

Genesis 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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:

Analysis

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; a... 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

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

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

2. How does this passage challenge modern cultural assumptions about identity, purpose, or morality?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

Interlinear Text

אָמַר	יְהוָה י	מֵאֲרֶת	בְּרֶקַע יַעַ	הַשָּׁמַיִם
said	And God	Let there be lights	in the firmament	of the heaven
H559	H430	H3974	H7549	H8064
לְהַבְדִּיל	בֵּין	וּלְיָמִים	וּבֵין	הַלַּיְלָה
to divide		and for days		from the night
H914	H996	H3117	H996	H1961
לְאֹתֹת	וּלְמֹעֲדִים	וּלְיָמִים	וּשְׁנָיִם:	
and let them be for signs	and for seasons	and for days	and years	
H226	H4150	H3117	H8141	

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 4:19 (References God): And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

Jeremiah 31:35 (Light): Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

Psalms 148:6 (Parallel theme): He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

Psalms 148:3 (Light): Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

Amos 5:8 (Parallel theme): Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night:

that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name:

Psalms 81:3 (Parallel theme): Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

Jeremiah 10:2 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

Genesis 8:22 (Parallel theme): While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Joel 3:15 (Parallel theme): The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

Isaiah 40:26 (Parallel theme): Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

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