

Sermon Notes Gen 1-2:3 God the Creator 8/8/2021

Introduction. The creation account in Genesis 1 is highly structured which helps memorisation and reveals its literary style. (notes from Wenham WBC Genesis Vol.1).

1. The number 7, associated with completion, fulfilment, and perfection, **dominates this opening chapter.**

'God' = 35 times

'earth' = 21 times

'heaven/firmament' = 21 times

'and it was so' = 7 times

'God saw that it was [very] good' = 7 times

2. Recurrent formulae:

i. announcement of the commandment, 'And God said' (10 times, but within the 7 days)

ii. order, 'Let there be...' (8 times, but within the 7 days)

iii. fulfillment formula, 'And it was so' (7 times)

iv. execution formula or description of act 'And God made' (7 times)

v. approval formula, 'God saw that it was good' (7 times)

vi. subsequent divine word, either naming or blessing, (7 times)

vii. mention of the days, (6/7 times - [7th in 2:2])

3. The narrative structure highlights the 3rd and especially the 6th day.

Day 3 has 2 announcements of the divine word, (9, 11) and Day 6 has 4 announcements of the divine word (24, 26, 28, 29), and the approval formula twice in Day 3 (10, 12) and approval and special approval formula in Day 6 (25, 31)

Day 1	Light	Day 4	Luminaries (lights)
Day 2	Sky	Day 5	Birds and Fish
Day 3	Land (Plants)	Day 6	Animals and Humankind (Plants for food)
	Day 7		Sabbath

4. The narrative has two poles, 'heaven' and earth

(1:1, 2:1) and its focus moves from 'heaven' to earth, finishing with a close-up on humankind (1:26-30).

- i. This gives **focus to the 4th day**, the creation of the sun, moon and stars which dictate the seasons, days and years.
- ii. Also, the **whole creation account climaxes with the special focus on humankind** - further developed in Gen. 2.
- iii. This is contrasted with the 7th day - **God's rest.**

Reflection. Why does God rest? Rest for humans?

5. Creation of humankind.

i. Humanity = male and female.

ii. All living creatures have the 'breath of life' given to them by God (1:30; 2:7), but **humankind alone are created in God's image. Humankind are created as moral agents who reflect the character of God.** 'image' and 'likeness' do not seem to be separate qualities, rather 'likeness' clarifies the meaning of 'image'.

Created in God's Image

i. **Humankind are like God in the sense of being His representatives (agents) - moral agents who have the capacity to relate to God on a deeply personal level.**

ii. **This means humans are responsible to God and that human life is sacred (Gen. 9:5-6).** The 'image' remains even after humans sinned against God (Gen 3, Gen 9:5-6).

iii. **Male and Female** (humanity) are **blessed by God and given the joint responsibility to have oversight and stewardship of God's creation** (1:26; 28-30).

iv. *'and it was so'* - what God said has happened.

Reflection/Response. How are we responsible to God for our treatment of others and for our caring for His creation? How do we as a Christian community show our respect for God's creation of all humans in His image; female/male, children/adults, indigenous/non-indigenous, new immigrants/Australian born? BB