

IN THE BEGINNING...

Mapping Genesis 1-3

The Book of Genesis reveals the beginning of the human race and opens to our understanding the key concepts of truth that are further developed throughout the remainder of the Bible.

GOD (1:1, 26-27)

- God bears the name Elohim, a plural noun, indicating that God is more than one and yet is one. God is a social unit, an other-centered fellowship. This is the first and most foundational truth of Scripture.

CREATION (1-2)

- The God of the Bible is a Creator God. The fact that He creates indicates that He desires others to exist as participants in His love, again showing that God's very nature is other-centered love.

THE SEVEN PATTERN (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31; 2:1-3)

- At the end of each of the first five days of Creation God pronounced what He had made, "good." At the end of the sixth day He pronounced all that He had made, "very good." Then God "rested" on the seventh day. This pattern forms the basis for the manner in which the new creation will be achieved: in stages that will finally culminate with perfection.

- From here on in Scripture the number seven becomes frequently used and highly significant, symbolic of totality and completion in every aspect of God's plan. Most importantly, human history is divided into seven millennial periods, indicating that salvation history will involve six thousand years and a seventh millennium of rest. We are there!

SABBATH REST (2:1-3)

- After completing the work of creation, God rested. That is, He ceased to create and took delight in all He had made.
- He blessed and sanctified the seventh day, meaning He infused it with distinctive meaning and capacity for imparting happiness into our lives.
- The Sabbath indicates that God did all the work of creation. He is its total source. We are the blessed recipients of His labor. The Sabbath therefore becomes the memorial of God's creative power and of our total dependence on Him alone for the work of our salvation.

IMAGE (1:26-27)

- The man and the woman as a pair, with the capacity to procreate in their own combined likeness, constituted the image of God.
- Therefore the term "image of God" essentially means that mankind was made in God's character likeness, made to love like God loves.
- In the Fall of man God's image, His character-likeness, was lost. In the plan of salvation God's image is recreated in humanity. Christ comes into our world as the second Adam bearing God's perfect image and we are to have that image restored in us as an extension of Him.

NOTE: "Genesis" means *beginning, birth, origin*.

NOTE: This account also informs us that all God does, His every deed, all His plans, His very nature itself—all that God does is always and only good and never bad. God is not the author of evil. We must look elsewhere to understand why there is evil in our world, never to God's essential character or nature.

NOTE: Because the Sabbath is emblematic of God's completed work of creation and it invites us to rest in that reality, the Sabbath signifies salvation by God's grace alone, through faith alone.

MARRIAGE (2:18-25)

- God informed Adam that it was “not good” for the man to be “alone.” Because God made humanity in His own image, and because the essence of that image is the self-giving, other-centered love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, it follows that the man could not be “alone” and reflect God’s image. In aloneness there is not possibility for love.
- From Genesis onward marriage becomes a theme in Scripture and a symbol for the atonement. Jesus becomes the second Adam and the church His Eve, and salvation history reaches its culmination with the marriage of the two.

DOMINION (1:28)

- Human beings were created as free moral agents to exercise responsible stewardship over the world God gave them.
- The dominion human beings were granted at their creation forms the basis for Satan’s dominion over the world, which is brought to light as the story of the Bible unfolds: because Adam and Eve had dominion of earth, they could transfer that power to Satan at will, which they did.

PLEASURE (2:8-9, 15)

- God planted a garden for the first humans, and named it *Pleasure* (“Eden”). God desires His creation to live in pleasure, indicating He only has our eternal happiness in mind.

FREEDOM (2:16-17)

- God made humanity free, indicating that love rather than control is His ultimate goal. Salvation will be achieved while preserving our freedom.

FELLOWSHIP (3:8)

- God is introduced as a plural reality of social love.
- God created the animal kingdom in pairs
- God created mankind in His image as a social unit of love.
- God came to visit the Adam and Eve in the cool of the day.

NAKEDNESS AND SELF-COVERING (2:25; 3:7-10)

- Adam and Eve were created naked and were not ashamed. After the introduction of the principle of sin, or self-centeredness, into their minds they “knew that they were naked” and felt shame.
- Now they felt a whole new set of psychological impulses: to hide from God, to be afraid of Him, to cast blame, and to create coverings for themselves.

DECEPTION VS. TRUTH (3:1-11)

- Sin was introduced into the human experience by means of deception regarding the character of God. Salvation will be achieved by the truth being told and irrefutably demonstrated. This becomes God’s primary mission.

OFFSPRING, LINEAGE AND THE PROMISED WARRIOR (3:15)

- In the first gospel-promise, God explained that two distinct lineages would run parallel to one another and wage continual war, and that through the righteous line a warrior would one day be born to crush the serpent.

NOTE: The effort to cover themselves and to hide their shame was the natural action of their now deceived and self-centered hearts. This was the first attempt at salvation by self-generated solutions or works.

NOTE: The primal lie deposited in the human mind by Satan was and is that God is essentially self-serving, that God is not the trustworthy God of love He claims to be.

“God is Love”—1 John 4:16

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All Scripture References are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.