

Thirteen Major Concepts of Biblical Creation

(If we had no scientific knowledge of origins, and only what the Bible tells us, what would we know? The following is a brief outline of the Bible's teaching on origins. It is not meant to be exhaustive, but we think it includes the major ideas of a Biblical doctrine of creation. A Christian who believes in the absolute authority of the Bible will begin his quest for knowledge about origins with the Bible's teaching as a given. All other observed facts and assumptions of science will be interpreted in its light. The teachings of science will never be used in such a way where an interpretation of Scripture becomes forced, e.g. seeing the pattern and progression of evolution in Genesis One.)

A. The *Agent* of Creation is the personal, eternal, triune God of the Scriptures.

1. All the Persons in the Godhead had a part in the Creation.

a. Gen. 1:1. *In the beginning God (elohim).*

b. The Father. *But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things... I Cor. 8:6.*

c. The Son. The stress is on the Son as the agent of Creation.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. Jn. 1:2

but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. Heb. 1:2.

d. The Holy Spirit. Gen. 1:2. *and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*

2. Creation is related to the Divine Decree.

a. Stated: *The decree of God is His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His own will, whereby, for His own glory, He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. (from the **Westminster Confession**).*

b. Scripture: Eph. 1:11. *...who works out everything in conformity with the*

purpose of his will....

- c. Summary: A choice was made showing *thought* and *will*.. See also I Pet. 1:20 and Titus 1:2. Before anything was created, before time, love and communication existed in the Triune God..

3. The question of *Why* God created.

- a. God had no need or compulsion to create in the sense that He had to create.

To say that God *had* to create is to say that God had need. God is in no way dependent upon His creation. He is eternally existent and self-sufficient.

- b. He created out of his own *free* will (sovereign pleasure) to manifest His own glory". Ps. 19:1; Isa. 43:7.

4. *How* did God Create?

There is no *how* to creation. *How* suggests a process. There was no process. Creation was *fiat*, i.e. it was simply projected (*called*) into existence by God's omnipotence. Heb 11:3

There were, however, stages to creation as we see in Genesis One.

B. Creation was *planned*.

C. Creation is *purposeful*. (teleological)

Ps. 104:24; Job 28:24ff; Prov. 3:19, 8:27; Jer. 10:12.

D. Creation was *Supernatural* (*creation ex nihilo*).

1. It cannot be observed, so it is a faith tenet.
2. Not out of *nothing* but starting from *nothing*.
3. This concept was entirely foreign to the Biblical world, and still is, outside of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

4. The universe is not an extension of Himself. It does not emanate from God. God is wholly transcendent from His creation.
- E. Time began simultaneously with creation. God is a timeless and eternal being. Past and present are the same with God.
- F. Creation was *Sudden*.

1. There was no time interval between nonexistence and existence. There is *no* sign of a long drawn-out process in Scripture.

a. Ps. 33:6-9; Ps. 148:1-6.

b. *Let there be light and there was light* Gen. 1.

Paul compares the suddenness of creation with the suddenness of spiritual conversion. See II Cor 4:6 and 5:17.

2. Note the miracles of Jesus. (especially in John's gospel)

Note also the disciples' response on one occasion: *What manner of man is this, that even the wind and sea obey Him.*

G. Creation had the appearance of age.

It is essential that the creation had some appearance of age. Adam was created as an adult. It is doubtful that God created the sediments with fossils. Such an assumption would appear to make God deceitful.

Some examples of creation with apparent age can be found in the some of the miracles of Jesus, e.g. changing water to wine and the feeding of the five thousand.

H. The Creation is *Revelatory* (autobiographical)

...creation is the most beautiful book of the Bible... M. Luther

There is `not one atom of the universe' in which his divinity does not shine forth.

H. Bavinck

1. Psalm 19:1ff. Romans 1:19,20.

All nature points to God. It symbolically illustrates spiritual truth. The Bible presents its worldview primarily through pictures.

(before Gutenberg men were picture-oriented not word-oriented)

2. This makes man special since he is created in God's image. Gen. 1:26ff.

Man was created an analogue of God; his thinking, his willing, and his doing is therefore properly conceived as at every point analogical to the thinking, willing and doing of God. C. Van Til

- I. The Universe is not a closed system. God can re-order it if He so desires. Therefore, Christians believe miracles are possible.
 1. Gen. 28: 10ff.
 2. The Incarnation. God the Son entered His creation.
 3. Col. 1:17.5. He superintends creation, i.e. holds it together.
 4. God is immanent in His created works. He has not abandoned His creation as the Deist supposed.
- J. There is a spiritual side to creation. The creation is not reducible to material.

Biblical Creation teaches a dualism of material and the spiritual. There are spiritual beings, and man himself has a spiritual dimension. Col. 1:16. Angels were created first. Job 38:7.

- K. Creation is not occurring today.

Gen. 2:2. The Bible's view of creation conforms to the First law of Thermodynamics.

- L. The Creation is not now in its normal state.

1. The fall affects all. Gen. 3, Rom. 8:19-22.

Therefore a Biblical creationist has an explanation for evil.

2. The universe is running down. Creationism also conforms to the Second law

of thermodynamics. De-evolution is taking place.

- M. Man is a special creation of God. He is *Qualitatively* different from the animals. Only man was created in the very image of God. Man is a fellow creature, but there is a gulf between man and animal life. God called animals into existence, but He personally fashioned man with His own hands. See the accounts in Genesis 1 and 2.

For Further Study:

A single book dealing with the doctrine of creation from a Biblical perspective is hard to come by. The ones listed below are provocative and provide an adequate starting point.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*. Vol. III.

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. See Chapter 17.

Henry, Carl. ed. *Basic Christian Doctrines*. See Chapter 9.

Henry, Carl. *God, Revelation and Authority*. Vol. VI. See Chapters 5-9.

Houston, James M. *I Believe in the Creator*.