Studies in Genesis - 03

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From our two former studies in Genesis we have seen that this is, indeed, what its name implies, "The Book of Beginnings"; and we have seen that Christ is its central theme. We have noted also that the outline story of the original creation, followed by chaos, and later by the renovation of the earth in six days—all recorded in chapter one—we have seen that this sets forth in shadow and in type God’s great plan of redemption—the new creation of born-again souls in Christ Jesus.

Today we want to consider the much discussed question of "The Creation Story and ‘Science Falsely So Called,'” still confining our study to chapter one. As children of God, we believe this record because God wrote it. For us, that fact alone is sufficient. But there are in the world today many groping souls who have been misled by "science falsely so called" (I Tim. 6:20), given out from institutions of higher learning as true science, yet contradicting the infallible Word of God. Therefore, we believe that such a study as we shall make today of this inspired record will enable us to help honest seekers after truth, even as it should strengthen our own faith in the wonders of the divine record.

NO CONTRADICTION BETWEEN TRUE SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

First of all, we may rest assured that there is no contradiction between true science and the Holy Scriptures. Literally scores of learned scientists have been men of faith in the Bible—from Genesis to Revelation. But Satan is subtle; and he has always had in the world, since the fall of man, those whose teaching the Apostle Paul described to Timothy as “profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.”

These are the men who put doubts into unsuspecting hearts and ignorant minds. "Professing themselves to be
wise, they became fools.” God said so in Romans 1:22.

My friends, our God is the God of law and order. And His laws are never unscientific. The very whirling of the planets, the passing of the seasons, the miracle of life—a thousand phenomena which we witness every day bear silent testimony to the eternal truth that our God is the God of law and order.

Therefore, let us enter upon this very important study with the prayer that God will show us wonderful things out of His inspired Word. We shall not attempt to delve into technical research; we shall simply try, in the layman’s language, to show what God says, and to expose Satan’s falsehood.

“THUS THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WERE FINISHED”

Following the outline story of the renovation of the earth and the creation of all life in six days, God states in emphatic summary: “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them” (Gen. 2:1).

“How did God create all these things?” you ask. “Thus”—according to the record of the opening chapter of the Bible—this is God’s answer to your query. The man of faith accepts God’s “Thus,” turning away from the skepticism of the idly curious. And “Thus saith the Lord” should satisfy our hearts.

Just what is implied in the word “thus,” is found in the six days’ work of God, which we shall do well to recall here:

First day—Light; day and night.
Second day—Firmament; the dividing of the waters.
Third day—Earth separated from water; plant life.
Fourth day—Light-holders: sun, moon, stars.
Fifth day—Fish and fowl.
Sixth day—All other living creatures and man.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them . . . And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.”

A few years ago a biology professor in one of our leading state universities made an attempt to reconcile the Genesis story of creation by days with the theory of the organic
evolution of man. He was a man of culture and gentility; a man holding the degree of doctor of philosophy; a professing Christian; and, therefore, all the more dangerous to the youth of his classes.

Unlike the atheist, who says that man just evolved from a First Cause, apart from the power of a Supreme Being, this professor believed and taught that God created man—but that He did it by the process of organic evolution. Untaught in the Scriptures, that professor was falling into Satan's snare, denying the fall of man, and making of no avail the atoning work of Christ on the cross. He had evidently been instructed by scientists "falsely so called."

But the striking thing that professor said, in trying to reconcile the Bible record of creation with the theory of evolution, was this: That the very order of the creation by days is definitely scientific! Of course, it is; for the Bible is not unscientific, though it does not claim to be a text-book on science!

Then that man explained to his class, step by step, how light had to precede life; how the dry land was made to "appear" before fowl and other living creatures could live upon the earth. These are just some of the conclusions he drew, all of which he gave as reasons why the Bible record is in accordance with the laws of science.

But there his logic failed. He went far afield, to try to prove that man evolved from a lower form of animal life, basing his whole argument upon one supposition after another. However, he was honest enough to admit at the end of the course: "After all, we don't know. It is only an hypothesis, a theory." And we know that a theory is a supposition, not a fact.

What that professor needed to do was to take God at His Word, follow the example of many brilliant scientists, not of scientists "falsely so called." He needed to admit that man was made "in the image and likeness" of God, that he fell through sin, and that his only way back to God is by "the way of the cross."

WHY HAS GOD NOT EXPLAINED THE CREATION?

"Then why has God not explained the creation?" you may ask. Simply because He is concerned primarily with
I found that he had been a member of a certain denomination for thirty years; and yet, when I asked him whether he was a Christian, he told me that he was doing his level best to make himself acceptable before God. When I asked him what he was doing, he enumerated many things, in which he was trusting. I asked him whether his trusting in those things had given him rest. His only reply was, "No, no, no!" I had the joy of telling him that rest of heart and acceptance before God do not come in the way whereby he was endeavoring to secure those things. I pointed him to the finished work of Christ on Calvary. And that poor man looked away to Christ's finished work, rested in it, and died in peace.

This is the soul-satisfying blessing Christendom needs to know. It is the heart of the Gospel of the grace of God. My friends, the irrefutable proof is laid at the very door of the Bible, that you can rest only in a finished thing.

"But," you say, "what does that have to do with me?" The fourth chapter of Hebrews shows that it has everything to do with you, because that chapter links God's way of rest with your salvation. You can not rest unless you have something in which to rest; nor can you rest unless you cease from your own works. God ceased from His own works and rested. You must cease from your works, but you must rest in your unfinished works. You must rest in Him who suffered and died upon the cross, bore the burden of your sins, looked up into His Father's face, and said, "It is finished." The work was done.

It is very significant that the same word "finished," found in Gen. 2:1 is the word which our Lord uttered on the cross. The heavens and the earth were finished, and God rested. Jesus finished His work, and we rest.

Good works do play a vital part in the Christian life. They should follow salvation, as the fruit of the life of service in the name of Christ; they are never the means of salvation. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works"—because we are saved "by grace . . . through faith . . . not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-10).

But for our eternal security we rest in the all-sufficient work of our crucified and risen Lord.

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II

THE CREATION OF MAN TOLD IN DETAIL

From our study of Gen. 1:26-29 we have seen that God created man in His own image and likeness. We have seen that Satan’s falsehood of an organic evolution of man, from a lower form of animal life, is a futile attempt to deny the fall of man, his need of a Saviour, and the efficacy of the shed blood of our crucified and risen Lord Jesus to cleanse from sin.

We have seen from chapter one how God provided for man in His beautiful creation—light, food, all temporal needs—giving to man dominion over “every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

We shall see in our study today of Gen. 2:7-25 some highly significant details concerning our first parents, whom the Lord created on the sixth day.

MAN—A CREATURE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (verse 7).

These words are deeper and convey more truth than one would suppose, upon a casual reading of them. And the first thing we note is that man is a creature, made by God, and accountable to his Creator. Man had a beginning; he was created; and is, therefore, not co-equal and co-eternal with God.

If you who listen to these broadcasts are familiar at all with the false cults, which we are considering on Sunday evenings, systems of religion that have come in the name of Christ, you will know that their primary teaching makes man co-equal and co-eternal with God. You are exhorted by one of these systems to assert continually your oneness with the “Mighty I Am” by stating, “I am life, I am eternal, I and God are one.” This is also the essence of Christian Science. Such systems of false teaching make the same assertion, merely using different phraseology.

The Scriptures set forth no such doctrine; for, according to the Word of God, man had a beginning as a creature. He is, therefore, responsible to God who made him, and will
which were above the firmament: and it was so” (verses 6, 7).

This is order. “The waters which were above the firmament” (which is mist) were separated from “the waters which were under the firmament,” on the earth. So God separated them even as they are now.

We know that the air above, the atmosphere, contains a vast ocean of water; and if God wants to shower the earth with rain, He just chills the air a little and down comes the shower. God’s separating the waters from the waters is another scientific accuracy of Scripture.

“LET THE DRY LAND APPEAR”

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so” (verse 9).

“Let the dry land appear.” The text shows clearly that this whole earth at one time was under water; and this is what scientists contend today. There is evidence on every hand that this earth was completely submerged under water. The fossil life shows this. The highest mountains contain fossil life that lived in the sea.

Again, this need not trouble the man of faith—or anyone who will believe God’s record. For not only does the flood in the time of Noah account for the scientist’s statement that the earth was once submerged under water; we must remember also that, out of the ruin and confusion that followed the original creation (Gen. 1:2), the whole surface of the earth may have been changed. This and the “dateless past” of Gen. 1:1, 2 make possible all the fossils of all the “geologic ages.”

The accuracy of the statement about the waters being gathered together in one place, is sometimes questioned. But it may be that, because of the flood, the surface of the earth now is not exactly as God made it 6,000 years ago. God at that time not only opened the windows of heaven; He also opened the flood-gates of the earth. The water came up from beneath, as well as from above; and the flood came. The surface of the earth evidently had an upheaval. And
it may be that thus the continents were formed, and the seas separated from the oceans.

"LET THE EARTH BRING FORTH FRUIT ... AFTER HIS KIND"

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good" (verse 11, 12).

At least ten times in verses 11-25 we read the significant words "after his kind." And what does this phrase mean? It is used of plant life; of fish and fowl; of cattle, beasts of the field, and of all creeping things. Each was to bring forth "after his kind."

This phrase strikes a death-blow to man's theory of the organic evolution of human life. It means that, whenever anything in this world reproduces, it always produces something exactly like itself. Now if you take two species of any manner of life and put them together, what you get is a "hybrid." That thing itself cannot produce because it is a new kind; and that is where evolution fails. Evolution teaches that everything today—all the different kinds of birds and all fishes of the sea and man—came out of one little, tiny speck of life in the water. Of course, evolutionists do not tell you where the speck came from. But they have to have a starting point, and they claim that that thing produced something different, not "after his kind."

My friends, there is no evidence that such a thing can be. If a man by ingenuity produces a new species, the new species can not reproduce. It stops right there. There is nothing in existence today, absolutely nothing, but what brings forth exactly "after his kind." That little expression of three words in the first chapter of Genesis, "after his kind," has blasted all the teaching of evolution. There is no way to get around it. It is as true today as it was six thousand years ago, when God decreed that each should bring forth "after his kind."

Again, how good God was to provide fruit and grass
and herbs on the third day, before He created animal life on the fifth and sixth days! Could this have been more in accordance with scientific law and order in all nature? Thus God provided food for His creatures, before He brought them into existence.

Dr. Scofield, in his Reference Bible, states that "it is by no means necessary to suppose that the life-germ of seeds perished in the catastrophic judgment which overthrew the primitive order" of God's original creation. "With the restoration of dry land and light, the earth would 'bring forth' as described. It was animal life which perished, the traces of which remain as fossils."

Bearing out this thought further, Dr. Scofield states that only "three creative acts of God are recorded in this chapter": (1) The heaven and the earth, in the original creation (verse 1); (2) animal life (verse 21); and (3) human life (verses 26, 27). In other verses the words "made to appear"; that is, made "visible" are used.

All of this makes clear to us that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"; that something happened, possibly the fall of Satan, to make the earth become "waste and void"; and that, 6,000 years ago God renovated the ruined creation, causing the earth to "bring forth" fruit, creating animal life and man.

"LET THERE BE LIGHTS IN THE FIRMAMENT"

"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years" (verse 14).

Scientists have quarrelled with Genesis because of this verse. They ask how God made light on the first day, when the sun was made on the fourth. You can not have light without the sun, they claim. But in this verse God does not say that He created the sun on the fourth day. He said, "Let there be lights in the firmament" to mark day and night. The sun was evidently a part of the original creation of verse 1. On the fourth day, however, God took these great lamps of heaven, and put them where they are now. As Dr. James M. Gray always told his classes in The Moody
Bible Institute, God took the great body of light which He had created "in the beginning," and on the fourth day put it into light-holders, the sun, moon, and stars.

Every scientist knows that there is a light independent of the sun. What is the sun? The sun is a lamp, a light-holder, that is all, just exactly the same as a light in your home. It is the thing that holds light. God took these mighty, heavenly bodies and put them over the earth, making one for the day and the other for the night. So, from that day to this, the earth has had night and day. What place the sun and moon had in the original creation, we are not told.

"LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE"

We have already considered the striking fact of verses 20-25, that all the living creatures of the lower forms of animal life brought forth, each "after his kind." For our purpose here, as we read these verses, before we go on to the creation of man, we need think only of the goodness of God in providing animal life, as well as plant life, for man before He created Adam "in his own image and likeness." It was all according to the plan of our all-wise and ever-loving God, thus to provide for man's needs.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (verses 26, 27).

In our next lesson, as we study chapter two, we shall consider in detail the creation of man. Here let us note the outline facts of this, the crowning act of God's creation.

In a former lesson we saw that the Holy Trinity is implied in the uni-plural Hebrew name for "God" in Gen. 1:1; and that here, in 1:26, we read the three plural pronouns, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Let us remember that man's three-fold personality—body, soul, and spirit; his power to exercise his own will—these are important ways in which man was made "in the image" of the Triune God.
To man in the Garden of Eden God gave dominion over all the earth. As we shall see from chapter three, Satan robbed Adam of that complete dominion when he tempted Eve.

It seems probable that Satan may have been given dominion over the original creation before he fell through pride. He is called, even now, "the prince of this world" and "the god of this world" (John 14:30; II Cor. 4:4). Nor did the Son of God dispute Satan's power to give Him "the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them" in His temptation (Matt. 4:8). Our Lord, the Creator, did not have to receive them at the hands of Satan; nor could He, the sinless Son of Man, receive them on Satan's terms. Yet He did not deny Satan's claim to the power to give Him this world's kingdoms and glory.

If, as it seems evident, in the original creation Satan was given dominion over this world, he was still seeking that dominion when he tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden. If he could induce our first parents to obey him, he would still, in a sense, be "the god of this world." So he must have reasoned.

We know, from bitter experience, how far Satan went in accomplishing his evil designs. But thank God! The second Adam, even our Lord Jesus Christ, will one day be given dominion over all the earth, when "all things" are "put in subjection under his feet" (Psa. 8:6; Heb. 2:8). Then "at the name of Jesus every knee" shall "bow...and...every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10, 11).

In that day we shall reign with Him in glory. Then "Paradise Lost" will have become "Paradise Re-gained"—with a plus! We shall have dominion, with our Lord and King, "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psalm 72:8). Then the dominion over the earth lost by Adam, and usurped by Satan, will be our Lord's—and ours, in Him, and by His matchless grace!

My unsaved friend, would you share in His eternal glory? Then take Him now as your Saviour and Lord. What you "do with Jesus" now will determine your eternal state. He loves you and will save you, but you must make your choice.
WHY SATAN DENIES THE CREATION STORY

Already we have tried to show that Satan denies the Bible record of creation because he ever seeks to discredit the fall of man, his need of a Saviour, and the power of Christ to redeem from sin. But we would not close this lesson without further emphasis and warning concerning this subtle attack of Satan against God’s inspired record.

If Satan can deceive the unregenerate man, and lead him to believe that he began at the bottom of “the family tree,” as it were; if he can lull the unwary into a false sense of security, convincing him that he is ever getting better and better, ever climbing heaven-ward; if he can deceive the self-righteous into believing that he can work his way to heaven by a respectable, moral, benevolent life—then Satan wins the victory over that man’s deluded mind and heart. He goes on and on in his gross deception, until the unregenerate man considers the Bible record of man’s fall a myth and a legend; the cross of our Lord, an unnecessary mistake.

Do you see, my friend, if Satan can convince man that he was not created “in the image of God,” and, therefore, did not fall through sin, then the enemy of man’s soul has prepared the ground for a veritable harvest of doubt and skepticism. For if the Genesis record of creation is in error, then what about the flood and Jonah and all the miracles of God’s Word? It is Satan who leads men to laugh at these facts of sacred history.

It is dangerous and subtle teaching that is filling the minds of our youth today. May God help us to be faithful in proclaiming the whole truth of His inerrant Word. Then He will see to it that His Word does “not return unto him void.” And the power of Calvary’s Cross to save and keep is, like our Lord Himself, “the same yesterday, and today, and forever.”