**Genesis – Chapter 1**

**The History of Creation (Gen 2:4-9; Job 38:4-11; John 1:1-5)**

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

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.

5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."

7 Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.

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.

19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20 Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens."

21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.

30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so.

31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

**THE PRIMEVAL EVENTS (1:1-11:26)**

**A. THE CREATION (1:1-2:3)**

The account of Creation is the logical starting point for Genesis, for it explains the beginning of the universe.

These verses have received much attention in connection with science; this is to be expected.

But the passage is a theological treatise as well, for it lays a foundation for the rest of the Pentateuch.

In writing this work for Israel, Moses wished to portray God as the Founder and Creator of all life.

The account shows that the God who created Israel is the God who created the world and all who are in it.

Thus the theocracy is founded on the sovereign God of Creation.

That nation, her Law, and her customs and beliefs all go back to who God is.

Israel would here learn what kind of God was forming them into a nation.

**The implications of this creation account.**

**First, everything that exists must be under God's control**

The Creation must be in subjection to the Creator.

Forces of nature, enemies, creatures and objects that became pagan deities - none of these would pose a threat to the servants of the living God.

**Second, it reveals the basis of the Law**

If indeed God was before all things and made all things, how foolish it would be to have any other gods before Him!

There were none.

If indeed God made man in His image to represent Him, how foolish it would be, to make an image of God!

If indeed God set aside one day for rest from His work, should not man who is walking with God follow Him? The commandments find their rationale here.

**Third, it shows that God is a redeeming God**

It records how He brought the cosmos out of chaos, turned darkness into light, made divisions between them, transformed cursing into blessing, and moved from what was evil and darkness to what was holy.

This parallels the work of God in Exodus, which records His redeeming Israel by destroying the Egyptian forces of chaos.

The prophets and the apostles saw here a paradigm of God's redemptive activities.

Ultimately He who caused light to shine out of darkness made His light shine in the hearts of believers (2 Cor 4:6) so that they become new creations (2 Cor 5:17).

**What about those who do not believe in any god?**

**7 theories on the origin of life**

The answer to the origin of life remains unknown, but here are scientist’s best bets

The origin of life on Earth began more than 3 billion years ago, evolving from the most basic of microbes into a dazzling array of complexity over time.

But how did the first organisms on the only known home to life in the universe develop from the primordial soup?

Science remains undecided and conflicted as to the exact origin of life, also known as abiogenesis.

Even the very definition of life is contested and rewritten, with one study published in the Journal of Biomolecular Structure and Dynamics, suggesting uncovering 123 different published definitions.

Although science still seems unsure, here are some of the many different scientific theories on the origin of life on Earth.

**(1) It Started with an electric spark**

Lightning may have provided the spark needed for life to begin.

Electric sparks can generate amino acids and sugars from an atmosphere loaded with water, methane, ammonia and hydrogen, as was shown in the famous Miller-Urey experiment in 1952, according to Scientific American.

The experiment's findings suggested that lightning might have helped create the key building blocks of life on Earth in its early days.

Over millions of years, larger and more complex molecules could form.

Although research since then has revealed the early atmosphere of Earth was actually hydrogen-poor, scientists have suggested that volcanic clouds in the early atmosphere might have held methane, ammonia and hydrogen and been filled with lightning as well, according to the University of California.

**(2) Molecules of life met on clay**

The first molecules of life might have met on clay, according to an idea elaborated by organic chemist Alexander Graham Cairns-Smith at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. Cairns-Smith proposed in his 1985 controversial book “Seven Clues to the Origin of Life'', that clay crystals preserve their structure as they grow and stick together to form areas exposed to different environments and trap other molecules along the way and organise them into patterns much like our genes do now.

The main role of DNA is to store information on how other molecules should be arranged. Genetic sequences in DNA are essentially instructions on how amino acids should be arranged in proteins.

Cairns-Smith suggests that mineral crystals in clay could have arranged organic molecules into organized patterns.

After a while, organic molecules took over this job and organized themselves.

Although Cairns-Smith's theory certainly gave scientists food for thought in the 1980s, it has still not been widely accepted by the scientific community.

**(3) Life began at deep-sea vents**

The deep-sea vent theory suggests that life may have begun at submarine hydrothermal vents spewing elements key to life, such as carbon and hydrogen-, according to the journal Nature Reviews Microbiology.

Hydrothermal vents can be found in the darkest depths of the ocean floors, typically on diverging continental plates, according to the Natural History Museum.

These vents erupt fluid which is superheated by the Earth’s core as it passes up through the crust, before being ejected at the vets.

During its journey through the crust it collects dissolved gases and minerals, such as carbon and hydrogen.

Their rocky nooks could then have concentrated these molecules together and provided mineral catalysts for critical reactions.

Even now, these vents, rich in chemical and thermal energy, sustain vibrant ecosystems.

Abiogenesis by way of hydrothermal vents continues to be investigated as a plausible cause of life on Earth.

In 2019, scientists at University College London, successfully created protocells (non-living structures that help scientists understand the origins of life) under similar hot, alkaline environmental conditions to hydrothermal vents.

**(4) Life had a chilly start**

Ice might have covered the oceans 3 billion years ago and facilitated the birth of life.

"Key organic compounds thought to be important in the origin of life are more stable at lower temperatures,” Jeffrey Bada at the University of California, told New Scientist.

At normal temperatures these compounds, such as simple sets of amino acids, are sparsely populated in water, but when frozen become concentrated and facilitate the emergence of life, according to Bada’s work published in the journal Icarus.

Ice also might have protected fragile organic compounds in the water below from ultraviolet light and destruction from cosmic impacts.

The cold might have also helped these molecules to survive longer, enabling key reactions to happen.

**(5) DNA formation**

Nowadays DNA needs proteins in order to form, and proteins require DNA to form, so how could these have formed without each other?

The answer may be RNA, which can store information like DNA, serve as an enzyme like proteins, and help create both DNA and proteins, according to the journal Molecular Biology of the Cell.

Later DNA and proteins succeeded this "RNA world," because they are more efficient.

RNA still exists and performs several functions in organisms, including acting as an on-off switch for some genes.

The question still remains how RNA got here in the first place.

Some scientists think the molecule could have spontaneously arisen on Earth, while others say that was very unlikely to have happened.

**(6) Life had simple beginnings**

Instead of developing from complex molecules such as RNA, life might have begun with smaller molecules interacting with each other in cycles of reactions.

These might have been contained in simple capsules akin to cell membranes, and over time more complex molecules that performed these reactions better than the smaller ones could have evolved, scenarios dubbed "metabolism-first" models, as opposed to the "gene-first" model of the "RNA world" hypothesis.

**(7) Life was brought here from somewhere else**

Perhaps life did not begin on Earth at all, but was brought here from elsewhere in space, a notion known as panspermia, according to NASA.

For instance, rocks regularly get blasted off Mars by cosmic impacts, and a number of Martian meteorites have been found on Earth that some researchers have controversially suggested brought microbes over here, potentially making us all Martians originally.

Other scientists have even suggested that life might have hitchhiked on comets from other star systems.

However, even if this concept were true, the question of how life began on Earth would then only change to how life began elsewhere in space.

**Commentary**

**1:1-2**

These verses have traditionally been understood as referring to the actual beginning of matter, a Creation out of nothing and therefore part of day one.

But the vocabulary and grammar of this section require a closer look.

The motifs and the structure of the Creation account are introduced in the first two verses.

That the universe is God's creative work is perfectly expressed by the statement God created the heavens and the earth.

**“bara” = created**

**It can mean – created out of nothing – and – it means that what was formed was new and perfect**

**The word is used throughout the Bible only with God as its subject.**

But 1:2 describes a chaos: there was waste and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep.

The clauses in verse 2 are apparently circumstantial to verse 3, telling the world's condition when God began to renovate it.

It was a chaos of wasteness, emptiness, and darkness.

**Such conditions would not result from God's creative work (bara°); rather, in the Bible they are symptomatic of sin and are coordinate with Judgment.**

Moreover, God's Creation by decree begins in verse 3, and the elements found in verse 2 are corrected in Creation, beginning with light to dispel the darkness.

The expression formless and empty (tohû wabohû) seems also to provide an outline for chapter Gen 1, which describes God's bringing shape and then fullness to the formless and empty earth.

**Two main possibilities:**

**Some have seen a middle stage of Creation here, that is, an unfinished work of Creation (v. 2) that was later developed (vv. 3-25) into the present form.**

But this cannot be sustained by the syntax or the vocabulary.

**Others have seen a "gap" between the first two verses**, allowing for the fall of Satan and entrance of sin into the world that caused the chaos.

It was by the Spirit that the Lord God sovereignly created everything that exists (v. Genesis 1:2 b).

In the darkness of the chaos the Spirit of God moved to prepare for the effectual creative word of God.

**1:3-5**

**The pattern for each of the days of Creation:**

**(a) the creative word**

**(b) the report of its effect**

**(c) God's evaluation of it as "good"**

**(d) at times the sovereign naming**

**(e) the numbering of each day**

**Regarding the word day** (yôm) several interpretations have been suggested:

**(1) The days of Creation refer to extended geological ages prior to man's presence on earth.**

**(2) The days are 24-hour periods in which God revealed His creative acts.**

**(3) They are literal 24-hour days of divine activity.**

In favor of the third view is the fact that the term yôm with an ordinal (first, second, etc.) adjective means 24-hour days wherever this construction occurs in the Old Testament.

Also the normal understanding of the fourth commandment (**Ex 20:11**) would suggest this interpretation.

**Day One**

**God's first creative word produced light.**

The elegance and majesty of Creation by decree is a refreshing contrast with the bizarre creation stories of the pagans.

Here is demonstrated the power of God's word.

It was this word that motivated Israel to trust and obey Him.

The light was natural, physical light.

Its creation was an immediate victory because it dispelled darkness.

**Light and darkness in the Bible are also symbolic of good and evil.**

**Here began God's work which will culminate in the age to come when there will be no darkness (Rev 22:5).**

Israel would know that God is Light - and that the Truth and the Way are with Him.

In the darkness of Egypt (Ex 10:21-24) they had light; and in the deliverance they followed His light (Ex 13:21).

**Day Two**

**1:6-8**

On the second day God separated the atmospheric waters from the terrestrial waters by an arching expanse, the sky.

This suggests that previously there had been a dense moisture enshrouding the earth.

**God's work involves making divisions and distinctions.**

**Day Three**

**1:9-13**

Dry land with its vegetation was formed.

Vegetation is part of the ordered universe of the true God.

There is no cyclical, seasonal myth to explain it.

God started it, once and for all.

Moreover, while pagans believed in deities of the deep as forces to be reckoned with, this account shows that God controls the boundaries of the seas (cf. Job 38:8-11).

**Day Four**

**1:14-19**

Day four included the sun to rule (govern, v. 16) the day and the moon and the stars to rule the night.

Either these were created with apparent age, or they had been previously created and were then made visible on the earth on days one and two when God separated light from darkness and waters above from water below.

**These heavenly bodies were to serve as signs for seasons and days and years (v. 14).**

These terms, as well as "day" and "night" in verse 5, are meaningless without the existence of the sun and the rotation of the planets.

**In astrology unbelievers use stars and planets for guidance, but the Bible says they merely display the handiwork of God (Ps 19:1).**

What folly to follow astrological charts of the Babylonians or worship the sun god in Egypt; rather, one should trust the One who made these objects in the heavens.

However, many humans repeatedly reject the Creator to worship the Creation (Rom 1:25).

**Day Five**

**1:20-23**

The great creatures of the sea and the air were created on the fifth day.

**In this section (v. 21) is the second use of bara° ("created"; cf. v. 1).**

Great creatures of the deep, worshiped as dragons and monsters in the ancient world, were nothing more than creations by Almighty God.

Moreover, fertility of life comes from the blessing of the true God (v. 22).

**Day Six**

**1:24-31**

Day six was Creation's climax for it included mankind.

**Though man was the last creature mentioned in the account, he did not evolve; he was created.**

Human life was created in ("in essence as") the image of God (v. 27).

**This image was imparted only to humans (2:7).**

"Image" (selem) is used figuratively here, for God does not have a human form.

**Being in God's image means that humans share, though imperfectly and finitely, in God's nature, that is, in His communicable attributes (life, personality, truth, wisdom, love, holiness, justice), and so have the capacity for spiritual fellowship with Him.**

**God's purpose in creating human life in His image was functional: man is to rule or have dominion (1:26,28).**

God's dominion was presented by a "representative."

(Egyptian kings later, in idolatry, did a similar kind of thing: they represented their rule or dominion by making representative statues of themselves.)

**However, because of sin all things are not under man's dominion (Heb 2:8).**

**But Jesus Christ will establish dominion over all the earth (Heb 2:5-8) at His second coming.**

God pronounced His blessing on the male and the female

**Creation Mandate:**

**(1) Be fruitful and multiply**

**(2) Replenish/fill the earth**

**(3) Subdue the earth**

**(4) Have dominion over the earth**

**Day Seven – 2:1-3**

1 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.

2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

**2:1-3.**

The seventh day was the day of rest, the Sabbath.

The structure of verses 2 and 3 in the Hebrew is well ordered in its clauses with parallel emphases on the adjective seventh.

**The number "seven" often represents the covenant (the verb "swear" is related etymologically); thus it is no surprise that the Sabbath became the sign of God's covenant at Sinai (Ex 31:13,17).**

**God blessed the seventh day and made it holy (sanctified it) because it commemorated the completion or cessation of His creative work.**

God's Sabbath rest became a predominant motif of Scripture.

Here before the Fall it represented the perfect Creation, sanctified and at rest.

After the Fall this rest became a goal to be sought.

The establishment of theocratic rest in the land, whether by Moses or by Joshua at the Conquest, demanded faith and obedience.

Out of the chaos and darkness of the pagan world God brought His people, teaching them the truth, guaranteeing them victory over all powers in heaven and earth, commissioning them to be His representatives, and promising them theocratic rest.