

The Doctrine of CREATION

1) THE UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF THE CREATION ACCOUNT (Genesis 1-3)

- a) **The world and its inhabitants are not the result of chance** - The important words are "**God created**" (1:1). The heavens and the earth (1:1), the animal life (1:20-25), and human beings (1:26-27), are all *specific creations of God Himself*.
- b) **Man is unique among all of God's created works** (1:26) - He is made in "God's image" - "**Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."** He is given dominion over the rest of creation. He is not merely another in the long list of mammals on the earth.
- c) **God is separate from His creation** - That is to say, God's creation is not an extension of His own Being. God is the **Producer** of nature. He is not a part of nature. The creation account will not allow room for any **Pantheistic interpretation** of the nature of God.
- d) **God delegated to created kinds the ability to reproduce their own kind - Genesis 1:11-12** - "**And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. [12] The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good"** (see also 1: 21, 24-25). Each "**kind**" is given the ability to generate seed to regenerate its own kind. This is totally contrary to the entire theory of evolution. Evolution teaches that through two random processes - **natural selection** and the **survival of the fittest** - each kind or species developed into the next higher on the evolutionary scale.
- e) **All that God created was pronounced good (1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31)** - There were no flaws or faults in God's original creation. The world then was different from the world now. There is not an **unbroken chain of progression and improvement from creation until now**.
- f) **Man forfeited much of that goodness through the Fall - Genesis 3:13-19** - "**Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." [14] The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. [15] I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.' [16] To the woman he said, 'I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.' [17] And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; [18] thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. [19] By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."**

This fits with what we all know to be true of our experience in this world. Sin has entered. Redemption has become a necessity.

2) DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF INTERPRETATION - Here are some of the most common proposed by evangelical Christians:

- a) **Original creation of the world out of nothing in 6 twenty-four hour days** - This view holds to a **recent cosmos** (probably between 10 and 20 thousand years of age). This is determined by tracing back the Scriptural genealogies to Adam and adding up the years (usually 40 or so for each generation).

Since the creation days are taken to be six 24 hour days, the age of the earth is also determined (being only six days older than man himself).

- b) **Six day re-creation view** - This view holds that Genesis 1:1 describes **an earlier created (perhaps judged) world**. Genesis 1:2 and following describe the **replenishing of this world**.

In support of this view, we **do know** that at least **some** creation activity **did take place before Genesis 1:1**. Satan, for example, is already active and on the scene. Before he came and tempted Eve he was already rebellious and cast out of heaven with one-third of the angels.

Also, Genesis 1:1-2 describe a world that was "**formless and void**". **Isaiah 45:18** seems to indicate God did not originally create

the world in that state - "For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!): "I am the Lord, and there is no other."

- c) **Six days of Revelation view** - This view is held by Bernard Ramm and others evangelicals. This view holds that the days of Genesis 1 are literal 24 hour days, but they are *days of revelation rather than days of creative activity*. In other words, the events described in each day are the events that God revealed to Moses during that 24 hour period, *not what God actually created during that time*.

There are many Christians who hold to this view.

- d) **The Gap theory** - This view holds that there is a substantial amount of time (perhaps millions of years) *between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2* - **Genesis 1:1-2** - "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. [2] The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."

During this "gap" Satan fell and brought destruction to the world. Much is then made of the second verse, "*The earth was formless and void*" - the word "was" can also be translated "*became*" formless and void.

- 3) **HOW LONG WERE THE "CREATION DAYS"?** - There's much mixed opinion here. For example, how do you have 24 hour solar days when the sun *wasn't even created until the fourth day?* **Genesis 1:14-19** - "And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, [15] and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. [16] And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. [17] And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, [18] to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. [19] And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day."

Also, at least once in the creation narrative the word "day" *is used to describe a longer period of time than 24 hours* - **Genesis 2:4** - "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."

In my opinion the Bible seems to indicate a recent history of man himself (even if some of the names were not included in the genealogies, it seems unlikely that *so many are left out to turn 10 thousand years into multiplied millions*). Scripture, however, is less definite on the exact age of the earth itself. *Is Genesis 1:1 the original creation? Did another world exist before this time?* We aren't told.