

**Why is this important?** *Creation Fall Redemption Consummation*

Genesis 1 and 2 were not thrown into the Bible haphazardly as an FYI. It is a vital part of understanding who God is, our relationship to Him, and the story of redemptive history. Without understanding creation, you cannot understand the Fall, and therefore, redemption or consummation. Without creation, God has no right to redeem us.

This was not written in response to the Scopes trial and should not be read as such.

**Is a serious Bible-believing Christian the person who reads Genesis 1 and 2 literally or literarily?**

**What does it look like to read Genesis 1&2 in its literary context?**

- As a Covenant
- Highlighting sabbath framework

**What is a Suzerain treaty?**

“Suzerain” is a word referring to the greater party and “vassal” to the lesser party of a treaty in the Ancient Near East. “Suzerain” means lord. The treaty’s structure was as follows: *preamble* → *stipulations* → *blessings & curses*

The preamble can be broken into two parts. The first section served to identify the suzerain by his name and titles. The second part, also called the historical prologue, illustrated how much the suzerain has done to protect and establish the vassal who therefore owes him submission and allegiance.

Genesis 1-2:3 can be read as the preamble of a treaty between God and man. We see God establishing Himself as creator and provider for His creation. In Genesis 2:4 and following, Adam is then given the stipulations of caring for Eden, naming the animals and Eve, and not eating the forbidden fruit. The curse is forewarned and the blessing implied. Using treaty language and format underscores the covenantal aspect of Genesis 1 and 2.

Although we don’t see the word “covenant” in this passage, Hosea refers to it as a covenant saying, “But like Adam they have transgressed the covenant; there they have dealt treacherously against me.” (6:7)

Adam is seen as the representative head in 2:16-7 – second masculine singular verb – speaks for Eve and all humanity: standing as priest

**Significance of Sabbath Framework in Creation:**

*Pictorial framework of a Sabbath-crowned week whereby God identifies Himself as the one for whom all things are and were created, the Lord worthy to receive glory and honor and praise.*  
(Meredith Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*)

1 *light/darkness*

2 *sky/water*

3 *land/water*

4 *sun/moon*

5 *birds/fish*

6 *land animals / man*

7 *Sabbath*

Similarity to other parts of Torah – flood, exodus, redemption themes throughout the Bible

Similarity to ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian documents – why? Because the format was a teaching tool in the same way those other documents were teaching tools for their people. The Israelites had been exposed to Egyptian creation myths, so why should Moses not have written the creation story in a format which they could understand? Also the story has formatting similarities but the content is entirely different, even polemical with the Egyptian texts. Genesis portrays God as sovereign **and** redeeming.

### **How do we see God presented in the creation story?**

*Sovereign over all creation* – apart from Him there is no cosmological order

Genesis 1:1-2: God, in His creating the heavens and earth out of chaos is Yahweh the Sovereign Redeemer who is establishing a new heaven and new earth. The same God who brought salvation to the cosmological realm-- is bringing salvation to humanity-- for those that is who are in covenant with God through Christ. "There is no existence apart from God, and the Creator can only be known truly through revelation." -Bavinck

*Sovereign over redemption* - apart from Him there is no kingdom order

Keep in mind that in vs.2, the fact of creation is here expanded upon so as to be redemptive. Again, the point of the story is not as a science text, but a prologue to God's dealings with humanity as through a covenant. As the preamble to the Mosaic covenant, one would expect that themes of redemption would be here initiation-- and would show up again as through the divine acts of redeeming history! We will not be disappointed...

And the **earth** was confusion and void ("*tohu va bohu*"-- formless chaotic waste, absolute nothingness) and the dark was over the face of the abyss (deep) and the spirit of God fluttered over the face of the water. – Gen 1:2

Other places you find this phrase are Jer. 4:23, Is. 34:11, Jer. 4:1 and is used to describe God's curse upon the world in prophetic texts.

Deut. 32:10-11 "He found him in a desert land, and in the **wasteland**, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, **hovers** over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings.

The verb "hover" used in Gen.1:2 is used again in the Pentateuch only here. By the use of the verb in Dt.32—it describes God's divine activity as symbolized by an eagle, leading Israel through the "waste" land of the wilderness-- again, the same word "tohu" for chaos. By describing the wilderness as "chaos" and using this verb "hovering" to describe God's saving activity-- there is no doubt that Moses wants us to understand creation as a prologue to redemption itself-- most especially the redemption of Israel.

*Temple language* – The word "firmament" which is said to separate the water in sky from the seas and rivers is the picture of a great "dome". In Exodus 39:3, it means to "spread by hammering" and Job 37:18 speaks of the skies being "spread out as a molten mirror." It is described as "shiny" in Dan.12:3. The firmament should be thought of as a great dome over the earth, as in that of a palace from which He is to rule . . . the earth is his footstool and the heavens his throne room  
More references to presence theology - Is. 42:5; 37:16; 66:1; Heb 4:13

So what is vital to a proper interpretation of Genesis 1 & 2?

**What are the “non-negotiables” as recognized by our confession?**

**Definition of Creation:** That work of the triune God by which he called all things that exist, both material and spiritual, into existence out of non-existence by His own will and for His own glory.

**A. References in every part of Scripture:**

Law- Genesis 1; Psalms- 90:2; Prophets- Isaiah 40:26ff, Jeremiah 10:12ff, Amos 4:13ff, etc.; Gospels- Matthew 19:4, John 1:3; Epistles- Romans 1:25, 1 cor 11:9, Col. 1:16; Revelation- 4:11, 10:6

**B. Ex Nihilo (from out of nothing)**

What are some of the implications drawn out by these passages pertaining to "ex nihilo creation?"

**Psalm 33:6-9** By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap. He lays up the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spoke and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast.

**John 1:3-4** All things came into being by Him and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life and the life was the light of people.

**Romans 4:17** Even God, who give life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist..

**Acts 17:24-25** The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; neither is he served by human hands as though he needed anything since he himself give to all life and breath and all things.

**Hebrews 11:3** By faith we understand that the worlds (ages) were prepared

by the word of God so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

### **C. All Three Persons of Trinity Present and Active in Creation**

#### **Father:**

**Malachi 2:10**, "Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?"

**Acts 17:28**, "We are God's offspring..."

#### **Son:**

**John 1:1-4, 14,**

**Col.1:16-17**, He is the image of the invisible God (the "beloved Son", vs.13)... for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible... all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.

#### **Holy Spirit:**

**Gen.1:1-2**, In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep while the spirit of God swept over the face of the waters. The God said...

**Psm.104:30; Job 26:13**

### **D. The Historicity of Adam and Eve as a Unique Creation of God and exclusively after God's own Image of which all other people are descendants.**

Gen. 1:26, Let us make *humankind* in our image according to our likeness...

Deut.32:8; Ps.11:4; 1 Sam.26:19, etc. where all people are spoken of as the "sons of Adam"

### **E. The Historical Adam in Covenant with God as The First Representative of Humankind**

Romans 5:12-19

#### **What are acceptable views?**

*The book of revelation and the book of nature are both from God and will be found when both are adequately interpreted to coincide perfectly.... The one (revelation in the Bible) was designed and is admirably adapted to lay the foundation of an intelligent faith in Jehovah as the absolute Creator and the immediate former and providential ruler of all things. But it was not designed either to prevent or to take the place of scientific interpretation of all existing phenomena and of all traces of the past history of the world which God allows men to discover. Apparent discrepancies in established truths can have their ground only in perfect knowledge. God requires us both to believe and to learn. He imposes upon us at present the necessity of humility and patience.*