

'IN THE BEGINNING'
(Origins of What's Happening Now in 'The End Times')
Studies in Genesis 1-11

'God's Work Week'

Too many people groan when the weekend is over and they have to go back to work, but not God. He so thoroughly enjoyed His work week that He assigned Moses, His penman, to start the Bible by rehearsing what He did each day! His pronouncement that ***'It is good!'*** and ***'It's very good!'*** sums up how much pleasure He had at work. Of course, the Lord only went to work for one week and it comes as no surprise that He did everything so perfectly the first time that He didn't have anything to correct, improve, or add after that.

Although God's awesome work of creation was accomplished, maintaining it and keeping it perfectly pristine became the next assignment. Adam was given that custodial job *'in the beginning'*. And as we now know that Adam and his assistant, Eve, failed miserably to do their job, allowed the anarchist, Satan, to take over and totally vandalize the handiwork of the Creator. God has been in the business of restoring His masterpiece ever since. He is sticking to the original plan of man presiding over His creation, which He plans to restore in the coming millennial kingdom of God on earth.

For things to succeed in the future better than in the past, God needs better people to whom He can delegate dominion over the earth. This is why God the Son began the restoration project by choosing, rescuing, redeeming, and transforming a selected group of people to ***'rule and reign with Him'*** when He comes to repair the planet (***Revelation 3:20-21***). God has never given up on the original perfect plan – as it was *'in the beginning'* so it shall be once again *'in the end'* (***Isaiah 46:9-11 & Revelation 20:6***). Some say, *'all's well that ends well'* and though that saying isn't a verse in the Bible, it's always true of everything God does and says.

Creation week in **Genesis 1** was clearly 7 consecutive 24 hour days (***Exodus 20:11, etc.***). This is an important factor in understanding God's way of creating the only new thing being made since *'the beginning'*. All things since then are not original creations, but reproductions of the originals. For example, a newborn baby isn't a new creation, but a procreation of his or her parents, with genetics of their descendants, eventually going back to Adam and Eve. Since that original creation, there is only one *'new creative'* act God does – that's when God takes a sinner and makes him or her *'a new creation'* after their sincere repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ's sacrificial death, burial and resurrection (***2 Corinthians 5:17, Acts 20:21, Romans 10: 9-13***). It helps us understand how God's creation of the world parallels His *'new creation'* work with us in Christ:

Devastation

Genesis 1:2 God sees us in our natural condition as ***'without form and void and in deep spiritual darkness'***. God's Spirit grieves over our sinful condition. (***John 3:18-21, 16:8-11***)

Day 1 – Light / Salvation

Genesis 1:2-5 God's Word about His Son Jesus pierces the spiritual darkness, lightens us to repent of sinful darkness and turn to **Jesus, the Light of the world**. (***John 8:12, Ephesians 5:8-12, 1 Peter 2:9***)

Day 2 – Space / Separation

Genesis 1:6-8 God's grace leads us to **separate from the darkness** of our former way of life, the sinful world system and all those still in spiritual darkness. (***2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, Colossians 1:13, 1 John 2:15-17***)

Day 3 – Fertility / Sanctification

Genesis 1:9-13 God's grace in '*raising our new life up above this world*' in order to make us full of **spiritual growth, new life and fruitfulness**.
(*John 15:1-11, Galatians 5:22-23, 2 Peter 1:5-8*)

Day 4 – Illumination / Testimony

Genesis 1:14-19 God's grace in enlightening the world about Him through His Son (*greater Light*), the Church (*lesser light*), believers (*saints in light*).
(*Matthew 5:14-16, John 14:9, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 3:20-21, Philippians 2:15-16, 1 Peter 3:15*)

Day 5 – Abundant Life / Ministry

Genesis 1:20-23 God's grace in creative use of spiritual gifts with beautiful results for His glory (*high, lifted up praise & depth of spiritual wisdom*)
(*John 7:37-39 & 10:10, Romans 12:4-8, Ephesians 5:9, Rev. 22:12*)

Day 6 – God's Image / Christ-likeness

Genesis 1:24-31 God's grace in calling us to His chosen vocation for us and shaping us into His Son's image to successfully fulfill His calling for our life.
(*Romans 8:29-30 & 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Philippians 1:6*)

Day 7 – Divine Rest / Spiritual Completion

Genesis 2:1-3 God's grace in resting from our good works to please Him & being totally satisfied with God, and all He has done for, in and with us.
(*Matthew 11:28-29, Hebrews 4:1, 9-11; Revelation 14:12-13*)

Discussion Group Questions:

- **Discuss how you have experienced each stage of transformation.**
 - *Do you think you can 'skip' or 'omit' a stage? Why? What does it matter?*
- **What stage ('day') are you at in God's 'new creation' process in your life?**
 - *Why do you think that? How do you feel about the next stage coming in your life?*
- **Do you think it is possible to get 'stuck' in the transformation process?**
 - *Why?*
- **On every day except 'day 2' it says 'God saw that it was good'.**
 - *Why not 'day 2'? How does 'God saw it was good' encourage your growth in grace in Christ?*
- **How does Creation week help you understand the discipleship process?**
 - *How can it help you disciple other believers?*