

The Book of Genesis
Genesis 1:14-19: The Creation of the Sun, Moon, and Stars
09/11/2019 Wednesday PM

Introduction

- So far in our study of Genesis we have covered Creation Days 1-3.
- God has created the heavens and the earth, created light, stretched out the “heavens” and created the atmosphere and space, gave form to the surface of the planet by separating the water from dry ground, and began to fill the earth by creating plants.
- Last week in looking at the creation of the land and plants, we seen how God finished his “separating of the waters” task from Creation Day 2 and formed the dry ground, and then he created seed-bearing plants after their kinds.
- God’s creative order shows his infinite wisdom. Everything he created was a stepping stone to the next creation.
- The land and plants would be needed to support the “living creatures” that would come later.
- Tonight, we will be discussing **The Creation of the Sun, Moon, and Stars.**
- This is Creation Day 4 and we will look at the purposes of the sun, moon, and stars as well as why God gave them the names that he did.

Genesis 1:14-19

¹⁴And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights-the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening, and there was morning-the fourth day.

Creation and Purpose of the Luminaries

- **V.14** - On Creation Day 4, God filled the universe with a variety of light-bearing bodies, called the luminaries (from the Latin, *luminare* = to shine, from *lumen*, *lumin* - = ‘light’).
- It says, “Let there be lights...” Before this, God had already directly created light on Creation Day 1. **Genesis 1:3**, “And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.”
- We have had 3 creation days already that have had evening and morning cycles without the “lights” mentioned here on Creation Day 4.
- God does not need “light bearers” to produce light, he is the Creator and he produced light from nothing.
- Actually, **Revelation 21:23** ‘sheds some light’ on this matter as it describes the new heaven and earth, “The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.”
- On Creation Day 1, God created light, but he now on Creation Day 4, institutes a new order in nature, that the sun should be the dispenser of diurnal (daytime) light, and the moon and stars should shine by night.
- People have tried to use this biblical fact to argue for creation days longer than 24 hours because they say that you cannot have ‘days before the sun.’ This is preposterous. What makes a day? A single light source shining upon the earth while it makes one full rotation on its axis. Haven’t we had that since Creation Day 1?
- Their argument stems from the latter part of **v.14** where it says, “to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years,”
- This brings us to the purpose for the luminaries. Why did God create these new lights?
- That is what the latter part of **v.14** is answering. It is true that God did create these lights “to separate the day from the night,” but does that mean that day and night were not separated before? We know that they were because the Bible tells us that the day-night cycle was in place before this.
- Before the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century, every biblical scholar recognized that the Bible taught this.
- Martin Luther (1483-1546), John Calvin (1509-1564), John Wesley (1701-1791), and even ancient Rabbinic interpreters like Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) all agreed that the luminaries were created on Day 4.

- Again, all that we are learning on Day 4, is that God has created new entities that he will now use to fulfil the purposes that he was fulfilling previously. The light came from him directly before, now he will use the ‘sun’ to be his light bearer, does this sound familiar?
- That is not the only purpose for the lights though, **v.14** continues “and let them serve as signs to mark seasons...”
- **“Signs”** – These signs would have been navigational signs as we see in **Job 38:31-33**.
- Before the creation of the compass, travelers and sailors navigated by the stars.
- These “signs” are not for telling the future or an individual’s destiny as astrologers contend.
- Astrology – “is the study of the movements and relative positions of celestial bodies interpreted as having an influence on human affairs and the natural world.”
- Most rational people understand that this field of study is bogus and that is certainly has no foundation in the Word of God.
- The luminaries are these as “street signs” if you will to help us navigate our travels, not our destinies.
- **“Seasons”** – Another purpose for the luminaries was to mark the seasons. **Psalm 104:19** says, “The moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.”
- Seasons began in the Creation Week, and that means that the earth has always tilted on its axis. The current tilt is 23.5°. This tilt is what causes seasons because of the leaning towards or away from the sun.
- The moon does not have any real influence on the seasons, but it can “mark the seasons.”
- The sun “rises and sets” in the same place every day. The only way that we mark months, is by the moon. It takes the moon, 29.5 days to orbit the earth. As it orbits the earth, it goes through different phases: full, half, quarter...
- By observing the moon, you can tell how many months have gone by and thus you can then gauge where you are in the year which will determine which season you are in.
- So the ending of **v.14** explains that the luminaries “serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years.” The sun is what we now use to mark the days, the moon is what we use to mark the months, and the full rotation of the earth around the sun is what we use to mark the years. Without the luminaries, we could not keep time straight.
- **V.15** – This verse really narrows down the context of what is about to be said in the following verses. The sun and moon are specifically designed for the earth and are used to bear light for it. When they are described, it is always in relation to earth.
- **V.16** – “God made two great lights-the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.”
- Notice here that God does not name the lights what we call them today, ie. “sun” and “moon.”
- It said that He made “two great lights.” The “greater light” is the sun and “the lesser light” is the moon.
- This is not to say that the sun really is “greater” than the moon, it is just that the sun was created first.
- It is also not to say that the sun and moon are the “greatest” lights in the universe. However in relation to the earth, they certainly are.
- The ending of the verse shows that the stars were also created on Day 4.
- **Vv. 17-18** – These verses repeat the same overall purposes of the luminaries, in that there are there “to give light on the earth” and “to separate light from darkness.”
- It is also here in **v.18** that God declares the creation of the luminaries on Creation Day 4 to be “good.”
- **V.19** – In classic form, this passage ends with “And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.”
- Despite the secular world’s views on the facts of the creation account, the account is true and accurate.
- One issue relating to the earth and the moon that scientists are still grappling over is the moon’s recession away from the earth.
- The tides are slowing the earth’s rotation by .002 seconds per century, and that in turn is causing the earth’s gravitational pull on the moon to weaken. The moon is thus moving away from the earth at 4cm (1 ½ inches) per year. Even if the moon had once been in contact with the earth, it would have only taken 1.37billion years for it to reach its present distance. This is an issue for secularist to deal with.
- God has a reason for everything that he does, and whether we understand it or not, we must surrender to his will and understanding and not lean on our own.