

# Astonished with the Creator: A Second Day

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 22 October 2023

Preacher: Jeff Jackson

- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, beloved, once again, we have the great privilege of being in Genesis chapter 1, talking about origins as God has revealed those origins to us in his wonderful word.
- The title for this morning, Astonished with the Creator, A Second Day, A Second Day.
- The Apostle Peter warned us as believers to be on high alert, high alert. We're to have a sober approach to our spiritual lives.
- It's not a game. It's a war. It's not entertainment. It's a battle. Because our greatest spiritual adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour, according to the Apostle Peter.
- Likewise, Jesus warned you and I as believers that Satan was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him.
- [ 1 : 1 5 ] Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. The devil attacks God's word at every opportunity.
- We're in the creation account and it won't be very long before the devil will approach the first human beings and deceive them. He will question the validity, the accuracy, the truthfulness of God's word as it's been spoken to them about how they're to live in relationship to God.
- From that moment on, Satan has been tempting God's people to disbelieve and distrust the truth as God has written it in his word.
- We want to do all kinds of fancy things with God's word in an effort in some way to help God out with tough stuff. He doesn't need any help. This is the maker of the universe. Satan knows full well what's at stake in the truth of God's creation account.
- And I want to go over some of that with you today as we do the exposition through this second day. If Satan can dilute God's word, if he can deceive us in God's word, if he can destroy God's word altogether, he would do it most eagerly, most eagerly.
- [ 2 : 3 7 ] Now, here's the truth. Satan cannot destroy God's truth, can he? God said his word will accomplish its purposes and it will never, ever pass away.
- God's truth stands as God has written it. That is very important for us to accept, believe, and work through together whenever we approach God's word.
- I say it again. God's word, his truth, stands as God has written it. It is for us to believe and live by. Now, since Satan can't destroy God's word, it can find Satan's attempts to schemes to dilute the truth and deceive us about God's account of our origins.
- And believe me, he is active in doing that. The issue in this truth war is our faithfulness to God as our creator and our savior.
- And our faithfulness to his word is our rule for faith, for life, for godliness. We cannot afford to compromise in any way, shape or form.
- [ 3 : 5 9 ] And so you and I, as believers, draw a line in the sand at Genesis chapter one, verse one. You say, Jeff, where do we draw lines? Where are the hills to die on?

Right in the first chapter of the first verse of the first book of the Bible, we draw a line and say, we will not move an inch, not a millimeter.

From this truth. We'll camp in it. We'll meditate on it. We'll ruminate on it. We'll marinate in it. I'll get all down in it. Let it get into the very poor so that I sweat it and bleed it and speak it and live it.

Now, that's not just rhetoric. That's faith in action. We are people of the word of the living God. And were it not for God's word, we wouldn't be God's people.

Everything is at stake in this truth war. God will be worshipped as our majestic creator who created all that we know.

[ 5 : 02 ] And as the scripture tells us, beyond what we can even know in this lifetime, we will worship him. In an astonishing, soul-lifting way.

Because God has told us that he has created the earth in an astonishing, soul-lifting, six literal days.

Now, folks, hear me on this, please. This is not my drum to beat. This is not my soapbox to rail from.

As God's redeemed people, it is our precious heritage in Christ. This account of origins belongs to you.

It's for you to believe, to live, to defend, to order your life by, to know your God by. This is our heritage in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 6 : 04 ] Who was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him. And apart from him, nothing came into being that has come into being.

Friends, the way, the way God says he brought all this into being matters to God. And it matters to how we know God and worship him.

God gives us this true account. So that we will worship him as he reveals himself to us as creator.

The facts of this account are critical to knowing God in the way he desires to be known. Now, please let that sink into your hearts and minds as to why it's so critically important that you and I come to this passage of scripture and allow the Lord in the way that he's written it, how he's written it, according to what he's written it.

Let it speak to us and reveal to us this great maker God. In the way that he wants to be known. That is our responsibility.

[ 7 : 21 ] So taking this account on faith, just as the Lord God has written it to us, is about worshiping God in spirit and truth.

It's the same with any other passage, isn't it? We want to come to any other passage in scripture and allow God to reveal himself to us so that we can worship him as that God.

How else would we know him? How else would you know God if it weren't for God's word revealing himself to you in the way that he's written it? How else would you know? You wouldn't. Because you and I, in an unsafe state, look at all of creation that is supposed to carry us to the throne of grace and cause us to seek out our maker.

What do we do with what creation tells us? In our unsafe state, we suppress that truth and unrighteousness. We're rebels at heart. We don't want to allow the creation to tell us there's a creator.

We don't want to be accountable to him. We want to do our own thing. Many passages in scripture tell us that Romans 1 just being one of them. We begin then at the beginning with what God says, with what he means by what he says, and we take him at his word.

[ 8 : 37 ] Now, that doesn't mean that we're not careful in our study. It doesn't mean that we're not circumspect and prudent, that we don't apply the principles of interpretation carefully.

We must do that, beloved. And that is what I'm appealing to you to do. That's what I'm undergirding here as I offer you this introduction. Let's look at Genesis chapter one together.

We're reading down through the text and we'll conclude here at God's conclusion of the second day. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth at that time, the first day of creation, the earth was formless and void and darkness was over the surface of the deep. And the spirit, the Holy Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Then God said, let there be light. And there was light. God saw that the light was good and God separated the light from the darkness.

[ 9 : 38 ] God called the light day and the darkness. He called night. There was evening and there was morning one day. Then God said, let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters.

God made the expanse and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse. And it was so.

God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning. A second day. Now, friends, Moses wrote these details by the superintending power of the Holy Spirit.

All of the human authors, some 40 plus authors, human authors of scripture. They all were superintended in that writing by the Holy Spirit. The details, the details of this account are what God wanted the Hebrews.

And then by that way, us to know about our origins. Is everything written in this account about God making and creating the world?

[ 10 : 52 ] No. What's here is what God wanted us to know so that we would know something about where we came from, who made us, why he made us. Even details about how he went about it to a limited degree.

Why? All of that is so you and I would know God as creator, as maker of heaven and earth. This is supposed to induce worship from our hearts.

We want to be as careful here as we are in any other place in scripture. This passage of scripture is meant to showcase the power of God in his sovereign will to create what was good to him and in the way that was good to him.

So what Moses does is takes us through what God wants us to know about God's activity to make a livable or a habitable world for our good and God's glory.

All of this is moving in a direction, friends. From the very first verse of the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, God is moving all of this somewhere.

[ 12 : 04 ] I told you that in the very first sermon. Genesis takes us all the way through the Bible to Revelation because a beginning is a beginning because it has an end. And God is marching all of what he's done and made to an end where he will then remake.

And it won't be something that we understand as a beginning because it won't have an end. I know that's mind boggling, isn't it? But this is our great big God. He will make something for all eternity.

Won't have any end. In the first chapter of Genesis, chapter one, verse one, we see God doing something in the beginning.

In the beginning. And it's all moving toward what God will do in making the planet livable. The crowning aspect of that creation will happen on day six.

Won't it? And that'll be us. You hear what I'm saying? God is doing all of this. For his glory.

[ 13 : 09 ] And for us. He's making a place for us to live. A paradise for us to live in. What happened?

Well, we'll get there. Because this is not paradise, is it? No, that's still to come. We're not in heaven yet. So what I'm trying to do here in the way that I'm titling these sermons and the way that I'm outlining these sermons.

This is what I'm doing. I'm I'm choosing or trying to stress. What God stresses in his own evaluation of his work.

What does God say? How does God evaluate this work that is his work in creation? It is all good.

At the end, very good. So, beloved, let's apply our worshipful hearts to drain every single drop of good about our creator in his work from this account of origins that God wrote for us.

[ 14 : 17 ] Now, here's where we were last week. Just a very quick outline review here. This was point number one. God's good way. One day we dealt with day one here or one day where God created light.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void. Darkness was over the face of the deep. The spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Then God said, let there be light. And there was light. God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

He called the light day, the darkness night. There was evening and there was morning. One day. One day. So here is the pattern establishing God's sovereign authority as creator.

This is the pattern that he gives us in the creation account as God begins to make, make, make all the way into day six. God said, God saw, God called, and it was so.

[ 15 : 19 ] That's the basic outline for every single day. And given some nuance here and there. I shared another outline for this creation pattern last sermon.

You can see that on the slides from last week. But I want to move forward now and just show you the basic one. What I'm seeking to do is honor and be led in my exegesis and in my exposition by this pattern of God's creative activity.

I'm allowing this to hold me accountable. This is God's pattern in this text. And it's repeated over and over and over. So I'm not going to monkey with that.

I'm just going to preach this message. Each of these messages relying on that pattern to guide me. God's given me my outline. And this is it. So I'm going to emphasize what the text itself emphasizes.

That's that's good. Exegesis and exposition. Now, because some of those words may be new to you. Let me give you a quick, brief definition of why that's important that I'm doing that and why you want to know that and be assured of it.

[ 16 : 32 ] Exegesis. Exegesis is the work that I do in coming to understand what God's word means by what it says.

I have to be very careful about what is actually written so that I can understand what it means by what it says. Otherwise, I risk reading into the text.

And I don't want to do that. You don't want me to do that. I don't want you guys to sit out there doing that. My exegesis helps me understand the author's meaning.

The author's meaning for his original audience and readers. Exposition is using that exegetical work to unpack that meaning in the form of a sermon.

Exposition. So exposition is the way I use the exegesis, the study that I do trying to come to an understanding of the meaning. I take that study, that exegesis, and I use it to unpack that meaning with you in the form of a sermon.

[ 17 : 42 ] It's very important that I am trying to get to the author's original meaning for his original audience. You understand why that's important. I am right. It's I don't want a monkey with the meaning.

What I'm asking myself is this. What did Moses mean when he wrote it? That's the meaning. I don't have any right to assign meaning to any text in scripture. I didn't write it.

It's not my book. It's God's, and God's the author. So you and I need to work very hard to understand when Moses wrote this account, who was he writing to? Why did he write it?

What was the purpose that was behind these people at this time needing to read this and hear this and study this and take this into their hearts? Well, we've covered all that in my introduction a couple of three sermons ago.

That's what all of this work is about. Now, I'm just trying to lay some groundwork for you as we move into talking about how we're to understand these texts of scripture.

[ 18 : 40 ] One of the reasons that I'm taking pains for this is because in my mind, this is probably one of, if not the most controversial and disputed passages in all the Bible.

And it's sad to me that it's that way because it's very, very, very clear. There are other places in scripture that are much more enigmatic to me than this is.

So let's move forward and see what we're going to talk about with this second day, this second day. God's good way, a second day.

Now we're going to talk about the sky. And in keeping with this pattern, it's the good of what God said. That's where the text begins in verse six.

Then God said. Let there be an expanse. In the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters.

[ 19 : 39 ] From the waters. Now, repetition, and I pointed this out to you before. Repetition is one way Moses expresses emphasis in the text.

If you're talking with someone in conversation and they keep repeating a certain thing to you, you're probably going to realize that's important to them.

Right. They're wanting to get that across to you. That's what Moses is doing. He's repeating over and over. Repeating.

God said. Throughout this account stresses God's power and authority over creation. All he had to do was speak. That's the point.

God's power and sovereign control over all that he's making is something that God only has to exercise speech. And it comes into existence from nothing. Creatio ex nihilo.

[ 20 : 39 ] From nothing. Creation from nothing. And it was so. Evening and morning and the day night cycle closing each day.

All characterize creations rapid immediate obedience to God's command. Folks, if we if we monkey around with that, we're missing the point of what this literary style.

This historical narrative is portraying about God, our maker. Do you see what I'm saying? The very way that this is all couched. The form, the grammar, the definition of the words, the chronological order.

All of that is suggesting to us in very clear literary terms that God is speaking something from nothing into existence and it is obeying immediately.

And that suggests to us the power and command of God's sovereign control over all the universe and all that he's made. This is why I've repeated to you that this is a hill to die on, because this is describing God in the way God wants us to know him.

[ 21 : 48 ] I speak. I speak. I speak. I speak. I speak. And it comes into existence. I speak my word and the purpose of my word accomplishes what I send out for it to do. Amen.

Now, God spoke. God spoke, beloved, and it was so. God spoke and it was so. Creation immediately came into existence.

On day two, it concerns the what we are calling the expanse in some translations, firmament. The word is rakia, rakia.

Rakia depicted a metal worker stamping out or beating out a flat base. Now, we don't want to push that picture too far. We don't want to push any of the word pictures in the Bible too far.

We have to interpret all of that in light of the context of what the passage is telling us. But now we have in our picture, in our minds, the picture of a metal worker taking a piece of raw metal and stamping it out into a flat base.

[ 22 : 55 ] All right. That's the idea so far. God commanded a separation between the waters above and the waters remaining on earth.

The space in between you and I call sky. Sky. At the time of creation, the function of the sky was to act as an expanse dividing or separating the deep that he's been talking about earlier.

The deep is the mass of water created on day one. Maybe it was this mass of water and this mucky mud or something.

I don't know. We don't get those kind of details. All we know is right now is this mass of water in this place that God has created so far.

And now it's like he's going to take his hands. This is not what I'm saying happened. I'm just giving you an illustration. It's as if he took his hands and he moved into that water and he separated it so that some of the water went up and some of the water stayed on earth.

[ 24 : 10 ] But he created. That's the idea of rakia. Stretch out. Beat, beat, beat, beat. What is he doing when he's beating that metal? He's stretching it out.

He's moving its form out. He's expanding it. That's the idea. Don't get fixed on the solid part. Get fixed on. He's moving that metal out.

That's what God's doing. And he's creating a space or an expanse in between all of that. You and I typically refer to that expanse as sky sky.

All right. Now, let's let's keep moving and look at how verse seven helps us with this. God made the expanse and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse.

And it was so. So this is the good of God made. We're already there. Now, the Lord God is taking this raw material that he's created from nothing and he's exercising his dominion over it.

[ 25 : 23 ] All right, beloved, more and more than a reiteration of verse six, verse seven is very important because verse seven tells us that God is controlling.

God is molding God is molding God is directing every aspect of this process for his purpose. Here's what I want you to see from verse six to verse seven.

We have God actively actively moving in his purpose and design to see this formed in those moments. Do you see this is this is an active God participating in these moments to make this come about.

I'll show you why that's important for us to get a picture of as Moses presents it to us here. God spoke and it happened.

He is commanding creation in verse six, is he not? That's a command. Then God said, then God directed, commanded you.

[ 26 : 31 ] I would say demanded. Let there be an expanse. In the midst of the waters. He's commanding in verse six.

In verse seven, he is immediately obeyed. There's no time between these verses. Say, Jeff, what are what is going on here?

We are reading about the miracle of God's creation. We cannot fully understand or comprehend this. It is even very, very difficult for us to take what we do know as true science, even now in our understanding of the laws of what govern this world and bring those laws back into that time and say, well, this must be and this must be and that must be.

Folks, this is the miracle. God is taking nothing and making something out of it. God is making these rules as he goes. He's fixing these boundaries.

In many ways, what you and I would look back and see in this is this. He's defying the laws of what we understand about our world, but he's not defying them.

[ 27 : 41 ] He's creating them as he goes, and he's not confined by them. That's the point. God is not confined by what we understand. We don't need to help God out and say God needed more time than a day to do this.

No, he didn't. He did not need more time. I'm going to show you the reason why scripture tells us this six day thing is a hill to die on and why it's so important for us to understand it and receive it as on faith because of what it tells us about God, beloved.

Please don't let the devil rob you of what this is revealing to us about God as he makes his world in the way that he's telling us he made it. We are reading about a miracle.

Now, let me ask a question with you and answer it as we do our investigation here together and we unpack this. What was God's purpose in separating the waters?

Does the Bible answer that question in this context? Yes, it does. What was God's purpose in separating the waters? Well, part of this work established a breathable atmosphere, a breathable atmosphere on earth.

[ 28 : 52 ] Another portion of this particular work delineated a space or an expanse or a place for the cosmos.

Now, isn't it interesting to us? We call the reaches beyond our atmosphere. What? Space.

Space. Where do we get that from? Expanse. Stretching out. God created a space where there was no space. He created that space and stretched the waters out so that he can make a breathable atmosphere for us to live in.

So that he could make a space for the home of the cosmos. The heavenly bodies. Had to go somewhere. And so he made a place to put it.

That's it. That's your God. He wants you to know him as that God. That all he has to do. And I'm using my hands and all that to illustrate.

[ 29 : 56 ] That's all that is. The only thing the Lord did was speak. Imagine the power for me to be able to say, I can't even do it. I'll mess it up.

Because I can't even conceive of nothing. Can you? Can you conceive of nothing? You can't. Everything that you know and relate to is based on something you know and relate to.

You can't get to nothing. You can't. God was there. And out of nothing. God in his mind. Spoke.

And created it. I told Suzanne the other day. We're growing a dahlia. Plant. In our little garden thing we have in our front. And that thing is making flowers about that big around.

For those of you who are gardeners. And I was out there the other day. And I think she came home. And I was standing there looking at this thing. And the intricacy of that one flower.

[ 30 : 59 ] And I was surrounded by hundreds of flowers and plants. That one flower awed me as I stood there just about weeping and thinking about. That came out of nothing.

There was nothing before that. And you created this. And you created hundreds of thousands of things like this in our world that are unique. And special.

And delicate. And beautiful. And intricate. And there was enough in that flower to cause me to say thank you God for being my God. And I would never want to rob that God and that maker of his intelligence, his wisdom, his beauty.

What did that flower tell me about the beauty of my God? And I think, man, you really know what beauty is, don't you? We struggle with that.

We try to grasp beauty. But God is beauty. And so when he speaks, he can speak it into existence. God is wisdom.

[ 32 : 03 ] And so he can speak wisdom into his creation that reveals all of this wonder and power. And this is the God that is your saving God.

And this is who he wants you to know him as. And we will not let our enemy rob us of one ounce of what the scripture tells us about this God, this maker, this creator, this savior.

Now, I do get worked up about this. I mean, I don't know what you guys are thinking now, but maybe it's, well, if a flower could do that to him, good night. What did the Grand Canyon do to the boy?

It just about blew my head off is what it did. God is just big. We need to let God continue to be big in our hearts, in our hearts. Don't squish him down.

I'm going to keep speaking to this, so stay with me. You and I can only speculate about the full nature of these waters above.

[ 33 : 06 ] And boy, I tell you, of all the commentators, I have stacks and stacks of books that I'm trying to go through with all of this. I've been working on it for a few months. And let me tell you, there are all kinds of ideas out there.

Some sound very plausible, but all of it's speculation because we can't go any further than what the text tells us. The text tells us that God spoke and created an expanse.

He separated the waters from the waters. And in doing that, he made a breathable atmosphere. And in that space, he created a place so that he could put the sun and the moon and the stars and the galaxies.

Wow. But he had to do that. Let me take you to one place here real quickly. It's Psalm 148. Verses four and five.

I'll put it up here on the screen in just a second as well. Psalm 148. Just four and five. So don't camp out there with me. I'm just going to show you and then we're going to close it up and go back to Genesis.

[ 34 : 07 ] But this will give us just a little bit of insight into these waters above. The psalmist is praising God for all of his work in creation.

The angels, the hosts, the moon, the stars of light. And then he comes to verse four. Praise God. Highest heavens and the waters that are above the highest heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord for he commanded and they were created. Notice again, friends, he commanded and they were created.

Now, you just take that literally. Just take it in the normal reading of the passage and you understand there was an immediate obedience to that command. Was there not? That's what it means.

Also, notice in verse four, the highest heavens or the heavens of heavens. The heavens of heavens just as a way of capturing what's in between.



[ 35 : 08 ] It means the highest heavens. That's why the NASB translates it that way. And the waters that are above those heavens. Now, why is that important?

What we know is that God is we're back in Genesis now. All of you who keep reading the song because you love God's word. Come back to Genesis with me. What we know is that God is stretching this space out into the heavens and establishing it there forever.

He is establishing it there forever. There are some theories that talk about these waters being like a canopy that surrounded the earth at that time, a thick water layer that served as a protection against the ultraviolet rays of the sun, etc.

And the argument gets very complex the more you talk about it. And the theories need to be subject to these laws that God has built into his world.

And so while I deeply respect Henry Morris and many, many of his insights. Oh, they're so incredible as a scientist. This is one case where I read the literature and try to do some study about how all this came about and what that might be.

[ 36 : 39 ] And I back off a little bit and I say, boy, that sounds really plausible. Because when we get to the flood, we hear waters being coming down and we hear waters coming up.

And so it did did that water layer get released and it came down. And now that's why people don't live as long because now we're not as protected from the sun.

The problem with all of that is when you talk with other scientists to explore the the likelihood of a canopy like that being over. And then they want to take the word *rakia* and make it say that.

And it doesn't. And the problem with all of that, according to these scientists, is that would create a greenhouse effect that would cook us. Because water is not a good barrier against ultraviolet light.

And they make this scientific argument. I read through some of them, you know, and boy, it's like you read it through and. I have to. OK, now let me go back. All right. Let me read that again. I'm not a scientist.

[ 37 : 40 ] And this stuff is deep water. No pun intended. This is deep stuff. So I'll tell you a little bit more about that and bring a guy in that's going to weigh in on this with us because I want to be real clear about this.

I'm just saying those are speculations. The truth is, we don't know. We don't know. What we do know is what the scripture tells us. God separated and made an expanse.

We call that expanse sky. Now we have breathable air. And we sometimes we'll look up and we'll say that we'll say, boy, the the clouds. Look at the clouds in the sky today.

Isn't that a beautiful cloud in the sky? But we also that's our atmosphere. But we also say this. Boy, the sun sure is high in the sky today. But the sun is outside of our atmosphere, isn't it?

We refer to all of that as sky. We use it back and forth. And the context helps determine what part of the sky we're talking about. But it's the space. That's the important material point about what we're trying to talk about here.

[ 38 : 42 ] This, this and all of God's doing. Notice that God doesn't pronounce this work as good. You see that in the text? On the second day, God doesn't pronounce this section as good, this part of the work.

But it's not because his work here is bad. It's just the first phase of this separation and work with the waters. Limited to the waters.

Each phase in of itself is building on the phase before it. So we could say that until day six, none of it's complete. But here the idea is God is still working with the waters.

And because that's not all finished, he doesn't pronounce it as good yet. It's not because it's bad. It's just not yet finished in the way of what he's doing with the waters. His declaration of good, if you'll notice, comes at the end of verse 10.

When the separating and gathering of the waters distinguished from the land is completed, then it gets the good mark. Right? You with me? I just don't want you to think that day two gets a bad rap because God didn't say it was good.

[ 39 : 53 ] And there's something, oh yeah, because people do that. And commentators, some of them have written in that way. And they want to take that and say, okay, now we can see that this is where we'll insert evil.

This is where we'll insert something ominous. This portends the fall in the garden. And we're like, where does it say that? How can, that's just an extrapolation that can't be supported by the context of the passage.

That's the kind of stuff that we read into. We're not allowing the scripture to tell us what it means by what it says. Very, very important. So we're all tracking now.

We're seeing this big God doing this awesome thing as he walks us through this chronology of one day and then a second day and a third day and a fourth day. Boy, and it's just inspiring.

It really is. Now in each day, God's stages of creation bring the earth closer and closer to sustaining plant, animal, and human life.

[ 40 : 57 ] That's where all this is marching to. He's just getting all the stage set for that. He could have done it any way he wanted to. This is God's original design.

He wants to make a habitable or livable planet for us to rule. And you'll see that in Isaiah 45, 18.

I'm not going to turn there, just give you the reference itself. Oh, let me throw that. I just noticed I didn't put that up here. There you go. That's the passage we just read in the psalm. Now, let's ask this question as we move through the remainder of this.

Why these stages over six days? Why is that so important? Why is that being highlighted and put out in our faces over and over and over again?

Another way to ask this is this. Why not create it all in six nanoseconds or over six million years? Why? Why six literal 24-hour solar days?

[ 42 : 00 ] Well, beloved, this chapter itself is giving us our answer. And we've been bringing that out in the other messages already. But we can also see God's purpose for six literal days, which will eventually comprise a seven-day week.

We can see all of that as it's spelled out for the Israelites and then consequently us. And if we can do that, we can go to Exodus chapter 20 to see it.

Exodus 20. I'm going to ask you to go there with me. What does God tell us? Well, in Exodus chapter 20, we have it starting out with the Ten Commandments.

Pretty important passage. The Ten Commandments for the life of the people of Israel. If you'll notice on verse 9.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work. Now, do you think that that means six literal 24-hour days?

[ 43 : 08 ] All right, why would you come to that conclusion? Because the normal reading of the passage requires that we understand six days.

We can relate to that. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But now on the seventh day, verse 10, is a Sabbath of the Lord your God.

In it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant, or your cattle, or your sojourner who stays with you.

Now, notice verse 11 caps it off. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth. Now, folks, would hermeneutics, would good scientific principles apply to interpreting the passage of Scripture we're in, would it require us to take six days literally in verse 9, which is clearly the meaning, even in a casual reading, and then go to verse 11 and take six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth and say, no, now, wait a minute, we all know that's not really true.

And so now six days become what? Six million years? Six thousand years? Or just some undisclosed, undetermined amount of time between each day?

[ 44 : 26 ] No. No. Beloved, no. In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day.

Rested would be better translation as ceased. God didn't need to rest. That kind of gives us a little bit of a misunderstanding of God's creative activity here. He didn't need to rest.

He wasn't weary. He ceased. He stopped. And in stopping, he made the stoppage a set-apart holy reality. I'm done.

I've done what I wanted to do in the way that I wanted to do it, and it's done. Man, thank you, Lord God. And therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Now, when we think about the context of the Ten Commandments, what kind of priority or importance would we put on the Ten Commandments for the life of Israel?

[ 45 : 22 ] Pretty high, don't you think? The Decalogue became the way that Israel understood their God as a sovereign lawmaker. I'm accountable to God for living like this.

And they realized, Paul would later say, that we would use the law to demonstrate. We would use the Ten Commandments to show us we can't do it. We can't live like that. And in not being able to live like that, it drives us to ask, where's the hope?

And the hope is in the cross. We go to the one who lived that law perfectly without sin. And that perfect life is applied to us in righteousness so that we then stand before God in the hope of the righteousness of Jesus.

He lived that perfect life on my behalf. He didn't violate a single one of those laws. And so he becomes the perfection in the law for me.

And that gets applied to me by imputation, by credit. And that all happens by grace through faith in Christ Jesus alone. Amen, church? That's the gospel.

[ 46 : 29 ] All right, we know that. So we know, couched within the Decalogue, couched within what Israel's being told, God appeals to himself as maker and creator.

And says, just as I created the earth in six days, this will be the cycle for you. And on the seventh day, even as I ceased my work, you will cease yours. And that becomes the pattern.

Critical. Critical. To our understanding of who God is. In simple terms, I'll put it up here for this. In simple terms, the Lord established our daily cycle of living as an ongoing reminder of our relationship to him as creator.

Have you ever thought of that? Each day of your life, my life, informs our hearts of God's power and goodness in creating our world, our work, our week, and in creating us.

It's all supposed to remind us, inspire us, draw our hearts up. Boy, in a world that is seeming coming apart. It's always been coming apart. The Bible tells us that the world is marching not toward an evolutionary betterment.

[ 47 : 43 ] That is not true. The Bible tells us the world is not evolving, but devolving. Amen. The world's getting worse, folks, not better. That's going to continue as a trend until Jesus comes back to get us.

That's why we put our hope in the new heaven and the new earth. Not this place. Not this place. Doesn't mean we shouldn't work for peace and all that kind of thing. We just understand what the Lord has couched for us.

Now, God made us to live in rhythm or in harmony with his design for creating the world in six literal days.

We live, work, rest, and worship in sync with his six-day creation week. Beloved, that is beautiful, isn't it? Doesn't that balm your heart and give you encouragement and edify you?

To know that God is calling us to be in relationship to him in the very pattern and cycle of life that God himself created when he made the world from the very beginning.

[ 48 : 46 ] God made the world to cycle like that, and he put us in that cycle and said, live within that. What do you feel like when you work seven days a week? What do you feel like when you work 14 and 21 days a week?

I've done that. Not wise. Not wise. Takes a toll, doesn't it? It's not God's way. It's not God's way. Originally, God's people were to set aside the seventh day to rest and reflect on this good God who does good for them in every way.

Every aspect of God's creation is designed to draw our hearts into worship and fellowship with the Lord as our creator. All right.

The good of God called. The good of God called. We're all the way into verse eight now. This is where it all gets good and closes up. God called the expanse heaven, and there was evening and there was morning.

A second day. A second day. It's very interesting. I'll do more with this maybe next time. When God closed out verse five and there was evening and there was morning.

[ 50 : 00 ] One day. How does he close out? Verse eight. And there was evening and there was morning. A second day. Not one day. He didn't say one day or what a second day.

That's going to become very important later. We'll talk more about that another time. Just note that that's the way the scripture says it. Now, of course, in all of this, God is exercising his authority, his sovereignty, his control, his dominion, his power over what he's made by naming what he's made.

Right. All right. Matt and Jessica, you guys got to name your babies. I got to name my babies. You got to name your babies. Right. That's why your name is Brooke. Rookie. Right. We get it. We get to give you those names.

Why? Why do we get to give you those names when you came out of the womb and I and I said, your name's going to be Jared. You didn't sit up. Jared didn't sit up and go, oh, we're not doing Jared.

All right. We're not doing Jared or Susie. We're not. No. No. Parents get to name your kids because we're the authority. You wouldn't be here if it wasn't for us.

[ 51 : 07 ] And so the Lord, you wouldn't. Now, God doesn't cop an attitude like that. I don't want to do God with an attitude. But God says, I made you. I get to name you. Right.

Mankind. I get to do that. Sun, moon, sky, darkness, light, expanse. Sky, whatever.

He made it. So that's what he's doing. He's exercising his control. He does this throughout each of the days that he's creating. These names reflect his goodness, folks.

They reflect his goodness. We name our kids and we mean good by it. Oftentimes, we give careful consideration to those names. I don't like this one. I don't like that one.

That one doesn't seem to fit. And invariably, the names seem to go with the personalities. I always love how that works out. I wanted to name my third and final child, a boy. I wanted to name him Jeffrey.

[ 52 : 05 ] And Suzanne said, no. One Jeff is aplenty. Thank you very much. And yet, Jared was a clone of me. Nanny, nanny, nanny.

He didn't have my name, but did he not? He acted exactly like me. My mannerisms. He thought like I did. Bless him. Amen. So God is doing this and it's good.

In doing this, God is exercising also his approval and blessing on what he's made. To name it. To name it and solidify it with a name.

To help it have a presence with a name. Oh, that's just so good. Now, look what the text says here as it closes up. And there was evening and there was morning a second day.

Evening and morning a second day. Very similar to how God closed out the first day. Friends, very, very few places in scripture have generated as much controversy, speculation, argumentation, alternate theories, and even outright denials.

[ 53 : 13 ] Or have drawn as much ire and criticism as, And there was evening and there was morning. A first day.

Or day one. A second day. A third day. A fourth day. Etc. In its spiritual darkness and rebellion against God the creator and his truth about origins, The world under the oppressive influence of Satan rejects the creation account as it's written.

As it's written. So much of the world's attacks against Genesis are meant to seem and sound sophisticated. So that many Christians are intimidated.

And they even feel the need to take God's word on creation and reconcile it with the world's rhetoric. Or with what the world passes for science about origins.

Now, the inherent dangers of that approach have done much, much damage to Christians, to the church, and even to society. Now, I want to bring that out. Why would I not?

[ 54 : 21 ] I'm a pastor. I'm a shepherd. I want to warn the sheep away from what will harm you and harm our gathering and our understanding of what it means for us to worship our creator.

So that we worship in spirit and truth. You're welcome. Woe be it to me if I don't do that. We are served well as we apply the same hermeneutical principles of interpretation to creation passages as to other portions of scripture.

We're also served well by maintaining our spiritual focus about why we gather here each Lord's day. Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation.

So I'm not bashing science. I just want to keep it in its proper place. And I want to clarify that as I move through this. All right? Hermeneutics deals with the science of interpretation.

Principles for proper interpretation. When we talk about why we're here, maintaining our spiritual focus about why we gather here each Lord's day, that becomes important in the way that we understand the creation account.

[ 55 : 32 ] Look, why do we gather? We gather for corporate worship. Worship. We are not here to be entertained. We are not here to be wowed by Jeff's cleverness or oratorical ability.

No. We're here to worship. We're here to encourage and build up one another in worshipping God. We cannot offer anything acceptable to God apart from his word of truth.

We worship in spirit and truth, do we not? Our church family takes a really high view of scripture and with good reasons. We really take a high view of God's word.

We keep it up here and we move toward it. We don't dumb it down and bring it down and make it something it shouldn't be. Friends, let me say it this way. Please hear me carefully.

We are not coming to this time of worship under God's word and saying, convince me. Now, I don't know of any of you doing that. Or I'd have to come talk to you.

[ 56 : 37 ] In love, I would do it. Because that's not the heart you need to be bringing sitting under the word. No, I think all of you come here because you get the word. We are coming together under God's word to say this.

Please convict me. Please change me. Please conform me to Jesus Christ. Convict me.

Change me. Conform me. Not convince me. The word of God is the word of God whether we say it is or not. Now, that heart commitment to God's truth changing us into Christ's likeness, that gives us our convictions.

That brings clarity and courage to us about the issues of life. Because we take God's perspective on it. It gives us our compassion towards the people in our lives.

Because we see that Jesus could live under all of these mandates of courage and conviction and clarity. But he was a man of compassion. Jesus didn't beat people over the head with this.

[ 57 : 43 ] He left it out there and said, this is the truth. Embrace it and know God. God's word on creation is the most authoritative, sophisticated, and accurate account of our origins that will ever be written.

Despite the world's theories, despite the world's skeptics and their assertions, we treasure the word of God as truth for life. Now, stay with me as I go through this with you.

As we study God's word together, it matters where we start in our understanding and interpretations. Do we start with and stand on what God says or do we start with and stand on something else?

And then do we require the Bible to conform or to measure up to that standard or that something else? You and I do this each time we come to God's word about any aspect of our walk of faith in the Lord.

We ask this, Lord, Lord, am I believing biblically, truthfully about this? Lord, am I allowing that truth to change me into greater Christ likeness to Jesus?

[ 58 : 57 ] Lord, is this helping me see you as a bigger God? Is this causing me to bow down to you and worship you as creator? Is it humbling me and exalting you?

These are the things that we ask. Look, the facts or the truths help us follow Christ in a biblically informed faith. What is this not?

What is this not? It's not blind faith. Folks, you will never hear us at Grace talk about blind faith. What is that? I don't even know what that is. Blind faith isn't faith.

It's not the faith of scripture. Our faith is an informed faith. It's a faith informed in Christ Jesus and his truth. That's where we stand. It's not blind faith.

It's a biblical faith. You and I are aiming at being faithful stewards of the truth. Part of that stewardship concerns how you and I make use of science in our walk with the Lord and in our understanding of his word.

[ 59 : 59 ] Now, so here's my attempt to clarify some of this for us. All right. Because I don't want to be a science basher. I don't want to do that. And I'm going to tell you why in just a minute.

But I do want to clarify where we need to keep science in relationship to scripture. This is very, very important for me as your pastor. Let me say it again.

This is about stewardship. And our stewardship concerns how we make use of science in our walk with the Lord and in our understanding of his word. How we come to interpret his word and understand his word.

Now, let me share this with you. Doctor, I rarely do this, but I want you to know this. Doctor, Jonathan Sarfati's work has proven really, really helpful to me as I try to navigate solid biblical exegesis and true science.

Doctor, Sarfati studied mathematics, geology, physics and chemistry at Victory University in Australia. I'm reading from his bio here.

[ 61 : 03 ] He earned his Ph.D. in physical chemistry. Now, listen to this. His doctoral dissertation and his primary focus of study was in vibrational spectroscopy.

Vibrational spectroscopy. There may be one person in this congregation who knows what that is. I didn't know what it was. He has written extensively on high temperature superconductors and sulfur and selenium containing ring and cage molecules.

Right. Right. Right. He's a chess champion. He's well known for his demonstrations at creation conferences, because he's a Christian, where he successfully plays chess against up to 12 opponents at the same time.

Blindfolded. What does all that translate into? He's not God. He's a smart guy. He's a smart guy.

He is a top notch, well-respected scientist in Christendom and outside of it. His scholarship is impeccable.

[ 62 : 17 ] He says, he says this. Some might ask, aren't many of our problems due to placing science above God's word?

The solution is understanding the difference between the ministerial and magisterial uses of science. I thought this was very helpful. I want to minister to you in this because I don't I'm not a science basher.

But at the same time, I want to keep all this in its place. All right. Look at this next one. The magisterial use of science occurs when science stands over scripture like a magistrate and judges it.

The magisterial use all too often overrules the clear teaching of the Bible to come up with a meaning inconsistent with sound hermeneutics. That's the problem.

All right. Now look at this one. The ministerial approach accepts that all things necessary for our faith in life are either expressly set down in scripture or may be logically deduced from scripture.

[ 63 : 17 ] The inerrant and authoritative word of God. So far, so good. The biblical way to think of science does not involve a hands-off approach by some deistic.

That would mean uninvolved God. Rather, natural laws are descriptions of the way God, the divine lawmaker, upholds his creation in a regular and repeatable way.

You could look at Colossians there and see that passage. Conversely, though, conversely, miracles are God's way of operating in his creation in a special way for special reasons.

Rather than capricious interruptions of the natural order at some whim, thus miracles should be regarded not as a violation of natural law, but in addition.

Thought that was very helpful. What are we saying? Creation is a miracle. It doesn't violate science for creation to be what creation is as it's written in the Bible.

[ 64 : 24 ] It doesn't violate science. It goes beyond it. Because that's God. That's God. I love this.

Now, I'm saying all of this because I want, I desperately want to encourage you in a robust faith in what God has written. Beloved, I love you and I want so much for this to bless you.

I don't want to make the mistake of discouraging you, hear me, from what true science can help us know and use in our walk of faith, especially when the Bible is silent.

Can science help us in what we understand about Scripture and God and the things? Yes, it can. As long as it serves the word and not usurps the word or stands over the word.

As long as we're not trying to do things like the six literal days of creation and bring what we're calling science into this thing and saying, yes, I know that it says that and I know that it says that in what looks like a very literal and normal way.

[ 65 : 33 ] However, the however is the problem. I think we've moved from allowing the word to be what it is and mean what it says by what it says into now I'm going to let science stand over the word.

All right. So again, I'm saying we can be encouraged by what true science can help us know and use in our understanding of walking with the Lord and when the Bible is silent. God created laws over his physical universe.

He did that. These laws can be known by us. We can apply true scientific inquiry to study God's world and we should.

We should do that. That's incumbent upon us to do that. There is true science and there is pseudoscience. True science.

Look at this. True science will always. I wish I'd have underlined it. Always support God's word and wisdom. What? Wait a minute. That's an absolute statement.

[ 66 : 35 ] That's right. Not backing off. True science will always support God's word and wisdom. You say, Jeff, how can you know that is fact? How can you be so absolute? Well, here's the answer.

Because God created science. God created these laws. God created this order. This isn't about chaos. This is about a God creating order out of chaos.

Science reveals truths about God's world. It can help. Those truths were created by the Lord. God created the natural laws that govern his universe.

Did he not? And creator God can alter those laws. Can he not? He can supersede those laws for his special purposes and designs.

I would think that creation would be called special. This was one time, never happened again. This is what we read about in God's creation narrative.

[ 67 : 34 ] Here are several examples. Beloved, please let me love you now in this way. Let your pastor love you. Let me bring you up into my arms and love you in this way and show you some things.

Here are several examples of God overruling his own natural laws and going beyond science in a way that can encourage our hearts. A great storm was battering the weary, fearful disciples on the Sea of Galilee.

That happened a few times. The storm was filling up the boat with water. Jesus was asleep in the boat while the disciples were fighting and fearing for their very lives.

And notice what happened. As I tell you this story. And they woke him and said to him, Jesus, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?

All right, that's how serious it was. And he got up and rebuked the wind. And he said, God said to the sea, hush, be still.

[ 68 : 40 ] Now, I don't know. I imagine there's nothing in the text that helps me know this for sure. It's just the context of knowing the Lord Jesus. Here's this violent storm that's raging. Winds, rain, sheets of rain.

This thing is chaotic. Everything's all over the place. It's so bad that these men who are fishermen, professional fishermen, are fearing for their very lives. They wake Jesus up.

Jesus stands up in the boat. And I don't think he did this. I don't think Jesus went, oh, hush, be still. I don't think he did that. I think our Lord said, hush, be still.

Immediate obedience. It didn't take 6,000 years. It didn't even take six seconds. Immediate calm and obedience. And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.



That's your Lord. In a similar incident, another storm, another storm, a different occasion, caught the disciples out on the lake. But this time, Jesus was back on shore because he had sent the disciples ahead of him.

[ 69 : 50 ] So he's back on the shore. They're out in the lake. And it's getting really, really dark. And they're rowing across the lake. And a storm comes up. And they're not making any progress. The wind and the rain and the waves battered the disciples literally for hours in this context.

I've preached on this. Now, here's the funny part. Funny, strange. They're in the midst of this great storm with all of this stuff pelting them. Threatening to swamp the boat.

They have been rowing for hours. They are exhausted. Very, very, very near to the boat. Near enough to where they could see what was going on.

And near enough to where they could actually speak. Right? They look out across the water. And they see Jesus walking on it. Walking on it.

Please don't let that go by you because you've heard this story before. Jesus Christ, the Lord of all creation, was walking on creation. In a way that none of us can do. They saw it.

[ 70 : 53 ] And you remember what happened, right? They were close enough with all this happening. Now, this slays me. Just read the story. Let you sit there and think about it. You're in the boat. And this is going on.

And you're fighting for your life. And you look up. And this is Jesus. And he's walking right on by you. He's going by the boat. That's what the text says. He's leaving. He's going by the boat.

Hey, hey, hey, hey. That's us. This is us. Don't you see what's happening to me, God? Where are you? Don't you understand what's happening to my life?

Can't you see the pain I'm in? Don't you understand the distress, God? Where are you? See, this is the disciples. Hey, wait. Jesus. That's Jesus. There he is walking. He's just moving on.

He's headed to the shore. I'll see you guys at the shore. And so they call out. They call out to Jesus. They thought it was a spirit and a ghost. They were scared. What did Peter say? If it's you, call me out to you.

[ 71 : 48 ] And what did Peter do? Peter started walking on the water. What happened when he started to sink? What changed? His eyes. He took his eyes off of Christ, put his eyes on himself and on the situation.

And he floundered in the water. Could have drowned if it weren't for Jesus rescuing him. Look what happened as they looked out across the water and Jesus was walking on it.

Then Jesus got into the boat with them and the wind stopped and they were utterly astonished. There you go. That's what creation account is supposed to do to us. Medical science has given us so many wonderful, wonderful helps, folks.

But science bows to its creator in every realm and in every way as almighty God manipulates creation to his own designs. We would expect that by what we read in scripture.

Science cannot explain creation. The original creation. Science cannot explain origins. We have the only account that we need right here.

[ 72 : 53 ] And we need to be careful with it. We wouldn't ask science to do that. When Lazarus was dead and in his grave for four days, Jesus came into town and was led to Lazarus' tomb.

He had the people roll away the stone to the entrance. One of the sisters of Lazarus said, Lord, if we roll away that stone, it's really going to stink.

He's been in there for four days and it'll overwhelm us. You sure you want to do that? Roll away the stone. They rolled away the stone. What happened next? Jesus cried out with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

Now the text tells us he did this loud. Lazarus, come forth. The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with the grave wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth.

Jesus said to them, Unbind him and let him go. This man's alive. The Lord said, and it was so. Nothing is impossible with God, friends.

[ 73 : 54 ] Beloved, if the Lord Jesus Christ didn't create his world in six days, then he didn't hush the storms, he didn't walk on the water, he didn't raise the dead, and he is not our only hope for heaven.

Now I believe that. I believe that because that's what the Bible teaches me. This is my creator God. This is what it says my creator God did in the time that he did it and why he did it.

Science can't help me deal with miracles. And this is a miracle. So I keep science where it needs to be and let science help me when it can help me. But I never elevated over God's word.

Now, look at this. What do each of these accounts have in common? What do each of these accounts have in common? They all reveal Jesus Christ as the almighty and majestic Lord of and over his creation.

And that's the point of the six days of creation. I want to minister that to you. We believe from the very first verse of the first chapter of the first book of the Bible that what God has clearly written in his clearly true and errant word should be clearly believed.

[ 75 : 03 ] Together, you and I need to read, study, and believe God's word on how he created his world. And then, and then, like the disciples in the presence of Jesus hushing the storm, you and I need to let ourselves be astonished by this creator God.

Amen. Let's pray together. Father God in heaven, we have sat under your word now. Your servant has attempted to preach this in a way that would honor your heart as creator and maker.

Lord, we don't want the devil to mix us up and confuse us. We don't want to allow the devil to deceive us or tease us away from a literal understanding of what you've done because that literal understanding helps us understand the greater reality of your power and sovereignty over your creation.

You proved it here as you made the world and you proved it throughout scripture in all these accounts from the Old Testament all the way through the new into Revelation. And one day, we're looking to you to come back, take us to heaven, and create a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness will dwell forever.

Well, we trust you as our maker to do that because we go back to Genesis 1 and see that you've done it before. So, Father, thank you for encouraging us. Help us to use the truth of scripture in ways that are responsible and faithful and helpful as we walk with you.

[ 76 : 37 ] Help us to use science in ways that are helpful and responsible in our walk of faith. Help us to be prudent, circumspect, and wise people as we do this to your glory and for our own good.

We praise and worship you in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.