now gathered into one place and so God **separates** the water from the dry land.

Can we even begin to fathom what occurred when this is spoken by God? All of a sudden the material that is in its unformed condition, buried under the depths of the surface sea starts to move. And all the necessary elements work to produce land, to push up and create the surface of land.

The water moves, gathering itself into one place. Tremendous chemical reactions get under way as the elements combine with each other to form the complex of minerals, the complex of rock and soil, making up the solid earth as to its crust and its mantle and its core. Just a staggering act of creation.

“**and it was so**” – “**dry land**” appears separated from the “**sea**”

- these short words just capture the amazing magnitude of what God did at this time

Application – The thickness of the earth’s crust is correct. If the crust was thicker, or thinner the oxygen content would either be too small or too great. If the crust was thinner, volcanic and tectonic activity would destroy life.

Turn to:

Psalm 74: 13-17

- everything is perfect
- God is sovereign over all

Psalm 33: 6-9

Psalm 89:10 - "You rule the swelling of the sea; When its waves rise, You still them."

Illustration – Have you ever heard of a Jewish Navy?

- From Genesis 1 to Jonah being swallowed to Paul’s shipwreck’s, the sea is a terrifying place to the Hebrews.

Illustration – In Mesopotamian religion, Tiamat is a chaos monster, a goddess of the ocean. She is the monstrous embodiment of an imagined primordial chaos. She mated with Abzû (the god of fresh water) to produce younger gods. The god Marduk vanquished her and split her like a fish into two parts. He cut her horizontally and divided her. Out of the upper half he formed a heaven and out of the lower half he made the earth.

Tiamat vs. – *tehom* – “**deep**” – the deep that we read in **Genesis 1:2** and in **Proverbs 8: 24-31** is

the same Hebrew word

When the original audience of Moses reads the account of Genesis 1 and 2, they understand that the God they serve, the God who rescued them out of Egypt, their God is sovereign over the waters.

Application -

Proverbs 8:32-35

**“Now therefore, O sons, listen to me,
For blessed are they who keep my ways.**

**“Heed instruction and be wise,
And do not neglect it.**

**“Blessed is the man who listens to me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at my doorposts.**

**“For he who finds me finds life
And obtains favor from the Lord.”**

CONCLUSION:

Albert Einstein, *The World As I See It* – *“The religious feeling of the scientist takes the form of rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law – which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection.”*

John Calvin – *“After the world had been created, man was placed in it as in a theater, that he, beholding above him and beneath the wonderful works of God, might reverently adore their Author.”*