

THEISM

The God of Creation

The creation reveals much about God. The first fact about God recorded in the Bible is that he is the Creator. “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). God’s written revelation to humanity (the Bible) begins by describing his creation (Genesis 1-2). That God is creator is declared many times in scripture (e.g., Psalm 8:1; 19:1; 33:6, 9; Isaiah 40:12, 22, 26, 28; 42:5; 45:18; 66:1-2; Acts 4:24; 14:15; Romans 1:25; Revelation 4:11).

The nature and character of God may be partly understood by observing creation. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). “For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made . . .” Among those invisible attributes, Paul names God’s “eternal power and Godhead” (Romans 1:20). These may be more fully described.

God is eternal, i.e., God is without beginning or end. “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God” (Psalm 90:2). God not only pre-existed creation, he preceded and created time. Whereas God is eternal, creation is temporal. Jesus’ stated that creation had a beginning. “From the beginning of the creation, male and female made he them” (Mark 10:6). He also said that the devil “was a murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44). Time not only began at creation, but unlike the eternal God, will come to an end when the creation is destroyed (2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12) because time is regulated by the creation.

God is eternally powerful – for from him came and by him continues all demonstrations of power, whether from the sun, moon, stars, other planetary bodies or earthly activities. By his power, the heavens and the earth, and everything in them, were made (Jeremiah 10:12, see also Jeremiah 51:15). Isaiah describes the power of God thusly, “Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. . . . Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; he calls them all by name, by the greatness of his might and the strength of his power; not one is missing” (Isaiah 40:21-22, 26).

Creation was by the Godhead. While creation is specifically said to have come from God, sometimes the creator is designated as the Son of God (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Hebrews 1:2) and sometimes the creator is designated as the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:2; Psalm 104:30; Job 33:4). The Hebrew word used to designate God in Genesis 1:1, 27 is *Elohim*, a plural term that is used with singular verbs whenever designating the true God. Thus, the God of creation carries the concept of the triune God.

The creation also indicates other attributes about God. *Creation indicates the independence of God.* God is complete within himself. He is not dependent on creation for his existence. While the creation is physical and therefore natural and material, God is not. God is a spirit (John 4:24). Therefore God must not to be equated with naturalism or materialism. And while God is, and always has been, a living, personal being (Joshua 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:9), the created world is impersonal and was made from nothing. The Hebrew word, *bara*, in Genesis 1:1 means to create out of nothing, i.e., to bring into existence something that did not previously

exist. “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear” (Hebrews 11:3). Whereas humans are sometimes talented with creative abilities, they create from things that already exist.

Creation indicates that God is a designing God. That the creation was designed is indicated by many obvious physical factors like separation of water from dry land, separation of heavenly bodies into sun, moon, and stars, for light and day and for regulation of the seasons (Genesis 1:14-18). Design is also indicated by separation of plants from living creatures, categorical distinctions by categories of birds, fish, dry land creatures, and mankind – each designed with mechanisms for reproduction. Upon completion of his creation, God evaluated it as being very good (Genesis 1:10, 12, 17, 25, 31).

Creation indicates that God is a providing and purposeful God. Inasmuch as the world was created, it had purpose. Hence, the physical, natural, and material world could not have come into being by purposeless chance or accident. All creation was intended to provide for human needs and purposes. God provided all things needful to man, e.g. food (Genesis 2:16-17), freedom and responsibility (Genesis 1:28), companionship (Genesis 2:18; 21-22), clothing (Genesis 3:21), etc. At creation God indicated care and concern for humanity by providing for human needs. When people realize that God is concerned about human needs, they may be motivated to pray with thanksgivings, knowing that God hears and responds to their petitions.

Creation indicates the graciousness of God. God’s graciousness is indicated in that he created man in his own image (Genesis 1:26-27), provided for his every need (Genesis 1:29; 2:8, 15-16, 18-22), gave him dominion over all creation (Genesis 1:28), and sought communication with him (Genesis 3:8-19). When man sinned, God was gracious in indicating that he intended to provide the future redemption of humanity which he ultimately accomplished in Christ Jesus (Genesis 3:16; see also Romans 5:18-19).

Creation indicates the sovereignty of God. A sovereign is “above or superior to all others; chief, greatest, supreme in power, rank, or authority.” No one has supremacy over God (Isaiah 43:10-11, 44:6; 45:5). As sovereign ruler, God made humans to have dominion over creation (Genesis 1:28). This was an assignment of stewardship over God’s creation, to which humanity is accountable to God. God judges people by whether or not they keep his commandments (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:6-7, 14-19). God asks no one for permission; nor does he seek approval from any other (Job 41:11). All creation is dependent upon God (Acts 17:28), Nature itself obeys God (Matthew 8:23-27). He rules according to his own purposes and elective will.

Creation indicates the wisdom of God. “The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens” (Proverbs 3:19; see also Psalm 136:5). In Proverbs 8:1, 22-31, God is personified as Wisdom by which all things were created. “O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all” (Psalm 104:24). Jeremiah declared that “He has established the world by his wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens at His discretion” (10:12, see also 51:15).

Since God is the Creator, all creation belongs to him. He is Lord of heaven and earth (Acts 17:24). The Creator, not the natural creation, should therefore be glorified and worshipped (Romans 1:22-25; 11:36; Revelation 4:11).