

CHAPTER FOUR: CREATION

Creation in General

1. In the beginning it pleased the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – to create the world and all things in it in six days. All was very good. In this way God glorified His eternal power, wisdom and goodness.

(a) **Time** of creation: “in the beginning” – before anything else existed, because God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing by His word (Genesis 1:1, Psalm 33:6, 90:12, 148:5, John 17:5, Hebrews 11:3).

(b) **Author** of creation: “the triune God” – the Father (1 Corinthians 8:6), the Son (John 1:2-3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2), the Spirit (see Genesis 1:2, Job 26:13, 33:4, Psalm 104:30).

(c) **Purpose** of creation: to glorify God’s “eternal power, wisdom and goodness” – God does everything for His glory (Romans 11:36, Revelation 4:11). That God created everything in the universe by a word shows His power (Psalm 33:6-9, Jeremiah 10:12, Romans 1:20). That everything, both small and great, perfectly fits together just as He purposed, shows His wisdom (Psalm 104:24, Proverbs 3:19, Jeremiah 10:12). That God made so many things in such a pleasing variety of colour, shape and size shows His goodness.

(d) **Extent** of creation: “the world and all things in it” (Genesis 1:1, John 1:2, Acts 17:24, Colossians 1:16).

(e) **Duration** of creation: “six days” (Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11).

(f) **Result** of creation: “all was very good” (Genesis 1:31, Ecclesiastes 7:29) – Everything was in perfect order just as God had planned it. Sin came into the world from outside.

Questions: What about the theory of evolution? Is Genesis 1-2 literally true? Note the following passages that demand the historical accuracy of these first chapters of the Bible – Exodus 20:11, Matthew 19:4-5, Luke 3:38, John 5:17, 1 Corinthians 11:8-9, 15:45, Hebrews 4:4, 11:3, James 3:9, 2 Peter 3:5.

Creation of Man

2. All creatures were made by God, the last to be fashioned being man and woman who received dominion over all the other creatures on earth. God gave man and woman rational and immortal souls, and in all respects fitted them for a life in harmony with Himself. They were created in His image, possessing knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. The divine law was written in their hearts and they had power to obey it fully. Yet, being left to the liberty of their own mutable wills, transgression of the law was a possibility.

(a) **Position**: As the last of God’s created works, man is the supreme creation. Man has been given dominion (= power to exercise control) over the rest of creation (Genesis 1:26,28-30).

(b) **Nature**: Man is made of two aspects, body and soul (Matthew 10:28, 26:41, 1 Corinthians 7:1,34, 2 Corinthians 12:2, James 2:26). This is most clearly seen at death when the body goes to the ground and the soul/spirit enters the intermediate state. Man’s body was formed “of dust from the ground” and God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (Genesis 2:7). It is as such a “living being” that God has fitted us to have fellowship with Him. Our bodies are good, and we are to glorify Him in our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:20). It will be unnatural for us to be without our bodies (2 Corinthians 5:1-5), and this is why God will give us a new resurrection body.

(c) **Likeness:** We are created in His image (same meaning as the word ‘likeness’, Genesis 1:26-27). An image of something has a visible resemblance of that thing. It is interesting that while we are forbidden to make any images of God, man is a living image of Him. The greatest problem with an idol is that it is lifeless (see Psalm 115:3-8). There are at least 3 things included in the image – knowledge, righteousness and holiness (see Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10). Like God, man is a *thinking* being (rational), so able to communicate and have fellowship; and man is a *moral* being, responsible for his actions. Fallen man remains in the image of God (Genesis 5:1-3, 1 Corinthians 11:7, James 3:9) although it is a distorted image (as in a broken mirror) and needs renewal.

(d) **Freedom:** They had God’s law “written in their hearts”, a blessing Christians receive when they are renewed (Jeremiah 31:33). It means that they had a natural understanding of the law and a love for it. Yet God did not so create man in a state where sin was an impossibility; man was free to sin. How such a good and holy man could choose to sin we cannot understand, but we know it happened.

The Probation of Man

3. The law of God in general was written in the hearts of the first human pair, but at the same time they were placed under a special probation not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their happiness and fellowship with God depended upon their yielding obedience to His will, as also did the continuance of their dominion over the creatures.

Man was given a specific test as to his obedience to God. “The tree of the knowledge of good and evil” was in itself no different from any other tree, except that God had said ‘Do not eat from it’ (Genesis 2:16-17). “Death” would be the result of disobedience, and we assume therefore that ‘life’ would have been the result of continued obedience to the end of the period of probation. The fullness of that life is what we shall experience in glory, with no possibility of choosing sin. Our Saviour Jesus was also put under probation in His earthly ministry, and particularly in the 40 days of temptation in the wilderness.