

Genesis 1: The Creation 01-07-18 PM

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1*

Genesis is one of the five books Moses wrote (Mark 12:26). It is both a book of history and a book of law; the very first laws in Genesis are found in Genesis 1, as God gives commandments to nature. There are remarkably important points made in Genesis one; the concepts of light and darkness, of night and day, and of the creation of mankind and the command to subjugate creation. These truths correspond to the coming of Jesus, as seen in the parallel passages in John 1:1-3.

Genesis 1 is also a controversial concept, as many struggle to believe the truth of the statement. Some outrightly reject this chapter (and Scriptures) as a myth. Others see it as possibly a figurative or symbolic passage. Yet by study we can see that not only is there no evidence that it is symbolic, but that it is expected as a matter of faith to be accepted as true. This is stated in Hebrews 11:3 - *By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*

Is the Creation important? We can find in the NT that Jesus is identified on numerous occasions as being the Creator of all things (John 1:3, Heb. 1:2). The miracles He performed often were to control nature to demonstrate this. Thus, the identity of Jesus is within the concept of the power of the Creator. As well, Jesus used the events of creation as the authority for His law on marriage (Matthew 19:4-6, Genesis 2:24). Therefore, we see that the doctrines of Christ are rooted in the creation.

Does the Creation account suggest symbolism? Typically in the Bible symbolic passages introduce themselves as such rather clearly (consider Revelation 4:2 or Daniel 7:1). There is nothing stated in Genesis 1 that suggests it is symbolic. In some instances, symbolic passages are restated by others in a way that explains they are symbolic. For example, when Peter quoted Joel in Acts 2, it makes clear that Joel's language of the last days was symbolic of the time of Pentecost. The account of creation is restated numerous times in the Old and New Testaments (Exodus 31:17, Mark 10:5-6, I Corinthians 15:7). It seems clear in these instances that not only was it not referred to as symbolic, the referees (Moses, Jesus, Paul) believed it to be literal.

Why then would anyone question the creation as literal? Our questions of the creation cannot come from the text. Therefore, they can only come from outside. Of course, we know that there are many different theories that attempt to explain the origin of our world. In the times of Christ and before, it was Paganism that sought to offer the popular pagan alternative. Today that alternative is found in evolution. It is not accepted based on merit or understanding, but on peer pressure or accusations of ignorance¹.

Could the creation account encompass long periods of time? Some suggest that perhaps the account in Genesis is only half-symbolic; that perhaps the days of creation are actually eons of time. They point out

¹ "We believe that the theory of evolution is a foundational scientific truth, one that has stood up to rigorous scrutiny and upon which much of human knowledge and achievement rests. To reject this truth or to treat it as 'one theory among others' is to deliberately embrace scientific ignorance and transmit such ignorance to our children" Clergy Letter Project

that there are passages in the Bible that use day for ages, and statements like 2 Peter 3:8 seem to suggest this possibility. However, it is clear in Genesis 1 that the days are specifically defined as the way we consider a day: *God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day* - Genesis 1:5. Consider that God created plants on day three, but the sun on day 4. How could this situation have existed for eons? The days of creation are the formation of our week; it seems clear in Exodus 20:11 that six literal days are meant.

Why is it so important to believe? What is important about the events in Genesis 1 is not just the doctrinal points in Christianity. It is also the danger of unbelief. The only reason to doubt it is true is the teachings of men; how can one hope to be saved if that sways our belief? As Christians, we are called to believe a number of remarkable, incredible things; That the world was created in six days; That the world was flooded and destroyed; That a nation was decimated by plagues; That a man was born of a virgin; That a man died but then came back to life; that sin can be removed by obedience; that the dead shall live again. Where would we be if we begin disbelief because of the great things we are told by God?