

**Things Written In Earlier Times
(What NT writers taught from the OT Events)
Lessons from the creation (Part two)**

Intro: Today there is a lot of skepticism about the creation account of Genesis one and two. Those embracing a secular worldview would simply dismiss it as a myth created by ancient Israel to explain their origins and incompatible with modern “science.”

But the Christian has a perspective from which to view the creation account. It is the testimony of one who was there when all things were made—Jesus. Jesus not only referred to the creation account in Genesis one and two, but also sent the Holy Spirit to guide His apostles in their use of this text as well. What did they say about the creation account? What lessons did they teach from it? So tonight as we continue our series “Things Written in Earlier Times” we want to examine what the NT writers said about the creation. What lessons did they teach from it?

In our lesson last week we noticed that...

The NT writers affirmed that accepting the creation account is a matter of “faith.”

According to the Hebrew writer it involves things “not seen” which require that we put our faith in the word of God.

The NT writers consistently affirm the truth that the God of Israel created the heavens and the earth as Genesis 1 declares.

Like Moses, they associated the God who redeemed Israel from Egyptian bondage with the one who created the world. His revelation to them as “I am” reveals that He was the self-existing one who made all things.

The NT writers affirm that all things that presently exist were created by God through the Word who became flesh as Jesus Christ.

In view of their understanding of Jesus as God’s eternal Son they affirmed His presence and participation in the existence of all things created.

The NT writers also acknowledged the details of God’s creative activity recorded in Genesis. They not only affirmed that God created the world; but they reference the specific acts of creation recorded in Genesis 1 & 2.

They refer to...

The creation of light out of darkness

The creation of Adam from the dust of the earth

The fact that humans were made in the image of God

That the first humans were made male and female

That the first humans were made in near proximity to the beginning of all things

That God rested from His creative work on the seventh day

And so as the NT writers reference the creation account, they accept at face value God's actions as reported by Moses. They are a tacit endorsement of the truth of all that God did in the creation of the universe. And we considered briefly some of the implied uses of these texts in the NT. But let's finally consider...

The NT writers based on the Genesis account reveal the powerful implications of the creation account.

The creation account implies that we were made for a relationship with God.

Paul urges the Athenians to think about the nature of God by looking at their own nature. But then he makes clear that we were made by the Creator for a relationship with Him. Paul wanted the Athenians to see that the Creator made all people from one with a common purpose: *"that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;"* (Acts 17:27) This statement defines the meaning and purpose of our existence as God's creation—to seek Him, to find Him, to know Him, and to live eternally with Him.

The creation account implies that the Creator alone should be worshipped.

In the Revelation the hosts of heaven declare God's unique claim upon the worship of His creation.

"Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created." (Revelation 4:11)

God alone is the object of worship because He alone stands above the whole created universe. And in addition they brook no rival to the true Creator, showing that the worship of any other god is a rejection of the true God and constitutes sinful idolatry. Having shown that there is abundant evidence for God's existence, His unique nature, and power, Paul exposes the sin of idolatry.

"For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures." (Romans 1:21–23)

In the Revelation an angel appeals to the unrepentant world:

"and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

(Revelation 14:7)

Because God is creator we should worship, fear, and give glory to Him.

The creation account implies that the Creator should be obeyed.

From the beginning of creation obedience to God was never negotiable. The first words of God to His human creation was an imperative blessing.

“And God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”” (Genesis 1:28)

When he placed Adam and Eve in the Garden he once more set the boundaries of their blessing and curse.

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.”” (Genesis 2:16–17)

God’s right to command, to bless and curse was a given to Jesus and His apostles. They repeatedly emphasize the human obligation to obey Him. They repeatedly affirm his right to bless and curse.

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.”
(Matthew 7:21)

The creation account implies that the Creator alone has the right to define what is moral and what is immoral.

Just as God had set the boundaries of humans in the creational blessing and in the garden, the NT writers believed that the Lord defines what was right and wrong, what activities are approved or not approved. I submit that morality cannot be defined separate and apart from the existence of a Creator.

When the scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus about whether it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause, he appealed to the created order for answer.

“And He answered and said, “Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, ‘FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH’? “Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”” (Matthew 19:4–6)

Relying upon the statements of Genesis one and two, Jesus reinforced the permanence of marriage by affirming that divorce and remarriage, except for fornication results in adultery.

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”” (Matthew 19:9)

The point here is that His teaching is rooted in the constitution of marriage from the creation. Because God is the author of marriage, He has the right who has the right to marry and to regulate the conduct of those in it..

The creation account implies that God is sovereign over the nations of the earth.

The Biblical writers affirm that all mankind and every nation proceed from the first human pair.

“and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;” (Acts 17:26–27)

Though Paul acknowledged the national divisions mentioned in Scripture, his language protests against any concept of racism, the belief that some people groups are not fully human.

Moreover he shows that God sovereignly rules over the nations determining how they arise, how long they exist, and over what territory they exert their rule.

The implication of creation is that all the nations are subject to God’s sovereign rule and purpose, and that He has the right and power to bring them into existence and to remove them from existence as He chooses based on how they respond to His creative purposes.

The creation account implies that the Creator has the right to judge His creation.

Paul showed the Athenians that final judgment was the implied right of the Creator.

“Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”” (Acts 17:30–31)

It is ironic that people today seem quite earnest and zealous about defending their rights; but what about the “rights” of the Creator? How diligent are our fellow-citizens to give Him His due as creator—the right to be loved and glorified by His creation, to be worshipped, to be obeyed, to determine what is moral and true, to rule over what He has made, to hold us accountable. We could wish that people were as concerned about preserving the “rights” of God as they are their own “rights!”

Conclusion: In future lessons we’ll be able to see how Jesus and His apostles marshaled the truth of the creation account and other OT accounts again and again in order to instruct God’s people.

What strikes me about all these references is that Jesus and His apostles did not regard Genesis one and two as a mere myth, but an account of what the Creator actually did in the creation of the heavens and earth. They treat Genesis one and two as foundational truth with implications for the whole creation for all time.

By faith I accept the worldview implied by the Genesis account and Jesus' endorsement of it. After all, He was there!