

## **DAYS 3-4: PLANTS AND LIGHTS**

### **Genesis 1:11-19**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

**Gathering of Pastors** – This week, I was at a gathering of pastors and one of the topics we were discussing was the topic of creating Christ-centered families. There were two tables of 10-12 pastors each and we were asked to discuss ideas and concepts about how to build Christ-centered families. Our assignment was then to pick one idea or concept and share it with the other table. A woman at our table shared how her church has a youth building called “The Bridge” which had a rock wall, skate park, rollout stage, fog machine, etc. Her idea was selected and she shared it with the entire group. When she was done, the moderator asked if there were any other ideas. I raised my hand and suggested “expository preaching and qualified leadership”.

Don’t get me wrong. I would have no problem with a rock wall in our future Youth building. But on the list of items important for building a Christ-centered family, it would be about #500, or much lower, on the list.

Days 1-3: **Light to Shine, Air to Breathe, Land to Live**

**Days 1-3: Divine Separation**

**Days 4-6: Divine Population**

God forms the formless and fills the void.

**READ Genesis 1:11-19**

**Proposition** : Two Acts of Creation:

**Plants and Lights** - Vegetation and Illumination

First Act of Creation:

**Day 3 – Plants**            **Gen 1:11-13**

Point – Day 2 Primeval **Hydrosphere** and **Atmosphere**

Day 3 **Lithosphere** and **Plant Biosphere**

I’m not a big fan of horticulture ... but ... the Word of God does make anything and everything very exciting.

Proof – **Gen 1:11-12a** – “Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, *and* fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with seed in them, on the earth”; and it was so. **And the earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, with seed in them, after their kind;**”

Bible Study Question that came from Malm's small group this week – “Was the Land there before it’s appearing on Day 3?”

- No and yes.
- The Earth was covered with water. I think most likely the elements of the land were there beneath the waters.
- “Let there be light” (*ex nihilo*) vs. “Let the dry land appear”

Four elements in God's act of creating plants:

- 1) God creates life
- 2) God creates mature life
- 3) God creates reproducing life
- 4) God creates unique and bounded life

1) God creates life → “**Then God said...**”

God gives us three descriptions of it:

- a) “**vegetation**” (literally means to be “wet” or “damp” – where water is)  
→ grasses that grow and spread along the ground
- b) “**plants yielding seed**” → those which grow to shoulder height
- c) “**fruit trees bearing fruit**” → those which grow taller than man

The creation of plants on Day 3 was not only the beginning of life but also the beginning of food.

- food was an important topic in the Bible and in life
- from a spiritual standpoint, from the first chapter to the last chapter, from **Gen 1:29** to **Rev 22:14**, food is important
- God's promise in the Abrahamic covenant, one of the three primary components of God's promise was that He would deliver him to a land of milk and honey

**7 Distinct Epochs** in God's plan for food for man

- i) Creation to Fall – restricted Vegetarian - **Genesis 1:29**
- ii) Fall to Flood – unrestricted Vegetarian - **Genesis 3:18**
- iii) Flood to Sinai – open (carnivorous) with one restriction
- iv) Sinai to Cross (Law) – severe restrictions (in sense of the number)
- v) Cross to Millennium (Grace) – open (no restriction –liberty)
- vi) Millennium – vegetarian with fish?
- vii) Eternity – Tree of Life - **Revelation 22:14**

Even in our unrestricted time (except for good personal discipline ☺ or sacrifice of liberty for the witness or a weaker brother), the food chain begins with plants, no matter what you eat.

2) God creates mature life →

By the end of this third day, there is a mature functioning system. God made the plant world instantly, universally, fully-grown, and fully-functioning.

**Illustration** – the deaf man in **Mark 7:35** – “**And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly.**”

- To hear is one thing, to be able to know that what you’re hearing is language when you’ve never heard language is another miracle.
- There’s no speech therapy here.
- **He has full command of a language he’s never even heard**

In the same way, when God created the plants, they were mature, fully functioning and complete plants. Adam and Eve did not have to wait for seeds to sprout.

**3) God creates reproducing life →**

He says it twice (**vv. 11,12**) and again in **v. 29**. God made full-grown, fully-mature vegetation with seed in it. He repeats this to let us know the vegetation is capable of reproduction. God restates much of His Truth.

**4) God creates unique and bounded life → Limitation to Variation**

“**seed**” – the ability to reproduce a form of life in its own likeness

- we know this from true science
- implanted in each created organism is a seed programmed to enable the continuing replication of the same organism

“**after their kind**” –from Hebrew word *min* – repeated over and over, **31 times** in OT

- **10 times in Gen 1 – 1:11, 12** (twice), **21**(twice), **24** (twice), **25** (three times)
- God wants to make it very clear that there is a limitation to the variation
- extreme complexities of the **DNA molecule** and the genetic code contained in it
- each type of organism has its own unique structure of DNA and can only reproduce the same kind.

**Illustration** - adaptive radiation - this is true science - as in Darwin's moths.

**Application** – One more reason evolution is so foolish.

**Illustration** - Bounded:

**Job 38:4-11** - God reminds Job of His majesty in creation

- God's sovereignty over the waters - He created boundaries
- same with plants and animals

**Application** – By the way, in evolutionary thinking trees evolved from marine organisms. In the Bible, God created trees on Day 3 and marine organisms on Day 5. There is no harmonization possible between the two worldviews.

**Gen 1:12b-13 – “and God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.”**

**“there was evening and there was morning, a third day” –**

Each day ends with this repeated phrase to emphatically declare the 6 days are the same; there is a connotation there. These are regular 24 hour days. This destroys the possibility of the alternate ideas of

- day-age theory
- framework theory
- analogical theory
- progressive creationism theory

**God speaks, God sees, and God evaluates**

Twice, for both land and plants, God says it is “**good**” - and that makes it good.

**Application** – A tree is not just “**good**” because we can cut it down and make a house or because we can burn it in order to get heat. A tree is “**good**” because God made it and pronounced it “**good**.”

**Application** – Why? Because it is now habitable

- It has reached the point where it can sustain life for man

**Application** – While both sea and the land are important, it is land that is most important because

- it is land where **man** will live.
- it is land where **Scripture** will be written
- it is land where **redemption** will take place

Purpose? It is habitable for Man

→ **A Garden** is coming into being.

Second Act of Creation:

**Day 4 – Lights                      Gen 1:14-19**

**Illustration** – I was listening to a sermon on Genesis on an app while driving my car. This app has a variety of sermons so you never know what you are getting. I was listening to this preacher who seemed OK at the beginning of the sermon. He was articulate which was good. After reading the passage of Genesis, he finished by saying “This is the Word of God,” so that was encouraging. As he began preaching, he was referring to the original Hebrew, which was also encouraging. Then, he said that this Scripture shouldn’t be read in context of modern science. He said that the original authors and audience understood the world was flat, and then he said a few minutes later, that the text supports this. Really??? Wrong!

When the Word of God speaks on something that true science can look at, it is true. Because the

Bible is absolutely without error in the lesser things, in the things of observation and agriculture and so on, we can trust it when it gives eternal information of eternal consequences on the more important spiritual things.

→ **Job 26:7** – “He stretches out the north over empty space, And hangs the earth on nothing.”

→ **Olivet Discourse – Luke 17:34-36** - at the end of the Tribulation period when Jesus comes back and takes away people to judgment, He will take people during the night, early morning and daytime. This indirectly tells us that the Earth is round. People at different places around the globe will be in different periods of that day.

→ **Genesis 1** - everything God says about the governing of the days, seasons and years are all accurate

Point – moving from forming the formless (days 1-3) to filling the void on days 4-6

- divine population - Day 4 corresponds to Day 1

Proof – God gives His pronouncement:

**Gen 1:14a** – “Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night,”

Day 1 – Let there be light – God created waves/photons of light

Day 4 – Let there be lights – creates the generators to produce the waves

John Calvin, Genesis Commentary – “*The difference is the light before was dispersed, but now proceeds from lucid bodies which in serving this purpose obeyed the command of God.*”

God gives His purpose:

**Gen 1:14b-15** – “and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so.”

- “for signs”
  - for fixed points of regulating worship and work
  - New Moons, Sabbaths, Feasts, etc.

So when the second generation of Israel out of the Exodus reads the original writings, they would say... “Aha! This is how we know when to do the things prescribed by the Law”

- for faith – Psa 8; 19; Rom 1:14-20
- for weather – Matt 16:2-3
- for prophecy – Matt 2:2; Luke 21:25
- for judgment – Joel 2:30-31; Matt 24:29

Also for navigating during long journeys.

**Illustration** – Before the invention of MSDs (Masculinity Sapping Devices ☺) - that is GPSs!

- “for seasons (appointed times) and for days and years”
  - calendar times, seasonal times, diurnal times

**Illustration** – Adam and Eve weren’t created as zygotes, fetuses, babies, or even children. They were created as adults in their prime ... probably around age of 50 ☺

In the same way, the light from these luminaries is hitting the earth as part of their creation - as part of God's purpose for man, to benefit man. This is part of God's good gift.

“and it was so” – 4<sup>th</sup> time out of 6 in **Gen 1**

- means it was made permanent
- at creation there is a firm and fixed and established condition
- the brevity of the language brings out the wonder, omnipotence and power of God

**vv. 14-15** → emphasize secondary purpose of the lights of the heavens - signs, seasons

**vv. 16-18** → emphasize the primary purpose of controlling day and night and giving light

God is restating His **Reason, Purpose, and Priority** → geocentric nature of God's creation

**Gen 1:16** – “**And God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; *He made the stars also.***”

“***He made the stars also***” – in italics in NASB - something the translators added to help us understand - it literally reads – “**the stars also**”

Point – that we know the level of importance of the stars (less than the sun and moon)

- completely in contrast to all astrological order, etc.
- God uses incredibly detailed language about the sun and the moons and then He just says the stars also
- He wants to remove any worship of the stars
- He wants to remove heathen misunderstanding

**Application** – A reader from Babylon would read this and say, “Wait a minute. You’re telling me my god is just a lesser afterthought?”

The astrologer ... the evolutionist

- the Sun and Moon were created first, then the stars.

**Gen 1:17-18** – “**And God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth,<sup>18</sup> and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.**”

**vv. 17-18** – three fold purpose statement:

- 1) Illuminate
- 2) Dominate

3) Separate

1) to illuminate - “**to give light on the earth**” –this is the second time (with v. 15)

- God is repeating Himself

**Application** – 2 creation accounts → 2 authors → really????

What does a good teacher do?

- 1) He tells you what he is going to tell you.
- 2) He tells you.
- 3) He tells you again.

In the same way, God restates in Scripture what He wants us to know.

2) to dominate - “**to govern the day and the night**”

Even when the sun takes over for the Day 1 light, the earth’s rate of rotation and the duration of each day remains the same. The rotation of the earth on its axis determines a 24-hour **day**. The Moon determines the **month**. The Sun also determines the **year**. It takes one full year for the earth to orbit around the sun.

What determines a **week**? There is nothing in the celestial bodies that determines a week. Universally across the face of the earth mankind lives by weeks. Where do you think they got that? Out of **Genesis 1** – The 6 days of God’s creation.

3) to separate - “**to separate the light from the darkness**”

- Order – forming the previously formless

**Application:** Again, we see this twice here (**vv. 14 and 18**), because God wants us to understand that He is a God of order, not chaos. There is nothing accidental with God. There is no experimentation, no trying and testing.

C.S. Lewis, *The Business of Heaven* – “If the solar system was brought about an accidental collision, then the appearance of organic life on this planet was also an accident and the whole evolution of man was also an accident. If so, then all our present thoughts are accidents. The accidental byproduct of the movement of atoms, this holds for the thoughts of the materialists and astronomers as well as for everybody else. But if their thoughts are merely accidents, why should we believe any of them? I see no reason...says C.S. Lewis...for believing that one accident should be able to give me a correct account of all the other accidents.”

end of v. 18 - God again sees and evaluates.

“**and God saw that it was good**” – nothing missing, nothing lacking, nothing out of place or in conflict in the heavens

We see God seeing and evaluating in four places so far in **Genesis 1** -

**1:4** – Light → light to see

**1:10** – Dry Land → land to live

**1:12** – Plants → food to eat

**1:18** – Lights → to see, to navigate, to harvest, to sleep, etc.

**Gen 1:19** – “**And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.**”

Again → we see stability – same as vv. **5, 8** - same duration of evening and morning

**CONCLUSION:**

**Psa 8:3** – “**When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained;**”

**Psa 136:5-9** – “**To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; To Him who made the great lights, For His lovingkindness is everlasting: The sun to rule by day, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, The moon and stars to rule by night, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.**”

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