

Session two: Early World Part 1

Discussion of previous session questions: (TBT - Response from Ascension)

1. *There are two accounts of Creation in Genesis 1 and 2, told from different viewpoints.*

a. *What does this account tell you about God?*

God kept everything at a balance, an equilibrium

Start with nothing (from darkness came light, life)

Repetition of the phrase "It was good" - importance of complimenting yourself, taking a step back and assess your works

Question - Why are there 2 accounts? possibly 2 authors: Priest, Yaoist. <- need additional research.

TBT - God created everything - He wanted us to exist. Shows the power of His word. He acts deliberately, demonstrating his love for order, beauty and goodness. Shows his fatherly love.

b. *What does Genesis 1 tell you about the nature and purpose of the world and the things around us?*

Creation was made to be fruitful and multiply.

Creation made for us, given dominion

Definition of dominion - Not ruler, stewards, representative of God to do God's will (made in his image)

TBT - inherent goodness and beauty of God's works, everything is interdependent with a hierarchy built into the system. Where mankind is given stewardship of creation. World is a dwelling place, tailored for our work and enjoyment

2. *The creation of mankind is told twice, in Genesis 1:26-31, 2:4-25.*

a. *What does it mean to be created in God's image?*

We are unique creations - only one who knows and loves creator, dignity of someone not something, dignity of a person (self knowledge/ possession)

TBT - Created in God's image and likeness, we are unique. Only mankind has dignity of being someone and not something: only we can know God and love him and share in his life. Has soul, created to be, a temple of the Holy Spirit. We are like him, rational, capable of love and wisdom and possess free will. Also do things like him, make things beautiful, bless and work, rest, exercise dominion.

b. *What does "male and female he created them" add to your understanding of the image in which we are created?*

Willed by God, helpers of each other, shared responsibility

God has no gender, we are created in image of Him to represent Him

TBT - We possess the dignity of God's image and reflect his goodness and wisdom. Male and female together, complementary - reflection of the image of God who is One and who at the same time is a communion of three persons.

3. Genesis 2:1-3 tells us that after completing his work of Creation, God rested on the seventh day, blessed it, and made it holy. Years later, the children of Israel will be commanded to refrain from work on the seventh day in imitation of God. If we are created in his image, is there any sense in which we stifle the image of God in ourselves when we ignore this command? In what way does this command enable us to more fully live in God's image?

Sabbath day - no work, not defined as Sunday only, rest is made for mankind, day of rest and worship

TBT - God creates and he rests, set aside one day free from work to free ourselves from life's demands and to turn to God. Period of rest and worship not because he needs it but because we do.

4. "Behind the disobedient choice of our first parents lurks a seductive voice, opposed to God" (CCC 391). That is the voice of Satan, the devil, who is pictured in Genesis 3 as a serpent.

- a. *What is the Serpent trying to accomplish?*
- b. *What strategy does he use?*

Induce the seed of doubt with half truths, make them second guess, tempt with promise of power and knowledge
Began with "Did God say", gossip, question

TBT - The serpent, who is Satan, attacks God by tempting those to rebel. Plants seed of doubt: God's intent, motivation and quality of his love. Suggest God is withholding good.

5. In Genesis 3:4, the Serpent calls God a liar—"You will not die," he says—and proceeds to tell the woman why it will be to her benefit to disobey God.

- a. *What are these "benefits"?*
- b. *Do these benefits offer Eve anything she does not already have? What do they offer?*

Eyes opened, be like God, know good from evil
Don't know what we have until we lose it

TBT - 3 benefits: eyes will be opened, be like God, know good and evil. Irony - Already know of goodness but still want it, mankind are already like God. Satan's counterfeit is for them to determine good and evil according to their own desires.

6. What immediate effects do Adam and Eve's disobedience have on their behavior, which show the consequences of their sin?

Humility, blame, lack of self reflection, fear of reprimanding
Selfish, ignore duties, overthinking.
Lease on Eden ended.

TBT - Realize they are naked and hide from each other, no longer live in harmony. Hide from God, image of him is distorted, from father to judge, don't take responsibility, begin blaming, excusing. Sin now has dominion over them. God pronounces upon them - fractured relationship, tension, lust, the desire to dominate.

7. Read God's curse on the Serpent and on Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:14-19.

- a. Does God abandon his disobedient children? What ray of hope do you see?*
- b. Is there anything about their punishment that might help mankind learn the lesson Adam and Eve so sadly failed?*

Kicked out of Eden, give them challenges, lessons, to suffer. To learn from suffering and enjoy the fruits of labor. Know gratitude, desire, pain, drama.

Question: Is it that we got too smart for our own good, so living in Eden would only be detrimental to us. We now know desire and think we can judge things ourselves, distrust God.

TBT - Not abandoned, God provides a resolution to the problem. Genesis 3:15 Battle between Serpent and Woman - woman will crush the Serpent's head. (the protoevangelium - first gospel). Pain in childbearing, toil in labor to understand the heart of love: the willingness to suffer and die for the one loved. Exiled so we will not live forever in fallen conditions.

8. New Testament Connection:

The apostle John borrows language and imagery from the Creation story to begin his Gospel. Read John 1:1-14. What new creation is he describing?

Dawn of the kingdom of God, Jesus Christ. Jesus is an example of God's envoy, How we should act.

TBT - John describes the new creation, dawn of the kingdom of God on earth, relates to the story of Creation. Christ offers the children of Adam, fallen from relationship with God "power to become children of God ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" (John 1:12, 14). God is walking with his people in harmony, what is lost in the Garden of Eden is restored in the kingdom of God.

Video Summary:

Early World Genesis - story of Creation

- People think it's a childish representation, taken literally, more interested in the how and not why.
- Actually poetry, figurative language depicting the primeval fall.
- Actually an anti myth against Pagan narratives - as opposed to rulers who made humans as servants, God made us as sons/ daughters.

Genesis 1

- God is building a habitat, day 1-3 is the form (create time, space, land), day 4-6 is to fill the void (sun and stars, fish and birds, land creatures and human)
- God is not subject to 24 hour clock (he made time), another sign that story is figurative, day is symbolic.
- Genesis 1:26
 - Adam is created in image and likeness of God
 - given intellect, reason, will
 - Capacity to love, family, God is love
 - Have dominion over, names the creatures
- Two stories, different hebrew word for God
 - Elohim (Gen1), It is good, poem, broad strokes
 - Yahweh (Gen 2), more intimate, zoom in, climax, not good to be alone
- Man was created on 6th day to prepare for the 7th day
- On the 7th day, God blessed it and rested. Divine rest
- note: there is no "end of 7th day", no morning or night, we are in 7th day
- the importance of the number seven. 7 (Sheva in hebrew)
- In covenant (Berit in hebrew) means to swear an oath (Shava in hebrew). Seven oneself.

Genesis 2

- Orders is to not eat from the tree of Good and Evil
- Serpent (Nahash in Hebrew) is Satan, good angel Lucifer who fell from God.
- Abuses the free will given and lures Eve with temptations
 - Twisted God's words
 - Tempt with created things and power
 - Subtle suggestion to God is holding out
 - To prefer self over God
- The fall, where the intellect is darkened and the will weakened
- Original Sin: Immoderate desire for things, indulge, the lesser good
- We choose what we Think makes us happy, not what God gives.
- As we fall into sin, we indulge in "natural goods" stray away from God, fall for the attraction and addiction that sin provides, we have a internal imbalance as we are created in the image of God which leads to a disconnect
- Getting caught by God is not punishment, it is redemption, mercy

Genesis 3

- Gen 3:15 Protoevangelium - "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."
- Known as the First Gospel.

- Pits the serpent (satan) against the seed of the women (offsprings of Christ) into warfare - then promises a savior (Jesus Christ) who will crush the serpent (dying on cross) and destroy Satan's rule over us.
- God has the plan of salvation in mind

Readings for Next Session:

- Genesis 4-11

CCC (Catechism of Catholic Church) 279-421 (optional)