

Creation--Old Testament #1

Multiply, Chapter 10; page 139-149

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DAY 1: Setting the Stage

The bible is less a collection of history, stories, teaching and principles, and more an epic story, from start to finish, literally. The central purpose of life is to *enter God's story*. He is the central character in His story.

But we've twisted this from life being about His story to making life about my story. We've run from the central purpose of life, to instead live for our purpose. Messes ensue.

When our life aligns with God's story, we experience meaning in life as we've been designed. When we make life about our story, meaning and purpose get dumbed down to feeling better about my life, now. Emptiness, loneliness and confusion ensue.

Read Genesis 1. Underline everything that strikes you that this is God's story...

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day. ⁶ And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." ⁷ So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸ God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning--the second day. ⁹ And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning--the third day. ¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights--the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning--the fourth day. ²⁰ And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." ²³ And there was evening, and there was morning--the fifth day. ²⁴ And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.

DAY 3: In the Image of God

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.

1. We are vastly **different** from God in some ways:

<u>God</u>	<u>Man</u>
• Creator	Creature
• Eternal	Temporal/ immortal
• All-powerful	I have a very small amount of power
• All-knowing	Limited knowledge
• Omnipresent	I can only be at one place at a time

2. God says that in some ways we are alike! Look back at 1:26. God says that He made us in His "image" and "likeness." God doesn't say this about any other creature; only mankind. What do you think He means that we are created in His image and likeness?

3. Taking into account the rest of the bible, theologians (and your author) believe this includes *at least* the following. Check which ones you think God means:

- At our core, we are relational in nature
- We have the capacity for deep relationship
- We have the capacity for deep love
- Moral capacity
- High capacity of reason
- Purposeful, beyond mere survival; Meaning matters
- Made to reflect the wonder of God to others (See Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3)

4. Underline every idea in the following verses that underscore the truths we've seen in Genesis 1.

Psalms 8:1 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. ² From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. ³ When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ⁵ You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶ You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: ⁷ all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, ⁸ the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. ⁹ O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

5. What's your biggest takeaway from today's study?

DAY 4: The Personal God of Genesis 2

1. Humans fumble around with vain speculations about who or what G(g)od is. A simple reading of the first two chapters of the bible will tell you something very definitive. He is all-mighty (Genesis 1) and *personal* (Genesis 2). Underline every word or phrase that indicates that God is personal:

Genesis 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. ⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. ⁵ When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶ and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—⁷ then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. ⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. ¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." ¹⁸ Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ¹⁹ So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

2. What privileges did God give man? What responsibilities?

Privileges

Responsibilities

3. On a scale of 1-100, how joyous does God seem to be over man and what He's created?

4. What words would you use to describe God's delight in man?

DAY 5: Life in the Garden

1. Some people who've rejected God have done so saying, "I can't believe that God would allow evil and suffering to take place in this world." Genesis 3 will show us where evil originated and how its perpetuated. Evil is continued by Satan and by all of mankind. Re-read Genesis 2, and "circle" or use a highlighter to find the kind of delightful, beautiful and bounteous world God made for man.

What words or phrases struck you from Genesis 2? What did God intend life to be like?

2. When you read Genesis, you make a mistake to read it primarily as a science text book. It should be read more as a *love story*. God created man for the joys of relationship and love. All of creation was like a gigantic Christmas present, given to all of mankind.

3. Put a check next to all the answers you think apply. What does Genesis 1 and 2 remind you of?

Christmas morning when I was a kid

A great family reunion

Going to grandma and grandpa's house for vacation

Paradise

My first trip to Hawaii

Other: _____

Finding Your Place in God's Story

4. The bible is *God's* story, the revelation of Himself and *His plan* for mankind. Unfortunately, every human being is born believing that life is *their story*, with themselves as the star actor. When we get to Genesis 3 and beyond, this contrast will take on "ginormous" proportions with disastrous consequences in every area of life. Below is a chart of God's view of life contrasted with how we see life.

<u>Life</u>	<u>My view</u>	<u>God's view</u>
Central story:	My story	God's story
Story importance:	My small story	God's epic story
Star actor:	Me	God
Bit player:	God	Me
Plot line:	* I get the good life * I live centrally for what makes me feel good.	* I reflect God's glory no matter what kind of life I have at any given moment * I'm made to love Him and people.
Purpose:	I'm shaping my story	I'm showing and shaping God's story

5. What things strike you about this chart?

6. What thoughts are you having about God? About you?