

Genesis 1:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding f... This verse is part of the creation account that establishes God's sovereign power and purposeful design. The structured pattern of the seven days reveals divine order, intentionality, and progressive development from formless void to a world prepared for human habitation.

The recurring phrases "And God said," "and it was so," "And God saw that it was good" create a liturgical rhythm emphasizing:

1. creation by divine decree
2. immediate fulfillment of God's word,
3. divine evaluation of creation's goodness.

This pattern refutes both polytheistic chaos-and-conflict creation myths and modern materialistic chance-based origins.

Each stage builds toward the climax of human creation in God's image. The theological themes include divine transcendence and immanence, purposeful design, creation's inherent goodness, and humanity's unique role as God's image-bearers and stewards. The creation account provides the foundation for understanding work and rest (Sabbath), male and female relationships (marriage), human dominion (stewardship), and moral accountability to the Creator. These

opening chapters establish the worldview framework for all subsequent biblical revelation.

Historical Context

Genesis 1 stands in stark contrast to ancient Near Eastern creation accounts like the Babylonian Enuma Elish, Egyptian creation myths, and Ugaritic texts. While these portrayed creation resulting from conflicts between deities or sexual generation of gods, Genesis presents a sovereign monotheistic God who creates effortlessly by divine decree. This would have been revolutionary to ancient readers accustomed to polytheistic cosmogonies.

The Hebrew text's literary structure (seven days, recurring formulas) suggests careful composition as theological proclamation rather than primitive mythology. Archaeological discoveries of creation tablets from Mesopotamia (2000-1500 BCE) reveal that Genesis addresses similar questions but provides radically different answers about the nature of God, humanity, and the cosmos. The absence of theogony (origin of gods) and theomachy (conflict between gods) distinguishes Genesis from its ancient Near Eastern context.

For Israelites emerging from Egyptian bondage or later facing Babylonian captivity, this truth that Yahweh created everything would have been profoundly liberating and countercultural. The gods of Egypt and Babylon were mere creations, not creators. Genesis 1 establishes that Israel's God alone is supreme, rendering pagan deities powerless and their worship futile.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What theological truths about Creation emerge from this passage?

2. How can we apply the principles from this passage to contemporary challenges in family, work, or church?
3. In what ways does this narrative foreshadow or typify aspects of Christ's redemptive work?

Interlinear Text

מִזְרָחּ יְעַשֵּׂה שָׂבֵד שָׂמֶן וְאָמָר	yielding	the herb	grass	Let the earth	bring forth	And God	said
מִזְרָחּ יְעַשֵּׂה שָׂבֵד שָׂמֶן וְאָמָר	yielding	the herb	grass	Let the earth	bring forth	And God	said
יְרָעָא אֲשֶׁר לְמִינֵּנוֹ פְּרִי עַשְׂהָא פְּרִי עַשְׂהָא	seed	tree	and the fruit	yielding	and the fruit	after his kind	whose
יְרָעָא אֲשֶׁר לְמִינֵּנוֹ פְּרִי עַשְׂהָא פְּרִי עַשְׂהָא	seed	tree	and the fruit	yielding	and the fruit	after his kind	whose
כִּי תְּהִלֵּה בְּאָרֶץ כִּי תְּהִלֵּה בְּאָרֶץ	Let the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth
כִּי תְּהִלֵּה בְּאָרֶץ כִּי תְּהִלֵּה בְּאָרֶץ	Let the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth	the earth

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 6:7 (References God): For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

Psalms 147:8 (Parallel theme): Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

Genesis 1:29 (References God): And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

Job 28:5 (Parallel theme): As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.

Mark 4:28 (Parallel theme): For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

Matthew 6:30 (References God): Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Genesis 2:9 (References God): And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:5 (References God): And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

Psalms 1:3 (Parallel theme): And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Jeremiah 17:8 (Parallel theme): For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.