

THE CREATOR IN THE BEGINNING

CREATED FOR A PURPOSE, PART 1

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

I. God Always Existed: A Creator Must Be Pre-Existent – *God*

- A. God Is _____ (Gen 1:1; Isa 44:6; Rev 1:8)
- B. God Is Self-_____ (Ex 3:14; Jn 8:58)

II. God Created Everything: All Things Created Center Around Him – *created*

- A. God Miraculously Created The Universe Out Of _____ (*ex nihilo*) (Ps 90:1-2)
- B. God's Miraculous Creation Refutes Errant _____ Theories And Stories

III. God Created Time: All Time And Our Time Center Around Him – *In the beginning*

- A. God Is _____ Time – He Was There When Time Began (Ps 90:4; 2 Pet 3:8; Rev 6:9-11; Isa 46:9-10)
- B. God _____ Time For Man's Seasonal Purposes (Ex 9:5; Ps 104:19; Ec 3:1-2; 1 Pt 1:17; Eph 5:16; Ps 31:15)

IV. God Created The Universe: All Creation Centers Around Him – *the heavens and the earth*

- A. God Is _____ To Creation (Acts 17:24-25; Rom 11:33; Isa 57:15)
- B. God Is _____ In His Creation (Isa 46:7; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16)

Conclusion:

1. God created us to know and love Him. **Reconcile** with your Creator through Christ, Who was also in the beginning. (John 1:1-2; 14)
2. God created the universe purposefully for His glory. He created us for the same reason.
 - Glorify your Creator with the **time** He has given you.
 - Glorify your Creator with **purpose** He has given you.
3. Our creation and our salvation demands **faith** in it's revelation, evidences and reality. (Heb 11:3; Eph 2:8)

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- A. **God Is Eternal** (Gen 1:1; Isa 44:6; Rev 1:8)
- B. **God Is Self-Existing** (Ex 3:14; Jn 8:58)

II. God Created Everything: All Things Created Center Around Him – *created*

- A. **God Miraculously Created The Universe Out Of Nothing (*ex nihilo*)** (Ps 90:1-2)
- B. **God's Miraculous Creation Refutes Errant Origin Theories And Stories**

III. God Created Time: All Time And Our Time Center Around Him – *In the beginning*

- A. **God Is Beyond Time – He Was There When Time Began** (Ps 90:4; 2 Pet 3:8; Rev 6:9-11; Isa 46:9-10)
- B. **God Created Time For Man's Seasonal Purposes** (Ex 9:5; Ps 104:19; Ec 3:1-2; 1 Pt 1:17; Eph 5:16; Ps 31:15)

IV. God Created The Universe: All Creation Centers Around Him – *the heavens and the earth*

- A. **God Is Transcendent To Creation** (Acts 17:24-25; Rom 11:33; Isa 57:15)
- B. **God Is Glorified In His Creation** (Isa 46:7; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16)

Conclusion:

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Introduction:

- Am I here by accident or on purpose?
- Do I matter in the universe?
- If I'm evolved, I'm a product of chance.

An Introduction To Genesis

- **Genesis' Title:**

- Hebrew Tradition would name a book by it's first word
- *Beresit* = "in the beginning" (Genesis is the book of beginnings)
- But "Genesis" comes from the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *toledot* which means "generations"
- "Genesis" is a Greek term meaning "origin, source, birth, or beginning"
- First 4 words: "In the beginning God ..."

- **Beginnings of:**

- The Universe – God demonstrates His power
- Order & Complexity – God demonstrates His omniscience
- Species – God demonstrates His creativity
- Humanity – God demonstrates His love
- Sin – God demonstrates His righteousness
- Judgment – God demonstrates His justice
- Redemption – God demonstrates His grace
- Nations – God demonstrates His sovereignty
- Israel – God demonstrates His mercy
- Language – God demonstrates His desire to communicate
- Marriage – God demonstrates His unity (through living illustrations)

- **The Generations Of:** (10 divisions of Genesis)

- *Toledot* = generations, descendants, histories
- Derived from "to beget"

(from Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, Baker, 2004, pp. 28-30 and Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing*, p. 70)

- Heaven and earth (1:1 – 2:4)
- Adam (2:4 – 4:26)
- Noah (5:1 – 9:29)
- Sons of Shem, Ham & Japheth (10:1 – 11:9)
- Shem (11:10-26)
- Terah (11:27 – 25:11)
- Ishmael (25:12-18)

- Isaac (25:19 – 35:29)
- Esau, father of Edom (36:1 – 37:1)
- Jacob, father of Israel, & Sons (37:2 – 50:26)

- **Genesis' Themes**

(from W. H. Griffith Thomas, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary*, Eerdmans, 1979, pp. 19-20)

- WHG Thomas, who said: “[Genesis] is essentially a book where God is prominent and predominant, notwithstanding human willfulness, wandering, and wretchedness through sin.” (p. 19)

- God in Creation
- God in History
- God in Providence
- God in Redemption
- God in Human Life

- **Genesis Rapped Up**

- Light From Dark (Gen 1-2)
- Eden Park (Gen 3-5)
- Noah's Ark (Gen 6-9)
- Babel's Bark (Gen 10-11)
- Patriarch (Gen 12-50)

- **Author:** Moses

- Moses is not explicitly stated as the author of Genesis, but is recognized by Scripture (Josh 1:7; Dan 9:11-13; Lk 16:29; Jn 7:19; Acts 26:22; Rom 10:19), Israel and Jesus to be the author of the Pentateuch
 - Jesus:
 - Mt 19:8 (commentary on divorce cites Moses)
 - Lk 24:27 (beginning with Moses and all the prophets...)
 - John 5:46-47 (Moses wrote of Me)
 - Peter:
 - Acts 3:22 (Peter: “Moses said”...quotes Deuteronomy)
 - Pentateuch:
 - Exodus 17:14 (Moses told to write what God said in a book)
 - Ex 24:4 (Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord)
 - Numbers 33:1-2 (Moses recorded...)
 - Rest of OT:
 - Joshua 1:7-8 (book of the law connected w/ Moses)
 - Joshua 8:31 (book “of the law of Moses”)
 - Ezra 6:18 (“as it is written in the book of Moses”)
 - Nehemiah 13:1 (read from the book of Moses)
 - Daniel 9:11-13 (refers to the law of Moses)
- Mosaic authorship was not challenged until the 18th century
 - Atheist R. G. Ingersoll: “The inspiration of the Bible depends on the ignorance of the gentleman who reads it.”

- **Genesis' Date:** Probably written during the Wilderness Wandering (1446–1406 B.C.)

- The known date of Solomon's temple is 940 B.C.
- 1 Kings 6:1 states that from the temple to the exodus was 480 years
- Thus Moses led the exodus in approximately 1400 B.C. (1420 B.C.)
- **The Documentary Theory: Moses Didn't Write The Pentateuch, But Successive Rabbinic Schools Did**
 - Liberals and critics of the Bible's divine inspiration denied the authorship of Moses on the Pentateuch. Rather the Pentateuch evolved over centuries by several Rabbinic Schools.
 - Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918) guessed that there were several authors contributing to the Pentateuch. He saw Gen 1 & 2 as contradicting each other because ch. 1 used Elohim and ch. 2 highlights Jehovah (or Yahweh).
 - **J** – Jehovist Document, 850 B.C., unknown writer in Southern Kingdom of Judah, portrayed God like man, used *Jehovah* as name for God, influenced by myths, Babylonian legends and Hebrew folktales
 - **E** – Elohist Document, 750 B.C., unknown writer in Northern Kingdom of Israel, portrays God's relationship to Israel (rituals, worship, miracle worker), used *Elohim* as name for God, containing Exodus & Numbers
 - **D** – Deuteronomist Document, 650 B.C., unknown writer combines J & E under direction of prophets, containing mostly Deuteronomy
 - **P** – Priestly Document, 500 B.C., various stages where Priestly sections were added, Leviticus and the law portions
 - **R** – *Redakteur* (Fr. for "editor"), 400 B.C., the final editor put it all together around Ezra's time
 - Gleason Archer summarizes this liberal position:

"**J**—written about 850 b.c. by an unknown writer in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. He was especially interested in personal biography, characterized by vivid delineation of character. He often portrayed or referred to God in anthropomorphic terms (i.e., as if He possessed the body, parts, and passions of a human being). He also had a prophet-like interest in ethical and theological reflection, but little interest in sacrifice or ritual.

"**E**—written about 750 b.c. by an unknown writer in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He was more objective than J in his narrative style and was less consciously tinged with ethical and theological reflection. He tended rather to dwell upon concrete particulars (or the origins of names or customs of particular importance to Israelite culture). In Genesis, E shows an interest in ritual and worship, and he represents God as communicating through dreams and visions (rather than through direct anthropomorphic contact, after the fashion of J). In Exodus through Numbers, E exalts Moses as a unique miracle worker, with whom God could communicate in anthropomorphic guise.

"About 650 b.c. an unknown redactor combined J and E into a single document: J-E. **D**—composed, possibly under the direction of the high priest Hilkiah, as an official program for the party of reform sponsored by King Josiah in the revival of 621 b.c.

Its object was to compel all the subjects of the kingdom of Judah to abandon their local sanctuaries on the “high places” and bring all their sacrifices and religious contributions to the temple in Jerusalem. This document was strongly under the influence of the prophetic movement, particularly of Jeremiah. Members of this same Deuteronomic school later reworked the historical accounts recorded in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings.

“**P**—composed in various stages, all the way from Ezekiel, with his Holiness Code (Lev. 17–26) ca. 570 b.c. (known as H), to Ezra, “the ready scribe in the law of Moses” under whose guidance the latest priestly sections were added to the Torah. P is concerned with a systematic account of the origins and institutions of the Israelite theocracy. It shows a particular interest in origins, in genealogical lists, and details of sacrifice and ritual.” (*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 97)

- **Ramifications: If Moses didn’t write Genesis, then ...**
 - The Bible is unreliable because it points to Moses as the author
 - Jesus is unreliable because He cites Moses as the author

- **Refutations:**
 - **Divine Inspiration:** God wrote Genesis using Moses as His human author (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21)
 - **2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness
 - **2 Peter 1:20-21** Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but **holy men of God spoke** as they were **moved by the Holy Spirit**.
 - **Purposeful Names:** Multiple names for God was used purposefully. *Elohim* (Gen 1) described God’s creative work. *Yahweh* (Gen 2) described God’s relationship with the law.
 - **Moses’ Mom:** Critics assume *Yahweh* was not used in Moses’ time. But his mother is called Jochebed (Ex 6:20) which is a combination of *Yahweh* and “glory.” Hence, *Yahweh* was commonly used in Moses’ time.
 - **Archaeological Discoveries:** Ancient cultures used multiple or compound names for gods
 - The Ugaritic Hadad tablet interchanged Baal’s name with Hadad for the same god
 - Amon-Re, Egypt’s 18th dynasty is a compound name
 - there were 3 names for the god Osiris: Osiris, Wennofer, Khent-amentiu; in Babylonian creation account
 - *Enuma Elish*, 3 deities have double names (Safarti, *The Genesis Account*, p. 30)
 - **Internal Evidence:** Geography, climate and agriculture has a solid understanding of Egypt (Moses would be familiar with Egypt, but not those exiled in Babylon who would have been the later authors)
 - **Lack of evidence:** There is no proof that these schools or editors compiled the Pentateuch, just assumption by critics.
 - **Computer Analysis:** Safarti points out that 2 Israeli scholars (Yehuda Radday and Haim Shore) did a literary analysis of Genesis, including as many variables

as possible. They concluded that there was great literary unity and it contradicted the Documentary Hypothesis (Safarti, p. 31) and that J, E and P are not distinguishable, but evidence of one author is strong

- **Genesis' Location** – Moses most likely wrote Genesis while wandering in the Wilderness for 40 years
- **Genesis' Purpose**
 - To instruct Israel about God's light amidst the darkness of the wilderness wandering and the paganized land of Canaan
 - To lay a foundation of faith by reminding Israel that God is the God of the beginning and the end

I. **God Always Existed: A Creator Must Be Pre-Existent** – *God*

- "God" is the center of this origin story
- We are not the center of the universe, God is.
- To Israel who is wandering around among nations with pagan gods, the One Creator God is unique – they were created by hands and feeble minds, God is self-existing
- "God" = *Elohim* (all-powerful, all sovereign, majestic)
 - *ELOHIM* = strong one
 - Masculine plural – The plural form of the word suggest that God is more than 1 person – He is the Triune God
 - Singular meaning – "uni-plural" noun (Morris, p. 39)
 - But the act of creation is singular focusing that it's one Person doing the creation
- Remember that Moses is refuting the polytheistic paganism
- **Genesis 1:1 refutes several worldviews that deny the One, True God:**
 - **Polytheism** – there are many gods
 - one God is assumed as the Creator
 - Davis: "That noun's plural form does not reflect polytheism is evident from the form of the verb of which the noun is the subject: third masculine singular." (p. 42)
 - **Atheism** – there is no god
 - nothing could not generate something
 - **Pantheism** – everything is divine
 - God is transcendent to creation
 - **Deism** – God created and left creation on it's own
 - "create" *bara* gives the sense of "sustaining" – God sustains His creation
 - **Naturalism** – there is only nature, nothing supernatural
 - nature was supernaturally manufactured by God
 - **Materialism** – matter (mass-energy) is eternal
 - God created matter out of nothing
 - Matter had a beginning
 - **Dualism** – eternal good & evil

- In the beginning was only God
 - **Humanism** – man is the center of all things
 - Theism – God is the center of all things
 - **Evolutionism** – we came to being by chance
 - God purposely made us
 - God made animals, man and woman in separate acts of creation
- “God” appears 32x in Genesis 1
 - History = HIS Story
 - We are not alone in the universe
 - We are not product of cosmic chance
 - “God is”
 - That changes everything – for the atheist and practical atheist (one who lives as if God doesn’t exist)
 - Even Ben Franklin, not known for being a Christian, said” I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proof I see of this truth – that God governs in the affairs of men.”
 - Genesis assumes God’s existence
 - Whereas the universe has an origin story, God does not.
 - **Kids from Adventure Club (on 2/19/16) asked:**
 - If God is all living, how did he start?
 - What did God do before time?
 - If God made the world, how did he live before that?

A. God Is Eternal

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God

Isaiah 44:6 I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.

Revelation 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

B. God Is Self-Existing

- I can’t exist without my heart or brain.
- I can’t exist without oxygen and food.
- I’m dependent on things to exist.
- God doesn’t need anything to start Him or sustain Him.
- R. C. Sproul: “... the most important ability we need is the ability to exist. Without that ability, that power, all other abilities would be meaningless. The grand difference between a human being and a Supreme is precisely this: Apart from God I cannot exist; apart from me God does exist. God does not need me in order for Him to be. I do need God in order for me to be. This is the difference between what we call self-existent Being and dependent being.” (*One Holy Passion*, pp. 17-18)

- John Feinberg: "Aseity (from the Latin *a se*, "from itself") is nuanced in a variety of ways, but the main idea of aseity is that God depends on nothing other than himself for his existence." (*No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God*, Crossway, 2006, p. 209, Kindle Edition)
- "Yahweh" is derived from "to be" and is most likely related to God being the "eternal being" – the "I Am"
- *Yahweh* means "The Self Existent One"
- Origin: some think it's from the Hebrew verb *chavah* = "to live, life" or from *hayah/havah* = "to be" or "being"

Exodus 3:14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

- He is, He's self-existent, uncaused
- "Aseity ... the basis of God's life is within himself and is not caused by anything external." (Millard Erickson, *The Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology*, p. 77)
- Charles Ryrie: "Some theologies use the word aseity to denote self-existence; i.e., God depends *a se*, on Himself. If God exists endlessly, then He never came into existence nor was He ever caused to come into existence. He is endlessly self-existent." (*Basic Theology*, p. 41)
- William G. T. Shedd: "The self-existence of God (aseity) denotes that the ground of his being is in himself. In this reference, it is sometimes said that God is his own cause. But this is objectionable language. God is the uncaused being and in this respect differs from all other beings. The category of cause and effect is inapplicable to the existence of a necessary and eternal being." (*Dogmatic Theology*, p. 276)

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

○ **"I AM who I AM" = God is always in the present tense**

1. Self-Existence Implies God Is Eternal, Thus Ever Present With Us

- Because He is uncaused, He is eternal

2. Self-Existence Implies God Is A Person, Thus Intimate With Us

- "I Am" is not like the impersonal pagan deities of the Egyptians and Canaanites, but is the Living "I"

Exodus 3:12-14 ¹² So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain." ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and

they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."

3. Self-Existence Implies God Is Unchangeable, Thus Reliable To Us

- I AM WHO I AM implies that God will never change
 - o He can say that about Himself every year and will always mean the same thing

4. Self-Existence Implies God Is Our Creator, Thus A Loving Parent To Us

- o Because He is uncaused, all of creation emanates from Him
 - Tozer: "Origin is a word that can apply only to things created."

Ie/ Evolutionists believe life began with a big bang

- But what caused the Big Bang?

- Usually, when something explodes, does it create beauty and order, or does it cause destruction and disorder? (thought from a professor at Frontier School of the Bible)

5. Self-Existence Implies God Has No Equal, Thus One To Be Worshipped By Us

- F.B. Meyer: "There cannot be less in the Creator than we discover in the creature."

(God's eternity would be a natural category to follow self-existence, but will be covered in the future topic of God, Time & Eternity)

II. God Created Everything: All Things Created Center Around Him – *created*

A. God Miraculously Created The Universe Out Of Nothing (*ex nihilo*)

- "created" = *bara* (singular form)
 - o original creation
 - o creation *ex nihilo*
 - o The God of creation is revealed in the frequent statements:
 - "God saw"
 - "God said"
 - "God made"
 - o John J. Davis: "The creative act of God reflected in verse 1, therefore, involved no preexisting material; a sovereign, all-powerful God created the heavens and the earth from nothing." (*Paradise To Prison: Studies in Genesis*, Baker Books, 1975, p. 40)
- *Bara* is used only of God. There are other words used to describe the act of creation, but only *bara* is used of God.

- John Phillips: “Men can ‘make’ things (*asah*) and ‘form’ things (*yatsa*), but only God can create.” (citing Wilbur Smith in *Exploring Genesis*, Kregel Pub., 1980, p. 38)
 - Allen Ross: “Humans may make (*asah*), form (*yasar*), or build (*bana*); to the Hebrew, however, God creates.” (*Creation & Blessing: Exposition of Genesis*, Baker, 1988, p. 106)
 - God will create a new heaven and a new earth (Isa 65:17)
 - God creates a clean heart (Ps 51:10)
- Moses alludes to that in his prayer in Psalm 90

Psalm 90:1-2 Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

B. God’s Miraculous Creation Refutes Errant Origin Theories And Stories

1. Genesis 1:1 Refutes The Pagan Origin Stories

(summarized from Tiberius Rata, Voice, “In The Beginning, God Created,” Jan/Feb, 2011, p. 18)

- **Babylonians** – Marduk (chief god) made man to serve lesser gods so they can rest
- **Egyptians** – Khnum (god) formed man on a potter’s wheel while his wife, Hekat, breathes life through his nose
- **Sumerians** – humans are the results of gods messing around in a drunken orgy
- **Canaanites** – views El as the creator and his wife, Asherah, as the goddess of fertility who makes women pregnant

2. Genesis 1:1 refutes Modern Origin Theories

(From John S. Feinberg’s *No One Like Him: The Doctrine Of God*, pp. 541-550)

a. Dualism

- Dualism #1: Matter and God are eternal. Matter is subject to God, but God needed something to work with to make the universe. Good (from the spiritual) and Evil (from matter) are eternal. (Plato, Gnosticism)
- Dualism #2: Good and Evil are two eternally existing spiritual forces. (Zoroastrians, Taoism – ying/yang, Star Wars)
- John S. Feinberg describes: “Dualism as a theory of origins takes various forms, but the fundamental idea of dualism is that there exist two distinct, coeternal, self-existent principles. In one form of dualism, the two principles are God and matter. Matter is imperfect and inferior in being, but it is not necessarily inherently evil.... One of the basic maxims of this sort of theory is *ex nihilo nihil fit* (“from nothing comes nothing”). If one grants this principle, then God cannot create the universe out of nothing, for from nothing comes nothing. Rather, God must be coeternal with matter so there is something for him to work with as he frames the world.”

- Result for man: Uncertainty of who's in control. No basis for future hope. Despair.

b. Emanation Theories

- The universe is a result of several emanation from God.
- These theories are generally pantheistic.
- Plotinus (Greek philosopher) believed that matter was the basis of all that exists. If materials things were stripped of all qualities, matter would be pure and formless. He focused on a state of nothingness. On the other end of origins is "The One" which is the source of all that exists. There is a higher "Mind" (*nous*) that orders the material world. Plotinus sees the universe as the emanation from "The One."
- Eckhart and other odd cults hold this view.
- Result for man: God is impersonal. No hope.

c. Naturalistic Evolution Theories

- The universe developed through natural (versus supernatural) means.
- Darwinian evolution is in this category.
- Big Bang
- "That goo became you via the zoo" (Safarti, p. 88)
- Result for man: Every is out for themselves (survival of the fittest.) No ultimate purpose of man and creation is a product of chance.
- A notable biochemist once stated that "... life ceased to be a mystery. Life is only chemistry."
- Even if a biochemist is able to generate life by mixing chemicals together, he still has to do it out of nothing, like God did.

d. Creation Theories

- 1) Creation From Eternity** – God has always been creating throughout eternity because it is a part of His attributes. This view has been held from Origen to today's Process Theologians. Evolution could be a part of this process among some Process Theologians.
- 2) Gnostic Views**
 - Feinberg: "First, Gnostics typically believed that the God of the OT and the God of the NT are two different Gods. The OT God is an inferior deity, but he created the world.... Second, Gnostics held that creation was mediated by lower beings arranged in a hierarchy of being... Third ... there is an absolute dualism between creation and salvation in Gnosticism.... Thus, what the OT God did in creating the material world must be 'tidied up' by the NT Savior God.... Finally... in contrast [to Christians seeing creation as created 'good'], the creation of Gnosticism's lesser God contains evil because the world contains matter."

3) Creation *Ex Nihilo* With A Specific Temporal Beginning

III. God Created Time: All Time And Our Time Center Around Him – *In the beginning*

- “in the beginning” = *beresit*

A. God Is Beyond Time – He Was There When Time Began

Psalm 90:4 For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night.

2 Peter 3:8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

- J. Carl Laney: “He sees the past and the future as if they are the present. And while human beings are limited in their knowledge by succession of events, God knows no such limitation....Nothing ever takes Him by surprise.” (*God*, p. 75)
- We’re linear creatures - see things in succession of events

ie/ see parade - from one point on the street, one side of the street, occasionally see down both sides of the street, but can't see around the corner

- can only see beginning and end of parade as separate events
- if in Goodyear blimp - get perspective of whole parade
- see beginning and end of parade at same time

Rev 6:9-11 - martyrs ask Lord how long to wait to be avenged - God looks to the future and pinpoints specific effects

Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,'

B. God Created Time For Man's Seasonal Purposes (Ex 9:5; Ps 104:19; Ec 3:1-2; 1 Pt 1:17; Eph 5:16; Ps 31:15)

- God created time the same time He created matter
- Einstein demonstrated to us that time and matter connected in his General Relativity

Exodus 9:5 ⁵Then the Lord appointed a set **time**, saying, “Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land.”

Psalm 104:19 ¹⁹He appointed the moon for **seasons**; The sun knows its going down.

- “The Bible thus stresses not the abstract continuity of time but rather the God-given content of certain moments of history.” (M.H. Cressey, “Time,” New Bible Dictionary, ed. by Wood & Marshall, IVP, p. 1187)

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 ¹To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:
²A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted;

1 Peter 1:17 ¹⁷And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the **time** of your stay here in fear;

Ephesians 5:16 ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

- “Redeem” = *Exagorazō* (to make the most of)
 - to purchase at full value
 - used to purchase a slave from the slave market
 - redemption
- **To Redeem Time: get the full value out of the time God has appointed us**

Psalm 31:15a ^{15a} My times are in Your hand

- Because God created time and all creation belongs to Him, thus our time belongs to God.
- Ie/ **College** – this is my time (without my parents to tell me what to do), but do see our time in college as God’s time? Instead of what’s best for my major, how about asking what is best for God’s glory?
- Ie/ **Midlife** – empty nest, my time – no it’s God’s time
- Ie/ **Retirement** – now I can do what “I” want to do, instead of what does God want me to do?

IV. God Created The Universe: All Creation Centers Around Him – *the heavens and the earth*

A. God Is Transcendent To Creation (Acts 17:24-25)

- “**heavens**” = Heb. *shamayim* – plural form
 - recognizing we live in a multiverse, but it is a unified system (universe) because of God
 - the word may have originated from *sham* (there) and *mayim* (waters) that hint of the water in the original atmosphere (Morris, p. 40)
 - but does refer to space and the universe – in space and time
- “**earth**” = Heb. *erets* – basic form before God shaped it in the days of creation
- “the heavens and the earth” – figure of speech called **Merism**
- Merism = when two opposites represent the whole concept
- E.g. Psalm 139:2 “You know when I sit down and when I rise up”

- “heavens and earth” represents the universe
- Henry Morris notes: “The universe is actually a continuum of space, matter, and time, no one of which can have a meaningful existence without the other two.” (*The Genesis Record*, p. 41)
- Morris paraphrases Gen 1:1: “The transcendent, omnipotent Godhead called into existence the space-mass-time universe.” (*ibid*)

Acts 17:24-25 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

- God is above and beyond creation

Psalms 145:3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

- Yet the Transcendent God is Immanent (near) to us

Isaiah 57:15 “For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

Other verses:

Isaiah 66:1-2 “Thus says the Lord: ‘Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist,’” Says the Lord. But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

Jeremiah 23:23 Am I only a God nearby....and not a God far away?

Hebrews 1:3 ³who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- James Sire: “*God is transcendent*. This means God is beyond us and our world. He is *otherly*. Look at a stone: God is not it; God is beyond it. Look at a man: God is not he; God is beyond him. Yet God is not so beyond that he bears no relation to us and our world. It is likewise true that *God is immanent*, and that means that he is with us. Look at a stone: God is present. Look at a man: God is present. Is this, then, a contradiction? Is theism nonsense at this point? I think not.” (*The Universe Next Door*, p. 25)

B. God Is Glorified In His Creation (Isa 46:7; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16)

Isaiah 46:7 everyone who is called by my name, whom **I created for my glory**, whom I formed and made.

Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be **glory** forever. Amen.

- Westminster Larger Catechism: "Question 1: What is the chief and highest end of man? Answer: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

- 3 prepositional phrases: by Him (lit. in Him), through Him and for Him
- "Paul's use of three different prepositions is one way of refuting the philosophy of the false teachers. For centuries, the Greek philosophers had taught that everything needed a primary cause, an instrumental cause, and a final cause. The primary cause is the plan, the instrumental cause the power, and the final cause the purpose. When it comes to creation, Jesus Christ is the primary cause (He planned it), the instrumental cause (He produced it), and the final cause (He did it for His own pleasure)." (Wiersbe, *Be Complete*, p.49)

- **Christ Is The Realm Of Creation**

- "by Him" = *en autoi* = lit. "in him"
 - Gnostic heretics taught that angels were the center of creation – Paul clearly taught that creation centers around Christ
 - not only does Christ have the power to create, but all of creation resides in His domain
- "all things" = *ta panta* = totality of the universe
 - from the electron to the black hole
- "visible and invisible"
 - false teachers taught dualism (material bad, spiritual good) and denied that God created a physical world
 - Paul contradicts the false teachers directly – all things visible
- "throne...dominions...principalities...powers" = angels and demons
 - Gnostics believe that a superior being created an inferior creature, then the inferior created something more inferior, and so on...
 - Paul taught that Christ "created all spirit beings instantaneously, directly, and out of nothing." (Gromacki, *Stand Perfect In Wisdom – Colossians*, p. 64)

- **Christ Is The Source Of Creation**

- "through him" = *di autou* – Christ is the active participant

John 1:3 Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.

Hebrews 1:2 His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God (Elohim = plural oneness) created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:26 Let *Us* make man in *Our* image, according to *Our* likeness

- **Christ Is The Goal For Creation**

- "for Him" = *eis auton* = lit. "unto Him"
- all of creation, from microbes to galaxies point to Christ

- John Piper correctly notes: "Now when God says that He created us for His glory, it cannot mean that He created us so that He would become more glorious, that His beauty and perfection would be somehow increased by us. It is unthinkable that God should become more perfectly God by making something that is not God. It is a staggering but necessary thought that God has always existed, that He never came into being, and that everything which exists which is not God is from His fullness and can never add anything to Him which did not come from Him. That is what it means to be God; and it should humble us, O, how it should humble us, when we ponder His reality!

"But this means that when God says, He made us for His glory, He does not mean He made us so that He could become more glorious in Himself. Instead what Isaiah 43:7 means is that He created us to display His glory, that is, glory might be known and praised. This is the goal of God that we must be aligned within our hearts and actions if we hope to escape His wrath at the judgment." ("God Created Us For His Glory – Isa 43:1-7; July 27, 1980, <http://www.soundofgrace.com/piper80/072780m.htm>)

Conclusion:

1. God created us to know and love Him. **Reconcile** with your Creator through Christ, Who was also in the beginning. (John 1:1-2; 14)
 - One thing science does well is to tell us **HOW**. What science can't do is tell us **WHY**.
 - Bruce Larson: "In Genesis, God the Creator continues to love and pursue His chosen people and desires their friendship, in spite of their failures and betrayals... To believe and trust in God rather than ourselves is to become His friend. That's the clear message of Genesis." (*My Creator, My Friend*, Word Books, 1986, p. 10)

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

2. God created the universe purposefully for His glory. He created us for the same reason.
 - Glorify your Creator with the **time** He has given you.
 - Glorify your Creator with **purpose** He has given you.

3. Our creation and our salvation demands **faith** in it's revelation, evidences and reality.

Hebrews 11:3 By **faith** we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through **faith**. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,