

In The Beginning God . . .

*An In-Depth Study of the
First Three Chapters of Genesis*

All Truth Begins Here



The Character of God: Part Four

INTRODUCTION: Even though we are moving into our final sermon in the study of the character of God in Genesis 1-3, we will still not exhaust the seeds of truth about His nature that may be found here. It is amazing, and certainly evidence of divine inspiration, that a narrative passage of three short chapters could contain so much information about God woven into the fabric of the creation account. We will pause to consider several other aspects of His nature and then review all that we have learned about Him.

I. God is a God of Order and Precision, Clothed in Beauty

- A. Chapter one expresses care and purpose in creation with both “after their kind” reproduction and interdependent synchrony of all living things.
- B. The “lights in the expanse of the heavens” were appointed for signs, seasons, days, and years and regulate the earth and the universe like a precision clock.
- C. In chapter two God plants a garden and fills it with everything needed. It is a deliberate and purposeful act that creates an ideal environment and furnishes every desirable thing that Adam and Eve could want.
- D. In all of this God has provided beauty and sensory capacity to appreciate it. He created not merely function, but color and sight, fragrance and smell, flavor and taste, texture and sensation; rustling leaves, singing birds, babbling streams, voice and music and the human ear. “In His image” gives us insight into the joy of God in all things beautiful, and yet, there is a symbiosis and mathematical precision to all of life that makes human engineering and design pale to nothingness by comparison. Who can make a beating heart, or a seeing eye, or put together a bee and a flower?

II. God is a God of Holiness, Justice, Wrath, Grace, and Mercy

- A. In the sad events of chapter three we also discover new facets about the character of God. He means what He says: sin brings judgment, death, separation from God and life. He can do no less and still be God.
- B. We see His holiness and righteousness in this one simple command, “do not eat,” and in the disobedience that follows the couple is driven from the source of life, because He is holy, and to transgress His commandments is to sin and incur the penalty.
- C. In His response we are introduced to His wrath and judgment, the curse of sin and the toil which rebellion brings. He is a God Who will by no means clear the guilty.
- D. And yet, we also see His grace and mercy as He sustains temporal life for awhile, forestalls final judgment, offers hope, provides a covering, instructs about the way back to light and fellowship, and demonstrates His love and patience even to those who have sinned and rejected Him.

III. God is a God of Love

- A. The love of God is seen in His loving creation of Adam and Eve in His Own likeness and in His preservation of them and their race in the promise of redemption. That God desires a relationship with human beings is without question, and His love drives all of His behavior toward us.
- B. Even in judgment and cursing there is blessing, for the idle mind is a dangerous place when out of fellowship with God, and so toilsome labor will be our lot and the very grief of life will drive us back again to our Maker wherein is life everlasting.

CONCLUSION: And so in these three short chapters of 80 verses, if we had no other pages of Scripture, we could deduce that our Creator God is transcendent, imminent, eternal, infinite, spiritual, non-corporeal, Creator, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, personal, relational, triune, good, benevolent, gracious, patient, merciful, holy, righteous, just, wrathful; giving both blessings and curses, sustaining, filled with order, harmony, synchrony, beauty, and loving toward all He has made and human beings in particular. In three short chapters we see this and only scratch the surface!

Genesis 1:9-19 Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a third day. Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

Genesis 2:8 The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.

NOTES

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. The goal of this series has been to demonstrate that major truths of the Bible all have their beginnings in Genesis chapters 1-3 and to explain them in ways that help you with your daily life. Discuss how this goal has or has not been met in your own life as you have listened to these sermons.
2. Spend some time discussing how the universe expresses the order and precision of God's nature.
3. Just for fun, discuss what you think the Garden of Eden might have looked like.
4. Scientists have estimated that human beings only use about 10% of the capacity of their brains. Suppose Adam and Eve, in their perfect state, used 100% of their capacity, what do you think this would have been like?
5. What exactly did God curse after the fall at the end of Genesis chapter 3. And what was the consequence of the curse?
6. In what ways does this account of the fall of humankind reveal both the justice and the mercy of God?
7. From the list of God's attributes in the conclusion choose 2 or 3 that have been especially meaningful to you and explain why.