

Lesson 3

God's Heart: Before Creating Earth

Introduction: Before getting into the creation account, I think it's important to remind ourselves of the eternal plan of God that we mentioned in the introductory lesson.

- **2 Timothy 1:9 (NASB):** *...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.*
- **1 Peter 1:18-20 (NASB):** *...knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.*
- **Colossians 1:16 (NASB):** *... for by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.*

We saw last week that God's eternal plan of redemption was empowered by His nature – His eternality, sovereignty, omniscience, and love. We

saw that this plan was not a reaction, but God had prepared it before time began. This week, we will see the motivation behind why God did this – we will look at His heart.

Look at these two passages from last week: **Psalm 83:18 and Isaiah 45:5.**

We can see a motivation of God in these two passages. God deservedly wants to be praised, and He wants Himself to be known. Deeper knowledge of God leads to more sincere worship; God is motivated by relationship because that brings Him glory.

Next, as we look at the creation account, our purpose isn't just to look at and highlight the things that God created and when; our purpose is more to consider what God has revealed about Himself through the creation account. Lastly, as we move into looking at creation, we will look at creation in the order that God created it.

As we seek to turn our attention to only Him, I think you'll be surprised to realize how much He has truly revealed about Himself. He truly wants us to know Him. He truly wants a close intimate relationship with us. This is His heart. See **Jeremiah 9:23-24.**

God created all the spirits.

Job makes it pretty clear that spirit beings were present when God created the earth; therefore, we will begin with God's creation of the spirit beings.

- **Read Job 38:4-7.**

First of all, I think it is quite significant that God created the spirit beings before He created anything else. This means that they witnessed God's omnipotence, sovereignty, and omniscience firsthand. Think of it, all the spirit beings got to see God speak everything into existence. What a display of power and wisdom! God was in the business of revealing Himself even before humanity was on the scene because He is motivated by relationship.

God created angels with mighty intellect and power to do His will.

Return to **Psalm 103:20**. The angels have great knowledge and understanding, and God gave them power to do great things. However, unlike God, they do not know and cannot do everything.

- **Read Ephesians 3:10 and 1 Peter 1:12.**

These two passages show us that angels are not all-knowing. It's very apparent that God desires for His creation to know Him. He has gone to great lengths and detail in revealing Himself.

He created the angels first, partly so He could reveal Himself to them as He went on to create the rest of creation. Now we see Him using His interaction with the church to further reveal His wisdom and grace to the spirit world.

This is a major truth about God that sets Him apart from the gods of all other religions. God is a God Who desires His creation to know Him and Who desires to have a relationship with His creation. This same desire that we see in God for the angels to know Him and His heart, we will clearly see is His same desire for all of mankind!

He wants us to know Him and be confident in Who He really is and what He is really like. Why? Because He loves us and wants us to be able to trust Him. And without knowing Him, we won't be confident in His goodness and love, nor will we be able to love and trust Him in return.

God created ALL angels/spirit beings perfect.

Since God is completely holy, He would never create anything evil. Everything He thinks, says, and does is perfect. Though God absolutely knew what every single angel would turn out to be like, He didn't create any of them as evil. He created them all perfect and without sin.

This truth brings up a huge point regarding the sovereignty of God. Review two of our main "perspective" verses: **2 Timothy 1:9 and Colossians 1:16.**

- First, we have this purpose and grace (plan) that was bestowed on us THROUGH CHRIST, before time began.

- Then, Colossians says that ALL things (including ALL spirit beings) were created BY Him and FOR Him (Christ).

This means that Lucifer and all the angels who became Satan and the demons, their whole rebellion and all that has resulted from it down through the generations was already factored into God's plan and purpose from eternity past!

Because we know that God is absolutely perfect and holy, we must be convinced that His plan and purposes are absolutely perfect and holy, too. Therefore, rather than questioning why God allows this and that, let us instead rejoice in the fact that the One who is absolutely holy, perfect, and good, is also the One Who is absolutely sovereign and supreme.

The next time you are tempted to be concerned about the "attacks of the enemy," remind yourself of the massive number of angels that God simply spoke into existence! With such power, wisdom, sovereignty, and greatness, why would WE, as finished-work Christians, ever find ourselves even remotely concerned about what the "enemy" is trying to accomplish?

Discussion:

1. What is the significance of God creating all the spirit beings before creating anything else? **God had a desire to reveal Himself, His creativity, and His desire for good for His creation. This desire shows that above all else, God seeks relationships.**

2. Did Lucifer's rebellion surprise God? **No! Just as his creation and fall were factored into the plan, so is his eventual destruction (see Matthew 25:41 and Revelation 20:10).**

God is so sovereign, He can use the schemes of the devil for His purposes (see the story of Job, Judas' Betrayal, The Temptation of Man).

God's desire for relationship can be seen in another creation story—the creation of man.

- **Read Genesis 1:24-27.**

What does it mean to be created in God's image? Obviously, this is not referring to man's body being like God's, because God is Spirit. Rather, God was referring to that part of man that cannot be seen: man's **soul and spirit**. The soul and spirit of man were created in God's image, setting man apart from the animal world. Our soul is our mind, will, and emotions.

Being made in God's image means that humans share, though imperfectly and finitely, in God's **nature**. That is, in His communicable attributes (life, personality, truth, wisdom, love, holiness, justice) and so have the capacity for spiritual fellowship with Him. God planned to give man a mind with which he could think and reason.

Bottom line, God created man to be able to have a **relationship** with. Therefore, God created man with a mind that would enable him to understand what God wanted to communicate to him. This is one of the key points that sets God and Christianity apart from all other religions—the fact that God wants to communicate with us and have a relationship with us.

God planned to give man emotions. God has emotions. He loves, hates, feels sadness and joy, and in order to have a relationship with man, man would have to have emotions, too. Can you have a relationship without emotions? It's impossible! This is why God created man with a mind and with emotions— so we can know and understand Him, understand His love for us, and love Him in return. What is the number one thing that we as parents want from our kids in return for our love for them? Love. It's the same with God.

God also planned to give man a will. God has a will. He makes decisions and choices. Where have we already seen God make choices? Creation. When He created, He decided what every single thing would be like. God also planned for man to be able to make choices. Why is this significant? If we couldn't make choices, we would be like an object controlled by someone else. We'd be like robots. When you get dressed each morning, do your clothes have any say in what you will wear? Do the contents of your fridge decide for you how you will use them in your next meal? Does your car determine the route you will take to work? Inanimate objects have no say in our decisions. They are controlled by us!

God could have made man without a mind, will, and emotions, but there never could have been a relationship had He done that. God did not make us like objects. He places a very high value on man.

Man was to be given a mind that could understand what God wanted to communicate to him, the intelligence to think through what God said, the ability to learn about His character and be able to communicate with Him. Man was also to be given emotions so he would be able to respond to God out of love for Him. *See 1 John 4:10* – we love because He first loved us.

He reveals Himself because, as the Creator, God knows the best existence for humanity is one in relationship with Him. God made Adam's body from the ground. When God created everything else, He simply spoke and it appeared. He formed all of the animals by a command from His mouth. But when He made the first man, He personally formed man's body from the earth with His hands. Man's body was formed by the immediate intervention of God. It did not grow; nor was it produced by any process of development. Compare **Genesis 1:24** with **2:7**.

God's personal intervention in the creation of man reveals His special connection with them, and his desire for relationship continues into the garden as He walks with His creation. This desire is unfolded throughout the OT, as God preserves the nation of Israel to make His name known, until He finally confirms in His coming as a person and offering His Helper – Himself – to dwell within those who believe, the supreme manifestation of this desire.

God is not only motivated by relationships for His glory but for our good.

Our understanding of God's heart has to begin not at the beginning of our lives nor at the arrival of Christ, but before time began, because that's where God's desire for relationship existed, and in Him it continues to exist.

To go deeper into this topic, read through Lessons 3 and 5 in the full Knowing God curriculum.