

of Discipleship

September 15, 2021

Day 1: Genesis 1:26

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

God creates humans last as a way of saying that humans are stewards of creation. As stewards we are obligated to keep the world and all that is in it in good shape. Some interpret the saying "have dominion over the earth" as meaning we can do with it what we like. The Hebrew word carries with it the meaning of care-giving or even nurturing. Our world must sustain generations of people and each generation has the responsibility to leave the world better than they found it.

Question: God creates us last to show how important we are in creation. Why do we put such emphasis on being first?

Challenge: Think of two or three ways that you can care for some portion of the earth.

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-2:4

Day 2: Genesis 1:27

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

The image of God is a term that Christians and Jews have wondered about for years. Just how are we the image of God? It cannot be our looks or our physical being. It may mean we can feel and think and that we have free will. It may mean we can create and give life. It may mean that a human is worth so much because we are the image of God.

Question: What do you think it means that we are in the image of God?

Challenge: Think about how much a person is worth if God created two?

Scripture: Hebrews 2

Day 3: Genesis 1:28

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 air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

"Be fruitful and multiply" is the one commandment God gave us that we have kept. All the others we have broken at one time or another except that one. The command to be fruitful means more than to populate the earth with people. It means that we are to be producers not consumers. The earth is created to sustain life and only by our wasteful use of the earth will we be unfruitful and subtracting. Once again the word "dominion" is used and again it means care-giving not exploitation. The prophets warned that the very earth will suffer for the sins of the people. We need to be careful with not only how we plow and plant but how we act. If we abuse each other then the earth itself will be harmed.

Question: Does this verse include all that is in creation?

Challenge: Think of some ways to be fruitful that do not involve children?

Scripture: Psalm 8

Day 4: Genesis 1:29

God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.'

It is not well known but the first humans were vegetarians. God mentions all the plants but not the animals for us to eat. It is not until after the fall that meat is allowed to be eaten. Kosher cooking makes it clear that when eating meat the blood should be completely drained out of the meat. This is because even though people are allowed to eat meat, the blood must not be eaten. They believed that our life was in our blood.

Question: Do you think Adam & Eve had to work the garden to get food?

Challenge: Where in the scripture does it allow humans to eat meat?

Scripture: Genesis 7

Day 5: Genesis 1:30

And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so.

The point of the Genesis account of creation is to say that God created, out of nothing, all that there is today. In ancient times it was believed that there were four elements that make up the world- fire, air, water & earth. In some creation stories the one who created used these elements. All the water, air and earth that God created are still here. Notice that the creation account adds that our life (breath) comes from God. God made all things & God gave all of the creation life. It is the prerogative of God to give life. As only God can give life then it makes sense that God was the one to come and give us eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Question: How would you describe what it looked like before creation?

Challenge: Try to describe just how God did all this creating?

Scripture: Psalm 148

Day 6: Genesis 1:31

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Everything was in harmony. God created a perfect world where everything worked together well and there was plenty for all. A day in Genesis is a way of saying that God created in an orderly fashion and over a period of time. We will never go back to the garden for we go forward to the Kingdom of God, which is a new heaven and a new earth.

Question: Why did the fall take place?

Challenge: How can we keep the Sabbath and rest?

Scripture: Genesis 3, Revelation 21