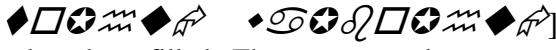
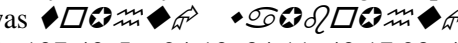


The earth was formless and void...

Genesis 1:1-31

I. THE EARTH WAS *FORMLESS AND VOID* (Gen.1:2)

earth – Genesis 1:2 uses earth to mean the “stuff” from which visible things were made. The use of the word “earth” here in verse 2 is not a reference to the dry land on our planet; that was not formed until the third day (vv.10-12). Earth in verse 2 refers to the material with which God separated, formed and shaped the sky, the dry land, and the seas.



formless and void [] (Genesis 1:2) –indicates that the earth in Gen.1:2 was without shape and had not been filled. There were no planets or stars. There were no birds, fish or people. The mountains hadn't been formed, the dry land or the sea. According to Genesis 1:2, the earth was like a lump of clay without the impress of the divine Potter's hands. The earth did not contain any inherent meaning or purpose, nor did it contain any evolutionary tendency toward meaning and purpose. Before God had spoken, the earth did not contain any stability or life; it was  -- unformed and unfilled (See Dt.32:10; 1 Sam.12:21; Job. 6:18; 12:24; 26:7; Ps.107:40; Isa.24:10; 34:11; 40:17,23; 41:29; 44:9; 45:18,19; 49:4; 59:4; Jer.4:23).

II. THE *WORD OF GOD* BROUGHT FORTH FORM FROM EARTH'S ORIGINAL *FORMLESSNESS* (Genesis 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26,28,29; cf. Psalm 33:6)

- A. Only when God speaks does non-existence spring into existence, order from disorder and life from lifelessness.
- B. All of the amazing complexity and intricacy of the world we live in is due to the power and creativity of God's Word.
 - 1. If the physical forces within stars were only slightly different, our universe would be almost devoid of carbon and oxygen, and life would not exist.
 - 2. Even slight changes in either the strong or weak nuclear force would destroy nearly all the carbon or oxygen inside stars-making life impossible.
 - 3. If the force of gravity were only slightly stronger, all stars would be red dwarfs, too cold to support life. If it were slightly weaker, all stars would be blue giants, burning too briefly for life to develop.
 - 4. In the atom, the mass of the neutron is delicately balanced with that of the proton; otherwise, protons would decay into neutrons, making life impossible.

III. GOD SPOKE *TEN TIMES* IN GENESIS 1 WHEN HE BROUGHT FORTH CREATION *EX NIHILO* AND IN *NIHILUM* (Genesis 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26,28,29)

- A. Just as God originally brought order from disorder through His 10 Words in creation, so too, He brings order from disorder in our lives through the TEN COMMANDMENTS (Exodus 20:1-17; Deut.5:1-21; Matthew 5:17-21)
- B. The TEN PLAGUES of Egypt were a “reversal” of Genesis 1 (Exodus 7-11).
 - 1. Water to blood (Gen.1:2,9,10 with Ex.7:14-22)
 - 2. Frogs, gnats, flies, locusts covered the land of Egypt (Gen.1:24,25 with Ex.8:1-24; 10:1-16)
 - 3. Death of livestock (Gen.1:24,25 with Ex.9:1-7)
 - 4. Hail (Gen.1:2, 9-12 with Ex.9:18-35)
 - 5. Darkness (Gen.1:2 with Ex.10:21-23; Psalm 105:28)
 - 6. Death of firstborn (Gen.1:27,28 with Exodus 11).

- C. Noah's flood was a reversal of God's separation of water from land on the third day of creation (Gen.1:9,10).
- D. The city of chaos [] (Isaiah 24-27)
 - 1. The city of chaos is the city that has rejected the divine impress of the potter's hand.
 - 2. The city of chaos [] did not love the law of God. Instead it chose a life of idolatry, materialism, said everything is relative and ultimately individualistic.
- E. In Jeremiah's day, the people of God would not listen to the Word of God as spoken by Jeremiah. Reference to "word" or "words" occurs over 150x (**Jeremiah 4:23-26**; cf. Hosea 4:1-3).
- F. The judgments of the book of Revelation are a reversal of Genesis 1 (Rev.6:12-14; 8:1-11:19; 16:1-21).
- G. When a person disobeys the Word of God, nothing will be left for him but disorder, disunion, disharmony, disease, destruction and death.
- H. The concepts of hell and eternal punishment go back to the precreation of Genesis 1:2.
 - 1. Scriptures use the terms like "formless", "void", "darkness", "deep", and "abyss" (Psalm 71:20; 88:7; Jonah 2:4-7; Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; cf. Psalm 69:3,16) to refer to God's judgment.
 - 2. When a person turns away from the order and stability of God's commandments, God hands him over to the depravity of his sin (see Rom.1) and the final consequence is meaninglessness, darkness, emptiness and death. Hell is the consequence of a person rejecting the commandments of God.
- I. Genesis 1 also shows us the consequence of God's orderly and creative Word – the final product was a good creation. The result of obedience to God's commandments leads to the blessing of life and ultimately an everlasting Sabbath rest of Paradise (Gen.2:3).



IV. MEANING, PURPOSE, ORDER, FULFILLMENT, AND HARMONY IN LIFE ONLY COMES THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST – THE WORD OF GOD MADE FLESH (John 1)

V. THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CREATION AND RE-CREATION (Gen.1:2; Isa.32:15,16; John 20:22; Acts 1:8; TABLE ADDRESS THIS EVENING; cf. Isa.44:#)

QUESTIONS FOR SABBATH DISCUSSION & MEDITATION:

Take what you have learned this morning and make it into a prayer for yourself, your family, the church and/or your nation. Remember that prayer consists in Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication (Feel free to use the outline for praying).


The news of wars and rumors of wars, of tragedies everywhere, certainly give the impression of a world out of control. Thankfully, that is not the case in the least. As we see a "world in chaos" today, what comfort can we derive from the work of the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1:2 and the work of that same Holy Spirit today?

What is the meaning of formless and void [ ]?

What brought order and life to the formlessness and void of the earth in Genesis 1:2? How are we to account for the complexity and intricacy of the world we live in?

How many times does the clause "God said" occur in Genesis 1? Why is this significant?

Explain how God's judgment upon a rebellious world is typically described in Scripture as "de-creation."

What is the city of chaos [] (Isaiah 24-27)? In what ways do we live in this kind of city today? How are we to separate ourselves from the chaos so that we do not fall under the city's judgment?

Explain how the concept of heaven and hell go back to Genesis 1.

If the "chaos" of creation was organized and arranged by the Word of God, is there any hope for healing and wholeness apart from God's Word (i.e. Jesus)?

Compare the role of the Holy Spirit in the first and new creation. How does the Spirit's presence in your life give you confidence that God's work will be completed and beautified?

Prepared by Pastor Aaron Goerner (10/14/2001). See Dt.33:8-10; Ezra 7:10; Malachi 2:7; Acts 17:11; Col.1:28,29; 1 Tim.4:12-16.
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