

Genesis 1

Follow up from last week: Genesis 1:27

Worldview matters to consider: Biblical authenticity and exclusivity, supernatural creation and the existence of God, age of the earth, man-kind & dominion

Biblical authenticity and exclusivity

Is the Bible accurate in its description of how the heavens and earth came to be, or is it just another mythological account?

Mesopotamian mythology

- a. Enuma Elish creation account
- b. Marduk vs Tiamat – goddess of chaos

Gen 1:2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the **deep**. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Did God have to defeat the goddess of chaos to form the earth?

From Wikipedia: a variety of creation accounts – here is just a sample:

1. Enuma Elish – Babylonian
2. Sumerian
3. Tungusic (Siberia)
4. Cheonjiwang Bonpuri (Korean)
5. Mayan
6. Cherokee, Choctaw and Creek

Supernatural creation and the existence of God

1. Does a being exist that precedes time, matter and space?
2. Can that being speak things into existence?
3. Can that being defy the laws of nature?
4. Can scientific observation alone explain the origins of the universe?

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Consider from this verse:

1. There was a beginning where matter did not exist.
2. God existed before anything else
3. God created out of nothing by speaking

John 1:3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Age of the Earth

Is the earth 6,021 years old or 4.5 billion years old?

1. Gap theory: millions of years between Gen 1:1 and 1:2
2. Day-Age view: Day so Genesis are long “ages” of time
3. Literary framework: the six days of Genesis are not intended to indicate a chronological sequence of events

4. Young Earth

- a. Six literal days is the simplest understanding – see the fourth commandment
- b. There was evening and morning each day
- c. Romans 5:12-14: death came into the world through sin; also note that initially, both man and animal were given plants to eat
- d. We must resort to stretching the meaning of Scripture to try and reconcile the Biblical account with common scientific theory

Why must we try and reconcile the Biblical account with common scientific theory when scientific theory does not allow for the supernatural?

1. If nothing occurs supernaturally, then there is no god that spoke things into existence.
2. If things do occur supernaturally, then there is a great likelihood that conclusions drawn with a presupposition of no supernatural activity are wrong.

Man-kind & Dominion

Man-kind is not animal-kind

Gen 1:25-26 And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. (26) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Likeness: something similar but not the same; Image: something representing another thing.

We are similar in our sense of right and wrong, our spirit, our attributes, our use of reason and logic, and our relational aspects.

We represent God in the dominion he has given mankind over the earth. We will consider this again when we discuss the Fall and the earth's rebellion against mankind as mankind rebelled against God.

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Question: How should our understanding of man-kind in relation to God affect our view of euthanasia? Caring for the environment?

Conclusion: Presuppositions and Faith

Our faith dramatically affects our worldview. All of these worldview matters: biblical authority and exclusivity, belief in a supernatural creation, and our conclusions about the age of the earth, the origins of mankind, and mankind's role as steward of creation, are faith-based.

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

John 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Next Week:

Read Genesis 2

Memory Verse: Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Another worldview...

Top Scientific Minds Declare That We Are Just One Among Many Animals

By Ingrid Newkirk – President and co-founder, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)
Perhaps measuring animal intelligence by comparing it to human intelligence isn't the best litmus test. As Mark Twain once said, "It is just like man's vanity and impertinence to call an animal dumb because it is dumb to his dull perceptions."

But, in the just-released Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness, witnessed by Stephen Hawking, a prominent group of scientists has declared that humans are not unique in ways that matter. Says the panel, "Non-human animals, including all mammals and birds, and many other creatures, including octopuses, also possess these [same] neurological substrates [as human beings]." Yes, they stand on their toes or tentacles, snatch their offspring from their arms or their arboreal nests, and they feel the same way about it as would you or I. The question is, how is this knowledge to inform our behavior? After all, shouldn't it?

Of course, hundreds of studies have already demonstrated animals' logical, mathematical, linguistic, and emotional intelligence. For example, for years we blithely believed that humans were the only species to use tools, until researchers documented that wasps were using pebbles as hammers, octopuses were carrying coconut shells as portable hiding places, crows were using sticks to dig in the ground for grubs and many other examples. The mathematical abilities of fish have proved to be on a par with those of monkeys, dolphins and bright young human children.

We know that elephants flirt with each other and gather to grieve over the loss of a loved one, that cows shed tears, and that monkeys have refused to pull a chain to access their only source of food if doing so caused another monkey, even a stranger, to experience a painful electric shock. In that famous study, one monkey starved and went without water for nearly two weeks to avoid hurting his fellow. When the experiment was repeated, other monkeys also chose to starve rather than giving shocks to another monkey. A similar study done with human subjects showed that 65 percent of people continued to give other people increasingly strong electric shocks if an experimenter simply told them to do so. It's not the monkeys who need their heads examined!

While miscommunication is blamed for many human calamities, chicks are able to cluck back and forth with their mothers from inside their shells before they are even hatched. Chickens!

One of the Declaration's signatories is Irene Pepperberg, whose work with a parrot named Alex showed that birds can learn meaningful English, count and identify colors, objects and shapes. Alex could even communicate his feelings in English.

Can any human speak even one word of another animal's language? No, but perhaps it's better that way, because if we could speak to them, how would we explain our systematic use and abuse of all the other species?

Can humans smell nuances of fragrance on the individual petals of a single rose and know whether insects have landed on it or human hands have touched it? No, but dogs can, and they try their best to, despite being dragged along by an impatient human anxious to get to Starbucks before work. Can humans navigate

using only the sky's polarized light? No, but bees can. Can humans change the color of their skin to blend in with their surroundings or keep an aggressive rival at bay? No, but cuttlefish can.

So, animals are conscious beings, capable of understanding cause-and-effect relationships, forming abstract thoughts, solving problems, using language, making tools, exhibiting long-term memory, and showing empathy, in many cases with skills that are superior to those of humans. But more importantly, animals can comprehend when they are being abused and killed, and they feel anxiety, fear and pain, just as humans do.

Chickens can only watch as other chickens are slammed upside-down into shackles and have their throats slit. Baby elephants cry out for their mothers, who are prevented from reaching them as they are beaten in order to make them perform confusing and even painful circus tricks. Mother monkeys grieve when their babies are torn away from them in the wild, to be sold to experimenters.

It's interesting that one of the definitions of the word "human" is "sympathetic." More and more people are beginning to show that they understand why that is important.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ingrid-newkirk/one-of-many-animals_b_1836537.html

**A RAT IS A PIG IS A
DOG IS A BOY**

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