

Chapter 9: Unraveling the Mystery

In the beginning

We have previously looked at the Genesis creation account and compared this to the work of Steven Hawking's. Now we will return for a deeper look at this text. In your Bible turn to Genesis 1 and read the first chapter.

This is a simplistic account of how God created the Universe and the Earth. However it is worth noting some interesting points about this chapter. Although it appears to be simplistic when compared to a scientific explanation, as we have previously discussed, a more complex scientific analysis does not prove the creation account to be false. More interestingly when you look closer at these verses they hint at the reality that the creation of the Universe by God is more complex than it has been explained within this chapter of Genesis. Consider the following:

In Genesis 1:3-4 it states:

3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

Then in Genesis 1:14-18 we learn the following:

14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;

15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so.

16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.

17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth,

18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.

And God saw that it was good.

Notice how it states that God created light before creating the sun and moon. Therefore we can understand that God did not just create light sources to shine on the earth but that He created light itself. Therefore this account of creation hints at more than the creation of the Earth and the stars but rather our entire universe and realm of existence. God created everything.

It is also important to notice how He created all things. Again referring to verse 3. "*Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.*" This account does not state that God formed the universe with a hand or by using any form of physical interaction. He spoke to make it happen. What a powerful being, this is beyond our comprehension, as it seems incredible to us that there exists someone so powerful that they can will something into existence by uttering a few words. This contradicts our misconceptions of God who is perhaps thought of as having a face, grey beard and hands stretching out from the sky. He is clearly more powerful and ultimately impressive than our imaginations can give Him credit. Notice that in verse 26 the word 'Us' is used when man is created.

Also notice that in verse 2 it states that *'the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.'* We will discuss this in more detail later in this study but it is worth contemplating that God has many manifestations.

The dawn of mankind

Read Genesis 1:26 – Genesis 2.

In this passage we learn how God created mankind and the authority, which He gave us. Notice how in Genesis 2:7 it describes God making man from the dust of the Earth. This is an interesting passage. If we consider that all life is carbon based and that dust itself is mostly carbon this description may be alluding to a greater complexity. All of the elements that make up a person can generally be found in the ground.

Notice that it mentions God breathing into man's nostrils to bring him life. Remember that God is a spiritual being beyond our comprehension. Therefore it is worth noting that in our creation He placed some of His essence into us in the form of His breath. The attention, which God gave to our creation, is more than was given to any other animal or plant. Perhaps this explains how God made us in His own image. (see Genesis 1:26) Also consider that we discussed that God is greater than a being who looks like man. Therefore if God is spirit and we are created in His image, when He breathed into us we can understand that He placed his spirit into our bodies. It is this, which has separated us from every other creature as he has given us great intelligence, the ability to create, and compose thought. In this manner we are created in His image.

The fall of mankind

Read Genesis 3.

This is man's greatest mistake. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command they introduced the knowledge of good and evil into their minds. Because of this they were able to comprehend the difference between them and as a result they were given over to sin. To sin is to commit an act against God's will and instruction. When they had no knowledge of good and evil they could not sin, as they were innocent and oblivious to it. However when they had lost this innocence God punished them and Man was banished from paradise, and more importantly our close relationship with the Creator was lost.

17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.

18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.

19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."

Genesis 3:17-19 (NKJV)

The rise of rebellion

Read Genesis 4. This chapter details the birth of Adam and Eve's first children Cain and Abel.

Notice how rebellion against the will of God begins to manifest itself further. Now that mankind is aware of good and evil Cain chooses to perform an evil act by murdering his brother. It is also worth mentioning that despite the exile from the Garden of Eden that God is still in contact with mankind and has not completely abandoned them. Notice God's words to Cain in Genesis 4:5 "*If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, **but you should rule over it.***" God teaches Cain that if he is not approved he will become compelled to commit an act against God's morality. Therefore knowing this he asks Cain to control his urge to sin, to attempt to resist his desire. Unfortunately for mankind this is now true for us all as we know how to commit sin, therefore we must learn to control its urges. Cain was unable or unwilling to resist and as a result murdered his brother. However from this we learn something interesting. Cain lies to God by pretending not to know what happened to his brother and because of this God revealed that "*the voice of your brothers blood cries out to Me from the ground*". This demonstrates two facts to us. The first that God is all knowing, and the second that even after death in some form we are alive in the sense of consciousness even after we have died. Some places in the Bible mention the blood as being the life force of a person (Genesis 9:4) or creature. Therefore we can reason that when we die we are not completely lost. We will discover more about this subject as we progress through our study.

Read Genesis 6-9 to learn about Noah, The Ark, and The Flood then return to this page to consider some interesting observations.

Notice that in Genesis 6:3 it is mentioned that God will not strive with mankind forever because he is '*flesh*'. This is an observation and the realisation of our greatest weakness, as it is the desires of our body, which tempt us into sin. Therefore God sets the limit of our lives to 120 years. Of course you will have read that there are exceptions to this rule. Noah is one example of this. However it is worth noting that he was already past this age when God set this limit for us. There is also another explanation for the age difference between the limit set in verse 3 and the age of some of the people who are described in the Bible. All of these people had closely interacted with God. Therefore He desired them to live longer to fulfil His purposes.

Regarding Genesis 6:5-6 notice the shift from good to evil which most people had made. It mentions that mankind's thoughts were constantly evil. Therefore the knowledge of good and evil had caused many to choose to practice evil rather than good. It was this choice which caused God to regret creating man. In order to subdue this rebellion God sent the flood to cleanse the earth from evil. However in Genesis 8:21 after the flood notice how God promised to never flood the entire earth again, and gave mankind a second chance. He blessed and commanded them to multiply across the earth to begin a new civilisation.

Read Genesis 10-11. In the description of the Tower of Babel account it is evident that mankind was quite advanced. It seems that it was more advanced than God deemed to be correct. Therefore He divided the people by introducing different languages.

It is also worth noting that this event has been documented in the texts of other cultures, which adds validity to the biblical account. Graham Hancock detailed in his book *Fingerprints of the Gods* a similar tale, which had been passed down throughout the Mexican civilisations that parallels the Tower of Babel account in Genesis. Consider the following:

“Diego de Duran, a conscientious and courageous collector of indigenous traditions, was yet another Franciscan who fought to recover the lost knowledge of the past. He visited Cholula in AD 1585, a time of rapid and catastrophic change. There he interviewed a venerated elder of the town, said to have been more than one hundred years old, who told him this story about the making of the great ziggurat.”

“In the beginning, before the light of the sun had been created, this place, Cholula, was in obscurity and darkness; all was plain, without hill or elevation, encircled in every part by water, without tree or created thing. Immediately after the light of the sun arose to the east there appeared gigantic men of deformed stature who possessed the land. Enamoured of the light and beauty of the sun they determined to build a tower so high that its summit should reach the sky. Having collected materials for the purpose they found a very adhesive clay and bitumen with which they speedily commenced to build the tower... And having reared it to the greatest possible altitude, so that it reached the sky, the Lord of the Heavens, enraged, said to the inhabitants of the sky, ‘Have you observed how they of the earth have built a high and haughty tower to mount hither, being enamoured of the light of the sun and his beauty? Come and confound them, because it is not right that they of the earth, living in the flesh should mingle with us.’ Immediately the inhabitants of the sky sallied forth like flashes of lightning; they destroyed the edifice and divided and scattered its builders to all parts of the earth.” Hancock (1996) p122 - 123

Now re-read the Tower of Babel account in Genesis and notice the similarities between this and the account recorded by Diego de Duran.

Mankind’s ability to grow, learn, and create reflect the characteristics of God. It is worth considering that when He states that we were created in His image that this relates to our intelligence and creative ability rather than our physical attributes, because it is our creativity and ability to shape our environment that separates us from the animal kingdom and reflects His character.

A Great Nation

This part of the study will be mostly unguided. Read Genesis 12-50 to complete the book and gain the background knowledge which is required to understand the latter parts of this study. You can find some important references below if you prefer not to read all of the suggested material.

- Genesis 12 – Abram is commanded by God to leave his country to journey to a land which He will show to him, and there He will make his descendants into a great nation
- Genesis 15-16 - Abram seeks an heir
- Genesis 17 – God makes a covenant with Abram and changes his name to Abraham

- Genesis 18:17-19 – God’s plan and purpose for Abraham
- Genesis 21 – Abraham and Sarah are given a son
- Genesis 22 – God tests Abraham.
- Genesis 25-26 – Abraham dies and Isaac inherits his birthright
- Genesis 27-28 – Jacob gains the inheritance
- Genesis 32 – Jacob’s name is changed to Israel
- Genesis 37 – Joseph’s account begins
- Genesis 41 – Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams and is given governance over the land of Egypt
- Genesis 46 – Israel moves to Egypt
- Genesis 50 –Israel dies and Joseph continues to lead Egypt and his people

It is now apparent to us that God formed a plan for the people of Israel. Even though Adam and Eve had broken His command and eaten the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil He never abandoned mankind. He chose Abraham as a man of faith to remain blameless and to become the father of many nations.

Joseph’s recorded history in Genesis teaches us that God had a plan for him. The evil that his brothers did was used by God to execute His plans both for Joseph, his brothers and the people of Israel, and as we will soon discover this was the first step of a much greater plan.