

THE GOOD BEGINNING

Genesis 1 - 2

STRUCTURE

Key-person: God

Key-locations: Heaven and earth

Key-repetitions:

- God's action: created (1:1, 21,27); saw (1:4, 25, 31); made (1:7, 16, 25); called (1:10); set/put (1:17); blessed (1:22, 28); gave (1:29-31).
- God commanded: let (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26); be (1:28); do not (1:15).
- God said, and it was so (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24).
- Evening came and then morning (1:3, 6, 11, 19, 23, 31).
- Separation: light from darkness (1:4); water above from water below (1:6-7); seas from dry land (1:9); work from rest (2:2); newlyweds from their parents (2:24).
- God saw that it was good (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).
- Reproduce according to its own kind (1:11,12, 21, 25).
- Creation of man (1:26-27; 2:7).
- Responsibility of man over the creation: to rule (1:26, 28); to work and care for (2:15); to name the animals (2:19).

Key-attitudes:

- Positive attitude: everything created was good.
- God loves: he created a paradise for mankind.
- Risk: God established boundaries and there was a risk that man would violate them.
- Loneliness of man before the creation of woman.
- Joy of man when he met Eve.

Initial-situation:

Considering that Genesis chapters one and two deal with the beginning of all things; there is no historical context that precedes the creation event.

Initial-problem:

The earth was formless, empty of life and dark.

Final-situation:

Everything God created was good. Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden. They were naked, but felt no shame.

BIBLE STORY

Creation

In the beginning God created heaven and earth. The earth was a formless void, empty of life, and dark. God's Spirit moved around over the waters (1:1-2).

God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw the light was good. God separated light from darkness and called the light "day" and he called darkness "night." Evening came and then morning; that was the first day (1:3-5).

God said, "Let there be a space between the waters to separate water from water." And it was so. Some of the water was under the space and some of the water was high above it. God called the space "sky." Evening came and then morning; that was the second day (1:4-8).

God said, "Let the water under the sky gather to one place so dry ground will appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land." The gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit-bearing trees with seed inside the fruit. Every seed will reproduce its own kind." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit-bearing trees. And God saw that it was good. Evening came and then morning; that was the third day (1:9-13).

God said, "Let there be lights in the sky to separate day from night. Let these lights serve as signs to mark seasons, days and years." And it was so.

God made two great lights in the sky: the brighter light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. God also made the stars. God put the lights in the sky to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. Evening came and then morning; that was the fourth day (1:14-19).

God said, "Let the water be filled with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth." So God created great sea creatures, every kind of fish, and every living thing that moves in the sea. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and grow in number. Let the fish and water creatures fill the waters. Let the birds grow in number on the earth." Evening came and then morning; that was the fifth day (1:20-23).

God said, "Let the land produce every kind of animal. Let there be livestock, reptiles, and wild animals. Let each reproduce according to its own kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals, livestock, and reptiles; each one reproducing to its own kind. And God saw that it was good (1:24-25).

Then God said, "Let us make man to be like us. Let them rule the fish, birds, livestock, and reptiles." So God created man to be like himself. He created male and female. God blessed them and told them, "Have many children; fill the earth with people and be its master. Rule over the fish, the birds and every reptile (1:26-28).

"I give you every seed-bearing plant and every fruit tree to eat. I give all the green plants for food to all the livestock, wild animals, birds, and reptiles." And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Evening came and then morning; that was the sixth day (1:29-31).

By the seventh day, God had finished his work and rested. God blessed the seventh day and made it a holy day, because on that day he rested from his creation work (2:2-3).

Garden of Eden

When the Lord God made the earth and the sky, there were no plants on the land, no rain, nor was there any man. Mist that rose from the earth and underground springs watered the earth.

The Lord God took dust from the ground and formed a man. God breathed life into the man's nose. Man became a living person (2:4-7).

The Lord God planted a garden in a place called Eden. He placed different beautiful trees with good tasting fruit in the garden. Two other trees were in the middle of the garden: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. A river flowed through Eden and watered the garden (2:8-14).

The Lord God put the man in the Garden of Eden to farm it and take care of it. The Lord God warned the man, "You may eat fruit from any tree in the garden except from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. If you eat fruit from that tree, you will die" (2:15-17).

Creating the Home

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make him a suitable companion." The Lord God had formed from the soil all the animals and birds. He brought them

to the man so the man could name each of them. Whatever the man called each creature, that became its name. The man gave names to all the livestock, birds and wild animals.

But Adam found no suitable companion for himself. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. The Lord used the rib to make a woman. The Lord brought the woman to the man.

The man exclaimed, "This is it! Her bones come from my bone and her flesh from my flesh! She shall be called 'woman,' because she came from a man" (2:18-23).

That is the reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two people will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame (2:24-25).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were some of God's actions mentioned during the creation process?
2. What commands did God give during the creation process?
3. What was God's opinion of his creation actions?
4. How was the creation of people different than the creation of everything else?
5. What responsibilities did God give people?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. The creation story reveals many facts about God's character, actions and abilities in seed form. As the Bible story continues, these seed-facts will grow larger and become more visible.
2. People were made to be similar to God (1:26). The part of a person that can't be seen has a mind, emotions and a will that is similar to God. The human body was created to house the part that was created to be similar to God. Of all the creation, only people were made to be like God.
3. God promises that undesirable consequences will be the result of disobeying his commands. The Lord God warned the first man that if he ate fruit from the forbidden tree he would die (2:15-17).
4. God gave man the responsibility to oversee his creation. At creation, all animal life was subject to man (1:28). God gave Adam the responsibility of farming the land (2:15) and ruling over the animals (1:26, 28).
5. God is the creator of the family and gives guidelines on how to establish a healthy marriage (2:24):
 - 1st Leave one's father and mother.
 - 2nd Unite.
 - 3rd Become one flesh. God's plan is for a man and a woman to participate in the sex act after they have left their parents and have made a commitment to remain united as husband and wife for long as both are living.