

We are in the midst of watching God make the uninhabitable raw materials of the creation into a habitable world. Verse 1 says God brought the world into existence, and v.2 describes it at that point as being utterly unsuitable to human life.

And that's not too hard for us to understand. When we look into space, we see absolute TOHU and BOHU everywhere we look. No signs of life at all. Then, in absolute contrast to everything else, comes Earth - every square inch exploding with such a mind-boggling profusion of life that it defies description.

For as far as we can see the earth sticks out like a sore thumb in the universe.

This is a constant irritation to the evolutionist (if their theory is true, and life is inevitable after 15 billions years, then you would think it would be all over the place.)

A place is only habitable if God makes it habitable.

So the first three days God makes the earth habitable, and then the following three days He makes it inhabited. That order corresponds to the “**formless & empty**” (TOHOO and BOHOO) of v.2.

TOHOO means “uninhabitable” and BOHOO means “empty.” So in the first three days God takes care of the TOHOO (makes the world habitable) and in the last three days He takes care of the BOHOO (fills it).

Gn.1:3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day.

God's Word

And God said

Creation by divine *fiat*. Here we see how God did it. He could have thought everything into existence, but he choose to use words, and here, in the 3rd v. of the Bible we are introduced to the concept of the Word of God.

Often in Scripture the writers refer to the Word of God as if they were talking about God himself (Jesus is called the Word).

And many times knowledge of God's Word, is knowledge of God.

1Sam. 3:7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

That's because God's Words are the exact representation of Him. That is not true of us. We speak things that are not accurate representations of who we are, because we are dishonest, ignorant, and thoughts have been introduced into our heads by other sources.

But everything God says is perfectly true and accurate. His words represent exactly what is in His mind. And no thought has ever been introduced into the mind of God. He never learned anything, he never had a new thought, (has it ever occurred to you that nothing ever occurred to God?). So every thought he has originated in his mind.

So when we see, “**And God said**” those are exciting words. We get a glimpse directly into the

mind of the Deity!

Significance Of The Fact That God Created By Words

1. It shows the distinction between God and the creation.
2. This shows us the effortlessness of the creation.

Ps.148:5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

3. It shows the absolute sovereignty and power of God - whatever he says, is. His Word is not only law; it is reality.

Yahweh is the great I AM - the one who has the power to exist in and of himself.

The I AM says, “Let there BE” and there IS. (Yahweh says yahee and yahee)

and there was light. It works every time.

Ps.33:8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him.9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

When we speak, all it does is send out vibrations in the air. Only God can speak things into existence.

That's one of the reasons we know for sure that Jesus was God. He raised Lazarus from the dead not by mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, not cardiopulmonary resuscitation, but by verbal resuscitation.

Jesus says, “Quiet, be still.” and the storm obeys. Only God can cause something to come into being or reverse natural forces by a mere act of His will.

You never have to wonder if God's word is true. By definition they are true. The very act of Him speaking them *causes* them to be true.

This is the first time we hear his voice. If His words show us a glimpse into his character, then what does he say?

Light

"Let there be light"

Some have suggested that at this point light already existed and God is just making it visible for the first time from earth.

That's another one of those interpretations that is interesting theologically but impossible grammatically. It misses the whole point of what's being said.

Literally God said, “Light, BE!” He speaks to the light that doesn't exist and commands it to exist, and it does. He speaks to nothing and tells it to be something, and it obeys.

Again, only God can do that. In Ro.4:17 God is defined as **He who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.**

lit: **who calls the not being as being.**

God is the Author of nature. The work of God is not only supernatural, but it is supra-natural. God transcends the created world.

At this point the naturalist will say, “How could there be light without the sun?”

My response to that is, “How can there be light *with* the sun?”

In the sun is hydrogen, which by itself is as dark as night. A big ball of hydrogen in the sky would be as black as can be. So where does the light come from?

The light comes from a massive input of energy into that hydrogen that fuses it into helium. The energy that results from that causes the atoms at the surface to emit waves of energy in the form of light.

“What is that massive input of energy?” Gravity.

“Where does the energy of the gravity come from? And where does the atomic energy come from?”

That’s easy – just like all energy, it comes from some greater energy Source: God.

Are we going to say God can create an energy source that produces light through a chain reaction, but He is unable to create energy in the form of light directly? Why would we assume that?

Is the light on earth before the sun mysterious because it had no apparent source? Not any more mysterious than gravity, which also has no apparent source.

If the naturalist is going to mock Genesis one because light exists on the earth with no apparent source, he should also mock everyone who believes in gravity, which also has no apparent energy source.

There are all kinds of forms of energy, but not all energy is useful for human life. I was reading about something called “zero point energy” which exists even in the voids of empty space. There is energy in a vacuum at the temperature of absolute zero.

But here God begins to make energy in a form that is conducive for human life.

The fact that God begins with light gives us the impression that light is the foundation of everything that makes the world habitable.

The ancient world would have had to take that by faith, but in our day we have a little more understanding regarding why light is so foundational for human life.

Without light there could be no human life. There could be no food, no air...no life.

All human energy comes from light. The calories that enable you to get up and walk around are just packaged sunlight.

When light from the sun hits green plants, there is a process called photosynthesis that converts the hydrogen from water + carbon from carbon dioxide into carbo-hydrates (food – stored energy). Now there is energy stored in the plant.

People and animals can’t do that. We can’t convert sunlight into stored energy, so we have to eat plants (or animals that ate plants).

One way or another, in order for us to live, we have got to get that stored energy from the plants into our bodies. Once we eat it, our bodies combine it with oxygen and it is turned into energy that our bodies can use.

So energy comes from the sun into a plant, the plant stores it, an animal eats it, we eat the animal and get it, combine it with oxygen, and it is taken out of storage and we have energy.

When photosynthesis happens, there is an exhaust. It produces waste. And the exhaust that comes out of the plants’ exhaust pipe is oxygen! The very thing we need to convert it back to energy!

When we do so, we give off some exhaust - carbon dioxide! The very thing the plant needs to store the energy!

If you take wood or coal or petroleum or anything that has that stored energy, and combine it with oxygen in fire, you get a whole lot of energy (heat and light) that is released.

So without light there would be no air no plants, no food, no animals and no people.

What is light?

We don't know. It's very mysterious stuff.

We have experiments that seem to prove that it is a wave and not a particle.

- light reflects off things like a wave.
- It travels through things like a wave.
- There is interference when waves collide. When peaks and valleys match up, the wave is twice as big, when they do not, the wave disappears.
- it bends around things like a wave.

On the other hand, we have experiments that seem to prove that it is a particle (photon) and not a wave.

- It hits things with force. (Windmill with black and white)
- When light hits metal, it knocks electrons out of the metal in various spots (like hail damage on a car) - in a wave the energy is distributed evenly.
- Although it has no mass, it is affected by gravity (it bends as it passes the sun)

It is the divine speed limit.

We can accelerate atoms by adding energy. You add a certain amount of energy and you get a certain amount of acceleration. We can get things to go more than 99.9995% of the speed of light, but the closer we get, the harder it is to get going any faster.

They have calculations that show how much energy it would take to get some mass to go a certain speed. It always works. In that equation, if you put the speed of light in as the speed, the amount of energy needed comes out to be infinity.

And light doesn't seem to follow the rules of physics. If you are in a car traveling 50 mph, and a faster car is coming up behind you at 70 mph, if you look out your back window you will see that car approaching at the rate of 20 mph.

Light always approaches at 186,000 m/s. If you are in a parked car, light from behind will approach at 186,000 m/s. If you are in a car going 180,000 miles per second, light from behind will still catch up to you at the rate of 186,000 miles per second.

There seems to be a connection between time and the speed of light. The closer you get to the speed of light, the slower time passes for you. This was discovered mathematically, but has recently been tested.

If they get two identical atomic clocks, leave one on the ground and fly the other one in a jet around the world, the times are off by the exact amount the theories would suggest. If they put each clock in a separate plane and fly them around the world in opposite directions, the times are off by the exact amount that would be predicted by the speed of the rotation of the earth.

So if one twin flew on a rocket at close to the speed of light until 10 years passed on earth, when he came back his watch would say he was only gone a few moments, and he would actually be 10 years younger than his twin.

It seems, then, that for a photon that travels millions of light years through space, it is created and absorbed in exactly the same instant. Since it is traveling at the speed of light, from its perspective, time is stopped, so it makes the trip in zero time. But if it goes out of existence the very moment it is created, that would seem to require that it never existed.

So you now have light with no light source other than God. That's how it will be again someday.

Rev.22:5 They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

The sun is a dark body, and light is created by the release of energy in its atmosphere. If you could put on a suit so you could survive the heat, and you passed the surface of the sun, it would be dark.

Perception

For us, light is the basis for perception. When we understand something for the first time, we say, "Ah, I see."

If we want to know if people are paying attention, we will say, "Do you hear what I'm saying?" But if we want to know if they understand it, we say, "Do you *see* what I'm saying?"

Seeing light is our clearest method of perceiving. In fact, light is the only thing we can see.

You can't see me, or this pulpit, or the walls around us. There is no way for you to actually see those objects. All you can see is the light bouncing off them.

And based on the appearance of the light that bounces off those things, you can gather information about what those things are like.

Without light we couldn't perceive the world around us. The vast majority of what we know about the world comes from what we see. Even blind people are able to interpret things they feel by information they have been given by sighted people.

God made the heavens and the earth, then started making it fit for human life. And the first thing He does is to create avenues for us to be able to perceive the world.

God wanted us to be able to know the real world. A rock exists right smack dab in the middle of the real world, and yet has absolutely no awareness of the real world. God wanted us to be able to be aware of reality.

God made us with the ability to know truth (truth is that which corresponds to reality).

That's significant, because in the Genesis one of the NT (John 1) we read:

Jn.1:1-21

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was with God in the beginning. 3Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

Genesis begins by saying, "In the beginning God made the world, and began making the world habitable by creating light, so we could perceive the truth about the real world."

John begins by borrowing that language and saying, "In the beginning was Jesus Christ, who fulfills the same function as light in the spiritual realm. He makes us able to perceive what is true spiritually."

That is such an amazing reality! So many people think we can know for sure about the physical world, but the immaterial world is a mystery. It's anyone's guess. It's unknowable, because it can't be observed in a test tube...

But that's not the case. Christ is the bridge between the invisible spiritual realm and the physical world we are bound to.

He is God in human flesh. He knows all about heaven, and he knows all about what it's like to be a human being, and so we can know for sure what is true in the spiritual realm – just by listening to

what He says about it.

There are people who look around and decide there must be some kind of god out there, but they doubt whether he communicates to us or reveals truth to us. Those people should think through the fact that God made light.

The fact that He made light should clue them in to something about His nature – He wants us to be able to perceive and be aware of the real state of affairs.

And if that's the case in the physical realm which is of relatively minor importance, why wouldn't it also be true regarding matters that effect our eternal destiny?

The next time you speak with an agnostic, who says we can't know about God or the spiritual world, ask him this: "How do you explain the existence of light?" Isn't it apparent that God wants us to be able to know about the real world?

4 God saw that the light was good,

We will come back to this

Separation

and he separated the light from the darkness.

The word separate does not mean "to pull apart" but "to assign different functions."

The artist separates the colors on his palate in a painting when he takes some blue and assigns it the function of portraying an ocean. Then he takes some of that same blue and assigns it the job of portraying a sky.

That's what God is doing in separating the created elements.

God didn't make light just for the fun of it. The things He creates in Gn.1 have a purpose. He creates them and then assigns tasks to them.

The point of creating light is not just to brighten the place up. The purpose of light is to create a daytime for earth, which requires a night time also.

God is a God of contrasts and distinctions - it is part of beauty. One of the steps in God's magnificent creation was to make distinctions. He didn't make a blurry world.

God brought about a beautiful, ordered world that is suitable for human life by separating things that didn't belong together.

That's what we do when we order our little worlds. We take the dishes from the dishwasher, which are all run together in a big jumble of all kinds of dishes together, and we separate them out. Glasses are placed in one cabinet; the forks have their spot, plates over here...

Things tend to become run together, and the process of cleaning and organizing is really nothing but the work of separation – separating things that don't belong together. When we do that, we are doing the same thing God was doing with the Universe in Gn.1.

Everything has its place and function –

Naming

5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night."

It's not just that He is giving things names that are appropriate for their function, by giving them these names He is actually assigning that function to them, and making them fit for that function.

When we see something, we observe what it is, and then name it accordingly. When God names something, by doing so He makes it that thing.

The act of naming itself bestows the necessary properties for the task.

The point of Genesis one is not so much to explain where everything came from. Everything came from God, and that's established in 4 Hebrew words in v.1.

The whole rest of the chapter talks not about things coming into existence as much as things receiving their function. (For a detailed discussion of this point see John Walton's commentary in the NIV Application Commentary set).

So the naming is what makes something what it is.

That point becomes very significant in the NT when we read all that it says about God's calling in our lives. The word "calling" is the same word "to name." (It's translated both ways in the NT)

When God called me to the ministry of preaching, by doing so He *made* me, ontologically, a preacher.

That's what gives life meaning.

The only significance of daytime is the fact that God called it day, and in so doing gave it the functions of daytime for His own purposes. Otherwise a 12 hour period of light would have no meaning.

The only significance of your life is the fact that God has named you something – called you to some task, and in so doing made you the tool for that task.

That's why the purpose statement of Creekside is "We exist to enable as many people as possible to discover and fulfill their calling."

And that's what makes Rev. 2:17 such a thrilling hope that we look forward to:

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

God is going to give you a new name!

In the OT, naming something also showed one's authority over someone or something.

The day and the night belong to him - this is one of the reasons we praise him - there is no boundary to his domain. He set every boundary. Ps.74:16 **The day is yours, and yours also the night; you established the sun and moon. 17 It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.**

Day

And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day.

Why evening first? Wouldn't it make better sense the other way around?

Not really. The first cycle was completed at the arrival of the next morning. God created daytime first – before setting up the cycle of day and night. All there was was day.

Then, during that day (which had no morning), God created the idea of alternating light and dark. Once He did that, the very first transition that could happen would be from light to dark. The transition between day and night is evening. So that had to come first.

So it was dark for a while, and then, after a period of darkness, the transition to daylight occurred, which was the first time there had ever been a morning.

There was no morning at the beginning of the first day, because there was no transition from night.

I like the NCV: **Evening passed, and morning came, the first day.**

This is the account of God creating the cycle of day and night. That's another reason why we take it to refer to a literal day. If these are not literal days, then there is no account of the creation of literal days.

The point of a figure of speech is to compare something to something else. When the word, "day" is used in a figurative sense, it compares something to a literal day. But how could Gn.1 be comparing successive creation eras to days when days didn't exist yet?

Is 1000 years to God like a day is for us? Yes. But God is speaking here in terms for us to understand. The entire chapter is given from a geocentric perspective. Creation is described from the point of view of someone on the earth.

Besides, how long does it take God to utter 2 words (YAHEE OR)?

So God set into motion the most basic and useful unit for measuring time – the constant rhythm of day and night.

The creation of the cycle of days is not a minor point.

TT Ps.19

In fact, the highlight of day one is not the creation of light, but the creation of days. In this account, the only significance light has is in the role it plays in the function of days.

The significance of days

Ps.19:4 **In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun, 5 which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion** (bridal chamber - wedding night hotel room)

When the sun comes out, it's like a man on the first day of his new marriage.

Dr. Delitzsch: "The morning light has in it a freshness and cheerfulness, as it were a renewed youth. Therefore the morning sun is compared to a bridegroom, the desire of whose heart is satisfied, who stands as it were at the beginning of a new life, and in whose youthful countenance the joy of the wedding-day still shines."

There is something wonderful about how God gives us a new start every 24 hours. We need that. There is something about the psychological effect of a new beginning -

If time just went on with no change - no days, life would be unmanageable. We would get behind and there would be no catching up. We would get carried away with some things - neglect others.

God made us so that we need new beginnings. That's why everyone makes a big deal out of the new year.

I love that. Especially after a day when I don't get much done, I have such an excitement in my heart to try again the next day in the freshness of the morning.

I don't like getting up when I am tired, but I love the beginning of the day - nothing has happened yet to ruin the day. All the little frustrations of yesterday are wiped away.

Some have thought heaven will be monotonous. I think there will be new beginnings.

Lam.3:22 for his comparisons never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

If we think heaven will get boring after a million years or so, we are like children who think the same thing about life on earth.

It's hard for a kid to think very far into the future. I heard an interview of a gymnast who was very young. The interviewer asked, "How old can you be as a gymnast?"

"Any age"

"Even me?"

"No, not if you're like 30 or something!"

Young children think life will be interesting up to age 20 or 30 or so, and after that you're just waiting to die.

But when you are 60, and you look back over the last ten years and count the new blessings...

Just think about all the great new things God has given you in the last few years. He never runs out of ideas.

God dispenses grace by the day.

Mt.6:34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

God designed us to live in a day by day existence.

Zep.3:5 Morning by morning he dispenses his justice, and every new day he does not fail,

Look back at Ps.19:5

That's the significance of the sunrise; what about when the sun sets?

like a champion rejoicing to run his course. Actually, "rejoicing like a champion..." **6 It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat.** champion rBGI a mighty, strong man of great valour - a hero.

The emphasis is on the rejoicing.

Think of the exhilaration an athlete feels as he brakes the tape and wins the 100-meter in the Olympics. Such a sense of accomplishment!

The Psalmist says the sun feels that way when it gets to the western horizon at night, after having traveled all the way across the heavens.

The point is that the sun's setting at night provides a sense of closure. A sense of accomplishment.

Ever lay down in bed at the end of a productive day and think, "What a great day!?" I don't know if we would have that feeling if there were no days ("Oh, what a wonderful 14 hour period that was").

I know I need something to draw my activities to a close each day. Night time has a way of doing that - drawing the day to a close, calling you to rest, becoming an environment conducive to rest, and then giving you a new start the next morning.

It also provided a period of time for God to give illustrations.

Lv.22:7 When the sun goes down, he will be clean,

Conclusion

Is there any significance to segments of time? New beginnings? Endings? Days? Yes – an entire day of creation was devoted to that.

As you stand here this morning on the threshold of a new era in your life, this new segment – I trust your heart is filled with hope in anticipation of the mercies that you have yet to receive from God. The ones that are coming tomorrow morning. Next week...

God has some things in store for you in this portion of your life that were not possible before.
Benediction: 2Co 4:14 **we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.**

Review Questions:

1. What is the significance of the fact that God created by means of words?

It shows the evortlessness of creation
It shows the distinction between God and the creation
It shows the sovereignty of God

2. The fact that God created light implies what about our ability to know spiritual truth?

It shows He is a God who wants us to be able to perceive the real state of affairs. If that's true in the physical world, it stands to reason it's true in the spiritual world.

3. and he separated the light from the darkness.

The word **separate** means

- a. “to pull apart”
- b. “to assign different functions.”

4. In the ancient world, what was the significance of naming something?

It demonstrated authority over that thing