

The Creation Account

According to the Earth and Seas

Genesis 1&2 Imaginatively Interpreted by James Griffin

In the beginning nothing was seen except darkness. I was naught but empty and wasted. Through my innermost depths there was only barrenness and desolation; I knew neither life nor light. Profound darkness enshrouded me. Then a mighty Rushing Wind blew over me, encircling my whole surface and stirring me at my foundations.

Something began to dawn in me which I could not describe. Something tearing at me from the inside, pushing to find a way out, and groaning to be set free and expressed. I longed for purpose. I desired to be filled and to be used, to be needed and valued. I was overwhelmed with a strange mixture of emotion: great hope and terrible fear.

Then I heard a sound, a Word that was uttered. It was both solemn and warm like the voice of a father bidding a timid child to come. As it came forth in the midst of the Rushing Wind and the deep darkness, I watched as the darkness retreated. I witnessed an astonishing brilliance saturate the cosmos. Sheer terror at the unspeakable glory was assuaged with a profound sense of peace and intrinsic trust. I saw as the commands of the Creator lifted the dome of heaven and established it in its place.

Then the Voice called to the depths of my being. It divided my waters and drew out of me something that I had never known. I felt utterly powerless to resist and so dry land appeared. The Power began to name that which it called into being and at the same time I sensed the great pleasure of the Creator as I participated in his unfolding design. Again the Majesty called to me and I was filled with its life. Lush greenery abounded over my surface, spreading throughout the whole earth.

The Magnificence then went to work filling the dome of heaven with luminaries to signify the rhythms of his living composition. He filled my waters with living creatures and the sky above me with winged fowl, each tailor-made for their unique environments. He bestowed a blessing on the beasts of the sea and the air, commanding them to increase.

The Word of His Mouth then made all species of beasts on the land, over the face of my soil. The God paused and then reflected. Anticipation shot through the universe as the host of heaven watched in wonder and awe. Then God came down from the heights and planted his feet firmly upon me.

Amazement arose in me as God formed from my own clay a new creature, unlike any other that had been. Giving it life with the very Breath of His Nostrils. In the presence of beasts and angels he declared this living being to be His Image and His Likeness, the great regent of His labors, to whom the earth and seas and every living creature would submit.

The Word was spoken for all creation to hear that the human was to be a perpetual memorial and a ceaseless testimony to God's sovereignty and dominion throughout the universe. He then vowed that the entire world would one day bless themselves through humanity. To those in heaven and earth who honored humanity, He pledged His blessing, but to those who rose up against humanity He swore an unending curse.

God then ceased from the work He had done. As an artisan labors in reverence while he builds a sanctuary for the Divine Presence, gasping in astonishment after seeing its beauty upon completion, so the LORD God beheld the whole of His creation. The heavens and the earth were finished in all their array; the cosmos being resplendent with His glory. He then filled the world with The Presence of His Majesty as the waters cover the seas. All of the earth rested in the fullness of God's super-abounding peace.

Still, I sensed that I had not seen the end yet. I pondered what more might He might add to an already overwhelming sense of completion. I became aware that my soil lay untilled and my shrubs uncultivated. The beasts of the field had none to shepherd them and the fruit of my trees spoiled without harvest.

So the LORD God placed the human amid my choicest parts, in a garden well watered at the head of four rivers. A land teeming with lush growth and the richest soil, filled with fine gold and abundant in jewels. The LORD's garden was a paradise; it lacked nothing that the human might need. The very source of life and the delicacy of freedom He did plant there, along with the entirety of implications they required. The LORD God saw every outcome that might arise and yet He was unfaltering.

God drew near to the human beholding him face to face and He said, “all of this I give to you this day. Take possession of it and rule over it, for I am giving it to you and your descendants as an eternal inheritance. Serve in my creation and maintain it, all of it is for your use and enjoyment. Only from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil must you abstain.” God solemnly entreated the human to steadfastly trust in Him.

The YHWH God called the human to remember that The Eternal ONE WHO IS had Himself crowned the human as the shining apex over all creation. Further the LORD implored human to understand that despite his position of honor in the world, mankind was yet a creature bound by a limit and it was essential to the human's task that the God-given boundary be honored and upheld.

Finally the Creator of heaven and earth warned the human that the freedom he possessed, the freedom of obedience or rebellion against the Throne of Heaven, entailed the choice of life or death. So The LORD spoke, "Obedience to my words will bring to you every good thing in abundance from My hand which I shall not withhold, but if you turn away from Me and yearn after the knowledge and experience which comes only from disobedience you will set about to destroy all that I the LORD God had made for you, even your very life."

A deep longing in the depths of the human soul did the LORD himself place there, that in the profundity of this ineffable yearning humanity might reach out and grasp that which lies beyond them. So that in their grasping they might find the LORD whom they seek, and in so finding they would be comforted and fulfilled. That in God's presence all humanity would be embraced and experienced by another, that they might know fully just as they are fully known.

So two by two did the LORD God bring the other creatures before the human, for him to see and to name. The human observed all of the creatures, calling each one by name as the LORD looked on. Yet the human knew he was all alone of his kind.

The LORD saw desire surge in the human's heart and God had mercy on him in his bewilderment. God saw that it was not good for the human to think himself alone, without complement. The Merciful One knew that the human was lacking and so he set to make for him a help. As the man slept, the LORD created a woman in His image and according to His likeness. Now the man also might behold God's craftsmanship in reverence and be reminded of God's embrace and His beauty, His kindness and compassion. So the man and the woman might be ever reminding to each other that **humanity is not alone.**

The Eternal Gospel of the Father

Ephesians 1:3-6

These thoughts are from C. Baxter Kruger
Adapted and Summarized by Joseph Steinke

The apostle Paul begins his great letter to the Ephesians with a burst of praise: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” This is an outburst of genuine praise that comes from excitement over glimpsing what God has done with us in Christ.

Paul has seen that something quite breathtaking and glorious has taken place in Jesus Christ and that it involves us—you, me, the world. He has seen the sovereign grace of the Father overflow and lavish upon us an almost indescribable heavenly gift in Christ. And, as we read further, we cannot help but feel that the apostle will explode if he does not get it out. He rattles on for ten or so verses without taking a breath.

Can you not feel the apostle's heart here? Awesome things have happened in Christ. We are included. They are for us and involve us. And the apostle is bursting at the seams to help us see it all with him. He strains word after word and stretches phrase after phrase, almost to the breaking point, as if what he sees is beyond words or expression.

But he must express it. He is driven to put it before us. He is a desperately inspired man. He feels that if he can communicate here all history will be changed. The question is: What is it that has the apostle so energized to communicate? What is it that he sees and feels? What is it that has gotten such a hold on this man?

There are three key points. But before we probe these points, we need to understand that Paul is taking it for granted that we all know that this is God's world. There is a God. And this God created everything in the heavens and on earth. What the apostle is so enthusiastic about is why God created the world and humanity. He is excited and burdened to explain the rhyme and reason of God's creative activity and the reason for our very existence.

1. The first point that Paul is making is that God the Father has a plan, an eternal plan, formulated, as it were, before anything was ever created, and standing as **the secret behind all things**.

2. Second, the Father has not left the execution of His plan to chance—or to kings and governments, the church and politics, or to you and me. He has appointed an executor of His will. He has designated One to accomplish His purpose. He has placed One in charge of working out His plan to the full.

3. Third, this plan has now been fulfilled.

The apostle sees that God's plan has an astonishing surprise in it. The Father has appointed His Son to step forth and work out His eternal purpose. And Paul is standing in awe because this is what has happened. Jesus has come. The work is finished. What the Father planned for us before creation has now been decisively fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

This first chapter of Ephesians is the apostle's verbal attempt to grab us and shake us and wake us up to see the glory. God the Father has a purpose first, a clear and definite purpose. And it is in order to bring forth this purpose that He creates and calls forth the universe and humanity out of nothing. On the personal level, this means that you and I are here not by chance, but by design. We are not accidents. We are creatures who have been created by God because He has a plan which includes us.

On the larger level, this means that both the universe, in its staggering immensity and diversity, and human history, in its splendor and complexity, are swallowed up in God's unfolding plan. Behind everything in creation and history lies the eternal purpose of the Father. That is the secret. And this purpose is no longer hidden from anyone.

The reason for all things, including our existence, is no longer an enigma, reserved for the super spiritual or the religious elite. It has been revealed in Christ, the light of the world. The light of human existence, the light of your existence, has been given in Jesus Christ for all to see.

In v. 4, the apostle refers to this secret purpose as to be made “**holy and blameless before Him.**”

In v. 5, he calls this “**adoption.**” Paul is telling us that we are here because God has an eternal purpose for us. And he is declaring to us that **God created us so that we would be adopted into His family, included in the circle of His own fellowship, and brought into a life of shared communion.**

Adoption! Adoption! Adoption! This is the first thought, the mystery, the secret, of the entire universe. This is why this world is here, why man, humanity, the universe, history exists. Delete this purpose and there simply is no creation, for there is no reason to call it forth nor to sustain it.

When we stop long enough to ponder, our very existence is quite a remarkable gift to us. We were not. We were not here at all. We had no mind, no heart, no eyes to see, no taste buds, no hands to hold, no friendships, no love. We simply were nothing. And we had no power to be. But God called us forth out of nothingness and not-being and gave us existence. He fashioned us and brought us here. Who cannot but marvel at this?

But wonderful as it is to be and to be here, the apostle is declaring to us that the Father has never had any interest in our mere existence.

He is telling us that before God created us, He determined that we should be filled and overflowing with His Life—made participants in His life and glory.

You see what is happening here. Paul's mind soars back through time, through the long history of Israel, through the Garden of Eden, through creation and into eternity. And there in eternity, before there was anything, before creation, Paul sees God the Father. And he is allowed to peer into the Father's heart. And there he sees this great and glorious purpose for us.

Before there was anything, the Father set out this plan and made this decision for us. The eternal purpose of the Father is to bring us into existence, and not just into existence but into His house. And not just into His house but to His table, and not just to His table but to His right hand. And not just to His right hand but into conversation with Him, and not just into conversation with Him but into face-to-face fellowship with God the Father Himself.

But even here we have not come to the glory of it. For this fellowship is not simply about face-to-face conversation or side-by-side relationship; it is about the meeting and sharing of souls. It is about such a profoundly personal sharing of life, such a thorough exposure of being, that we begin to be in God and God begins to be in us—mutual indwelling, *perichoresis*.

Paul is talking about being ushered into a fellowship with God that is so close, so intimate, so deep, so real, so alive that everything God the Father is, everything He has, all His treasures and glory are shared with us personally. Staggering as it may be, inconceivable as it may appear to us, this is what Paul is saying.

The Father destined nothing short of Himself as our inheritance. He has no interest in our mere existence. He gives us existence for the sole reason of bringing us into profound intimacy with Him—an intimacy in which God's very being and life and joy pass into us and become ours.

In his book *The Weight of Glory*, C. S. Lewis talks about those moments in our lives when we suddenly recognize beauty. We suddenly behold, we become very aware of, the beauty of something—a sunset, a person, a picture, a word, a touch. We are caught up, for a moment, in the pleasure of what the philosophers and artists of every age call “beauty.”

But Lewis goes on to say that, wonderful as these moments are, inspiring and pleasing as they may be, they never really satisfy us. It is not enough to behold beauty. The secret longing of our hearts is to move beyond glimpsing it. We want something else which can hardly be put into words—to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it.

(The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., reprinted 1975], p. 13).

This is a great analogy for what Paul is telling us about God the Father and His eternal purpose for us. It has never crossed the Father's mind to give us mere fleeting glimpses of His glory. The plan from eternity is that we would be included in, united with, baptized into His glory and life. His eternal purpose for us is nothing less than the gift of passing into, receiving to ourselves, bathing in and becoming part of the Father's very life, security, peace, dignity, joy, purity, freedom and love. Is it any wonder the apostle is so inspired?

Can you believe this? Can you believe that this is the way God is, that this is God's will, plan, purpose for you from eternity? Can you believe this is why He created you out of nothing? Can you believe that this is why He gives you life now, that this is what your existence, your time, is all about now?

The apostle is bursting at the seams because he has seen it and he knows that this is it. He has heard the conversation between the Father and the Son in the Spirit before creation. He has seen the very heart of the Father. And he is declaring to us that this good news, this decision, this purpose for us was in the Father's heart before the foundation of the world. This is the gospel, the eternal gospel.

Adoption in this context means to be taken into and included in the circle of the Father's fellowship. It means to be included in the circle in which what is shared is not merely rights and privileges, but life. The eternal plan is for the Father to lavish Himself upon us, to give Himself and all that He is and has to us, to share with us His own life and joy unspeakable, full of glory. Adoption means to be included in God's very own life, made a participant in His fullness, filled with God.

Moreover, this purpose of inclusion in God the Father's own life carries with it the plan to custom-make us for participation in His life. The purpose to embrace us and include us in His life and fullness incorporates a plan of equipping and forging, tailoring and making us right and ready for Him. For the point is not merely to give us rights and privileges, but to bring us to share in His life.

What good is it for the Father to lavish Himself upon us if we are alien to Him and cannot know Him? Adoption includes the plan of our being made right for God, of our being transformed into at-oneness and union with Him, of our being tailor-made for the Father and His fellowship.

Before we were born, before creation was born, before we did anything right or wrong, God the Father determined that we would be brought into union with Him and made full participants in His life and glory. This is the staggering plan in the Father's heart from all eternity. Out of the womb of this glorious purpose creation was birthed and we were given existence. Unto this end we are sustained.

You see, volumes are crammed into these little phrases, “in Him” (v. 4), and “through Jesus” (v. 5). Paul is telling us that this great decision of the Father was not made in the abstract. It was made in Jesus. We were chosen in Christ, predestined to adoption through Jesus.

We are coming now to the heart of all things
Christian and certainly to the spring of the
apostle's inspiration. The very secret of the real
Christian life lies right here. But what do these
little prepositions in and through mean?

We must think carefully here, for this is too good to miss. Chosen in Christ, predestined through Jesus, means that the Father not only planned that we would not be alien to Him but right and ready for Him; He also planned the way that He would bring this to pass. And that way is Jesus Christ, His eternal Son incarnate.

The Father determined this destiny for us—
embraced, included in the circle of His immediate
presence, tailor-made for participation in His life
—and He determined the One who would
accomplish it—Jesus Christ.

This is the heart and soul of the gospel . For it means that the coming of Jesus is not an afterthought. He was destined to come before the foundation of the world. Jesus Christ is not Plan B quickly set in motion after the failure of Plan A in Adam.

No! No! No! Jesus Christ is Plan A. He is the only plan. He is the eternal Word (JN 1:1-13, 14).

It was all purposed in Him (EPH 1:9).

He was always destined to be the One in whom all things would be summed up (v. 10).

Adam was never the chosen one. Abraham, Moses, David were never the chosen ones. You were never the chosen one. From all eternity, Jesus Christ is the chosen one. He was elected to be the One who would come and fulfill the Father's plans for us. We were never designated as the ones who would make ourselves right for the Father.

From eternity, that responsibility has been sovereignly snatched from you and me and placed into the hands of Jesus Christ. Never once has it crossed the mind of the Father that anyone but Jesus would be the mediator, the high priest, the saviour, the executor of His will. Never once has it entered His mind that you would be responsible for making yourself right for Him. You are not capable of bearing that kind of responsibility. But Jesus Christ is.

What Paul is telling us is that the Father had His eye on His incarnate Son Jesus Christ when He called creation forth out of nothing. The Father named His own Son before creation and said: 'Thou art the mediator!' 'Thou art the executor!' 'Thou art the vicarious Man!' Before the beginning, the Father said: 'You, My beloved Son, will go and step into creation.' 'You, My beloved Son, in whom My soul delights, will become a human being, a real man.' 'You will plunge yourself into the midst of human brokenness and eradicate it and forge the real human existence with Me for them.'

‘You will invade and attack all alienation and foreignness and replace it with our life and fullness.’ ‘You will penetrate every fiber of human wrongness and undo it, circumcise and crucify it.’ ‘You will be their holiness and blamelessness.’ ‘You will be their at-oneness, exaltation and adoption.’ ‘You will cross the chasm, all the chasms, between us and bring them to Me—tailor-made, right, and ready for Me and life in My house.’

From all eternity, the Father elected His own Son to be the executor of His plans for us. Here is amazing, and indeed humbling, grace. From the very beginning, the Father put man soundly in his place and gloriously elected Jesus to be the vicarious Man. He planned that we would be woven into the fabric of Jesus' existence. From the very beginning, the Father decided that Jesus would be our head and representative and substitute, so much so that what would become of Him would become of us.

He planned that Jesus would be the one in whom we would be radically and decisively cleansed and made right for Himself. He planned that Jesus would be the one in whom our wrongness would be undone. He planned that Jesus would be the one in whom we would be taken down and lifted up, emptied and filled with all the treasures of heaven, crucified and exalted into the circle of the Father's fellowship.

From all eternity, the Father planned that in Jesus Christ we would be crucified, dead, and buried, and made alive again in at-oneness with the Father. Chosen in Him, predestined through Jesus Christ, this is the most exciting news in the universe.

This is what the apostle Paul is saying is the mystery hidden for ages and is now revealed in Christ Jesus. He has seen Jesus at the Father's right hand from all eternity and He sees Him there now as a man, as the Man, as our head, substitute, representative, mediator and high priest.

This is the secret purpose and meaning behind all of Creation. Now we know, now we believe, now we live, now we love, now we dream, now we hope, now we participate in our world as co-creators with Christ Jesus, now we partner in the revelation of the Father's love, now we share the generosity of our inclusion with everyone, now we find a way out of our lost darkness and live in the light of who we really are, the chosen and adopted children of God our Father in Christ Jesus.