

“The God of Creation”

By Pastor Trent Boedicker

Text: Genesis 1:1-31

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Introduction

What do these three images have in common?

- *The Great Pyramid of Giza*
- *The Golden Gate Bridge*
- *The International Space Station*

They are among the most spectacular engineering accomplishments of all time. It took incredible skill, careful planning, and a tremendous amount of work to build them.

The Great Pyramid is one of the oldest wonders of the ancient world. Towering 140 feet above the Egyptian desert, it was the tallest man-made structure for nearly 4,000 years. It took 2 million blocks of stone to complete, some of them weighing as much as 80 tons. Experts are still baffled by how the workers managed to haul such a vast amount of building material to the site, or how the individual stones were aligned perfectly into place. It is a mystery we may never solve.

The Golden Gate Bridge, in San Francisco, is also an impressive feat. It has been called “The bridge that couldn’t be built” because of the tremendous challenges that were involved. The span of water they needed to cross was only one obstacle. There were also strong winds to contend with and regular earthquakes hindering their progress. Eleven people died during construction. But finally, after pouring a huge amount of concrete and stretching miles of steel cable, the bridge was opened in May of 1937.

If we think that’s amazing, imagine what it took to construct the International Space Station 220 miles about the earth. The project involved a team of 100,000 people from 15 countries, (some of the most brilliant men and women in the world). It took a budget of \$100 billion. They couldn’t run to the hardware if they needed a few extra bolts. Components were launched into space. The astronauts who assembled the pieces had bigger concerns than dropping a hammer or keeping their balance on a ladder. One tiny rip in their space suit would mean instant death. But

today it orbits the earth housing a small crew. (inspired by article: <http://www.cnn.com/travel/article/engineering-feats/index.html>)

These were huge projects, that took real ingenuity and muscle to complete. But as impressive as they might seem, we're going to talk about something far more spectacular and amazing this morning: the creation of the universe. Who could have drawn the blueprints for a job so great as this? Who could have laid the foundations or stretched out the heavens? Who could hung the stars in place? Not us. We don't even know how many galaxies there are. Every time we build a larger telescope, we realize just how little of the universe we have seen. Only a being of infinite wisdom and unimaginable power could accomplish a work so great.

Our passage this morning, in Genesis 1, introduces to the God who created the heavens and the earth. We learn, first of all,

Creation has a beginning. (v.1)

Verse 1 tells us, *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."* It may be difficult for us to imagine, but the world we know has not always existed. If we were able to travel back in time, far enough, through ages of history, we would reach a point before civilization... before the first human beings opened their eyes... before any living creatures roamed the earth... before the mountains were formed or oceans were poured... before planets circled in orbit around the sun... before there was a single star shimmering in the sky. When there was nothing, just a dark and empty void. Then suddenly, with a burst of light, the universe was born.

What happened? There are a lot of theories, and speculation, that have been offered. Some people talk about a big bang, a giant explosion that flung the stars and planets across the cosmos. Even if that were the case it wouldn't really answer the more important question – "who lit the fuse?" Scripture shows us that it was God who called the universe into being. With his thunderous voice he spoke: "Let there be light," and there was light."

Psalm 33:6–9 reads, *"The heavens were made by the word of the Lord, and all the stars, by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the water of the sea into a heap; he puts the depths into storehouses. Let the whole earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and it came into being; he commanded, and it came into existence."* (CSB)

There is a principle that is always true in our world: something doesn't come from nothing. I don't just walk into the kitchen and, "POOF," out of thin air a homemade apple pie appears on the counter in front of me. If there is apple pie on the kitchen counter, it's because someone put it there. It was probably my wife who spent the afternoon baking: peeling apples, and making crust, mixing together brown sugar and cinnamon. The outcome of her work is this beautiful pie I can't wait to taste. --- Or, there could be a different cause. Community Market may have a sale on frozen pies. Either way, I'm happy. But pies don't bake themselves, it would be wonderful if they did, but they have to come from somewhere; someone prepared it. The same is true of the universe: it didn't just appear out of nowhere. Something, or someone, is responsible for bringing the world into existence.

Christian author, Charles Baker, explains: “Everything which has a beginning was produced by a sufficient cause. The Universe has had a beginning, and therefore must have had a cause sufficient to bring it into existence.” (*A Dispensational Theology*, p. 113)

Only God has existed through all eternity. He was there before time began. He is the author of history, the maker of all things, the giver of life who brought the cosmos into being with his mighty power. The truly amazing thing is that long before you and I arrived on the scene, he was thinking of us. We’ll talk more about that in a few minutes.

Creation had a beginning, but it also has design. (v.2-25)

As we continue reading in Genesis 1, we see the power of God at work. Look at verse 2...

The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

As we make our way through the chapter, it becomes clear God has a plan. His movements are not random or haphazard, but everything he does is intentional. He starts with nothing, but with each successive day he prepares a perfect home for humanity.

At first, we are told, the world was formless and void. Some commentators believe there may have been an original work of creation that fell into ruin when Satan was expelled from heaven. The passage doesn’t say that, but it’s a possibility. We do see the work of God bringing order out of chaos. During the first three days, he gives form to the earth, and on days 4, 5, and 6 he fills it.

- On the first day he shapes creation by separating light from darkness, distinguishing day from night.
- On the second day he forms the sky, separating the waters on the surface of the earth from water that fills the clouds.
- On the third day he separates dry land from the sea, causing the earth to produce plants and trees, and all kinds of vegetation.
- On the fourth day, the Lord begins filling earth. He places lights in the sky above: the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night, dotting the heavens with constellations. Commentators wrestle with how to interpret these verses (14-17). If there has been light since day 1, how is it that we are only now introduced to the stars. One explanation is that while the stars had been present since day 1, they were obscured by vapor and clouds. Only now do they become clearly visible from the surface of the earth. (*see Sailhamer, J. H, Expositor’s Bible Dictionary: Genesis, p.33*)

- On the fifth day God calls forth living creatures in the sky and sea. All kinds of fish swim through the oceans, and all kinds of birds fly through the air.
- Finally, on day 6 God fills the land with animals, starting with the beasts of the earth, and then, as the pinnacle of his creation he forms humans in his image.
- On the seventh day he rests from his labor, not for his own benefit, but for ours as an example to us.

We have all kinds of questions as we read through the chapter, and we don't have the time to address all of them this morning. But something we see very clearly, is that there is an order to what God creates. Throughout the passage, the Lord examines his work, and we are told repeatedly "God saw that it was good." Verse 31 says, "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good." It wasn't just "okay," or "it will do." Everything was exactly as it was meant to be. The world was in a state conducive for life and beneficial for humanity.

Even today, we see evidence of God's design all around us. The more we learn about the universe, the more we realize that we're not here by accident. Consider the variables of our solar system that needed to line up perfectly in order for the earth support life. There are different types of stars throughout the galaxy, some larger than others, some burning with more intensity and heat. According to a NASA website, the hottest stars reach 100 thousand degrees Fahrenheit on their surface, or 200 million degrees at their core. How hot is our sun? It's not the hottest, about 10 thousand degrees Fahrenheit on the surface. If our sun was larger or smaller, producing greater or less heat, life on earth could not exist. The placement of the earth also had to be just right. If our planet were moved a few million miles in one direction or the other (which isn't all that much when we begin navigating the galaxy) the glaciers would melt, carbon dioxide and water vapor would pour into the atmosphere, and the temperature would be too intense to support life. If the earth was a few million miles further than the sun, the planet would be covered in ice, and the temperature would be too cool to support life. (see <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/review/dr-marc-space/stars.html> and <http://www.icr.org/article/planet-earth-plan-or-accident/>)

One author writes, "If mountains were more numerous or had much higher elevations, eternal snows would pile up until most of the water would exist as ice. If the atmosphere were less dense we would be bombarded daily by millions of meteorites which now burn up in their passage through the air. It is very difficult to believe that blind chance could have produced this intricate balance in all realms of nature" (Baker, "A Dispensational Theology," p.122-123)

Everywhere we look, there is evidence of design.

Creation had a beginning, it has design, and it also has a purpose. (v.26-31)

Elsewhere, in Scripture, we are told that the universe exists to bring glory to God. **Psalm 148:1-5** is a call to worship, summoning the entire universe to join together in praising God. The psalmist writes,

*Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the heights above.
Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts.
Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars.
Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies.
Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.*

We can tell that the psalmist was excited to worship God. It brought him joy to sing songs of praise. The highest honor for his life was to honor God, not just with his words but in all that he did. This is what we were made for.

When the sun shines above the earth it is doing what it was made to do: and that displays God's glory. When the mountains stretch towards the sky, it is doing what it was made to do and that displays God's glory. When the stars twinkle in the night sky, they are doing what they were made to do: and that displays God's glory. They don't have voices, but we do. How much more should we offer God our praise?

It's sort of like going to an art gallery, and noticing a beautiful painting on the wall. Maybe it is a picture of a sunset. The colors are exquisite. They seem to resonate from the canvas. The brush strokes are so precise, and the image is almost lifelike. As you marvel at the work, you look at the plaque to read the name of the artist. "Wow, he really knows how to paint," you tell yourself. Just as the painting displays the skill of the artist, creation was meant to reflect the splendor of God.

Human beings were given a special role in creation. Look at Genesis 1:26-28.

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ 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."

Human beings are unique. God set us apart, forming us in his image. That's a huge topic, and we could spend all day unfolding its meaning. But one implication is that we are called to represent God in this world. We reflect his likeness in a way that is distinct from any other creature he has made. The polar bears are beautiful and strong, but they are not made in God's image. The lion is fierce and majestic, but it was not made in God's image. The rhino is huge and mighty but they are not made in God's image. Only human beings were given that honor. We are a special creation of God.

Adam and Eve were given dominion over the earth. They not only received the privilege of ruling over creation with the Lord, but more than that, they were entrusted with the responsibility of caring for the world he had made. There are profound implications for our lives today, living as image bearers. We represent God in this world by serving him, reflecting his character in the way we live, and extending his compassion to others.

Many people struggle to find meaning in life. If there is no creator, if we are nothing more than some cosmic accident, then life has no meaning. Human beings are just a tiny blip on the globe, destined to fade away as quickly as we appeared. That would be a sad way to live. But because there is a creator, our lives take on significance. You are not an accident. You are a masterpiece, created by God for a purpose: to reflect His glory and to bear His image in this world. Whenever a voice whispers in your ear, telling you “you are nothing, you will never amount to anything, you’re not special,” ignore it. That’s a lie of the devil, jealous of what God made us to be. Your life has meaning, so use it to honor the God who made you.

Conclusion –

If God is the creator of all things, we stand in awe of Him. Who can compare to the almighty? None of our accomplishments, as impressive as they might seem, measure up to his work of creation. There is no one like him in the universe.

Glorify Him, he called into a being a vast and beautiful universe into existence, give him the praise he deserves /

Open your eyes to see his handiwork all around you

Pursue the purpose for which we were made, we are called to be faithful stewards of the world God has made