

Lesson: Genesis 1-2:3: Everything began “Good” Pt. 2

Biblical Takeaways (1:26-2:3)

1. The “Us” of God
 - a. Day 6 of creation is split into two descriptions, very differently than other days. The first part describes the creation of the animals of the field. On Day 5, God created the animals of the sea. On Day 6, the animals of the land. In so doing, God makes a distinction between the animals and what he intends to make as his crown jewel of creation.
 - b. The Genesis writer makes a distinction between human creatures and all other creatures when he includes the divine comment, “and God said, let us make.” Debates have spiraled over the centuries in regard to whom God was speaking when he said, “us.” The problem of course is that Genesis, and the rest of the Bible, clarifies that there is only one God. If there is only one God, then why would God say, “us?” Believers and scholars have attempted to answer this question in several ways to better understand how the one God, the maker of all things, could speak in the first person plural.
 - i. Literary Plural: Some have argued that the plural is just literary flourish like when one person may say “we” or a person of stature (like a king) might say “we.”
 - ii. The Divine Council: Others have argued that since early Israelites were Henotheistic (believing in one creator God but also believing in many divine beings, like angels), that God was speaking of the divine council: God and the angelic hosts.
 - iii. The Triadic Godhead: Still others argue God was speaking of himself as Father, Son, and Spirit. (This is the view I take).
2. *Imago Dei*
 - a. This phrase is Latin for “the image of God.” Another distinction between humanity and the animals is that God makes them in his image and likeness. He makes both male and female as in his image and likeness.
 - b. The exact understanding of the terms “image” and “likeness” have been debated as well. The term “image” (Heb: selem) is often used to speak of idols (Num 33:52; 2 Kings 11:18). In a way, human beings are the “idols” of God.
3. Rightful Dominion: The initial task of humanity was to act like God in the world. This job will be further clarified with the naming of the animals (Gen 2:19).
4. The Original Blessing: God “blessed” humans to be fruitful and multiply, extending God’s rule over the world. When God finished “all” of what he did, he declared it to be *to’v mo’od*, “very good.” destroyed and all was at peace.
5. The Day of Rest: When God finished the work of creation, God rested. Not because God was tired but because the day was to be set apart. Nothing more in God’s creation was to be done since it was complete, perfect in its order. Thus, the Sabbath day was originally established to be the day on which humanity joined God in rest. It provided humans a way of openly declaring their connection to God as his image.