

## Our Sovereign LORD

6/6/2021

### **Scripture 1:** (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And 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 lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

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

And 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 heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens 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. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

**Scripture 2:** (Matthew 6:25-33)

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

## Sermon:

Do you believe in miracles? That is a serious question. Do you, truly?

I do. Absolutely and without question. Miracles have happened and they happen all around us, all the time. Yet we easily lose this sense of the miraculous, because we are surrounded by it and because the world takes miracles for granted, as being expected, as ordinary; it no longer considers them to be miracles at all, but part of the natural order of creation (yet then they won't call it creation because that implies a Creator, so it becomes just the "natural order").

So, do you live with a sense of wonder at the miracles of God which you encounter every day of your life? Do you feel gratitude and appreciate all that Jesus has done, does, and will ever do for you, in this life and in the life to come?

Regaining or restoring our sense of wonder at the "*works of [His] hands*" (Job 34:19; Psalm 28:5; Isaiah 5:12) helps us to live lives comforted by His Grace and Mercy, resting in and depending upon His daily acts of Divine Providence. *{There is no such thing as luck, but lucky [or fortunate] is the person who has God, who has Jesus, on their side and lives on the side of Christ.}*

Now, what do Miracles and Providence have to do with one another? They are both fully, completely, truly, and entirely dependent upon the Sovereignty of God. They are a part of why our "*only hope in life and in death*" (Heidelberg Catechism Q1) is Christ Jesus. They are the means by which "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

I asked you a few minutes ago if you believe in miracles, now I will give you some "qualified proof" for miracles:

- A few moments ago we just read Genesis 1: so let me ask you, what did God create first?
  - Baseball. Go ahead, check me out. What are the first words of our passage? "*In the Big Inning...*" Clearly God is a baseball fan...and every baseball fan knows and believes that miracles **happen**: my Tampa Bay Rays went to the World Series last year and are currently in the lead for a pennant, and that is a miracle.

But all kidding aside, it is a miracle that you are here right now: the pew you are sitting in is a miracle, the air you breath is a miracle. The fact that we have this breathable atmosphere, and the perfect climate to support our human lives, *{even if it is sometimes inhospitable; where a person could survive and exist through available adaptable materials, like the South Pole and equatorial Africa}* is evidence for the daily miracle of our continued existence. It is a miracle that our water doesn't freeze across the globe or our atmosphere boil off into outer space.

Life, all of creation which you see around you, is a miracle, and the result of a miracle – all of it is God's handiwork within His creation (Psalm 19); so, we have no excuse and no reason to deny that God is. The entire debate concerning the necessity and existence of God, hinges upon the beginning: His act of and the event of creation.

Modern science describes is called, "The Big Bang". By their faith, it is believed true and that their "scientific model" is considered to be "irrefutable evidence" against the Biblical creation story of Genesis 1, that we just read.

According to SPACE.COM, and I quote, “The Big Bang Theory is the leading explanation about how the universe began. At its simplest, it says the universe as we know it started with a small singularity, then inflated over the next 13.8 billion years to the cosmos that we know today.

Because current instruments don't allow astronomers to peer back at the universe's birth, much of what we understand about the Big Bang Theory comes from mathematical formulas and models....In the first second after the universe began, the surrounding temperature was about 10 billion degrees Fahrenheit (5.5 billion Celsius), according to NASA. The cosmos contained a vast array of fundamental particles such as neutrons, electrons and protons. These decayed or combined as the universe got cooler.

This early soup would have been impossible to look at, because light could not carry inside of it. "The free electrons would have caused light (photons) to scatter the way sunlight scatters from the water droplets in clouds," NASA stated. Over time, however, the free electrons met up with nuclei and created neutral atoms. This allowed light to shine through about 380,000 years after the Big Bang.”<sup>1</sup>

Wow. That sounds like a fancy way of describing what happened simply when God said, “*Let there be light...*”

However, did you notice the tiny and critical flaw within their “scientific” argument and description? “In the first second after the universe began...” Science may be able to describe what the moment of creation may have looked like, but their application of the Scientific Method cannot and will never be able to say what [or Who] began, originated, and instigated that initial act of Creation. Science can only describe what happened after the moment of creation, but neither a moment before nor the instant of creation; they require faith and belief, or trust and confidence in their models. The difference between science and religion, is not in the substance but in the descriptions: science can never satisfy the How, Why, or Who of Creation only the clear teaching of the Bible explains that Creation is the miracle of God.

Our entire world and existence stems from God first creating, and then ordering His creation over the following days; He did not create anything after that, although He made things and caused them to come out from within that creation; a point which science affirms, that all matter came into being at that one, single moment of creation, during the “Big Bang” (CERN)<sup>2</sup>.

Everything around us was created “*In the beginning...*”, every atom and sub-atomic particle. Everything is a part of, and the direct result of, God's miracle of creation. Everything. God created the heavens and the earth, light and darkness; then He separated the waters above from the waters below, the waters from the dry land; He caused plants and animals to be brought forth, then He made Man in His Image, male and female, and called it all, Good. Not just Good, but Very Good.

God created because He desired and chose to; isn't that such good news? He didn't need to. God was under no external compulsion, having no need or requirement to create everything (or anything for that matter). The creation of our finite universe was merely the sole, Sovereign Act

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.space.com/25126-big-bang-theory.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.exploratorium.edu/origins/cern/ideas/bang.html>

and Will of the Triune God, because it is in His nature to be the Creator. Otherwise, without a Creator, without God, the universe must be random and spontaneous; occurring “by chance” within an infinite space. Chaos without Order. *“Formless and void.”* (v 1:2)

Logically, if anything has a “chance” of happening within an infinite space or opportunity, then it will and must happen with an infinite frequency; yet I do not see and hear on the news or the Internet about new universes or human-like creatures being spontaneously created or creating themselves. The notion of random creation or “spontaneous generation” follows the same logical principle as placing one monkey with a typewriter within a locked room for an infinite period of time, and then expecting the “Works of William Shakespeare” to be produced at some point<sup>3</sup>.

While that expectation is mathematically possible, it is statistically improbable. Its probability approaches Zero, but is not Zero. Therefore, any event with a non-Zero probability must occur, within an infinite possibility. If there is a chance that something will happen and is given enough opportunity, then it will and must happen. *{Furthermore, any non-Zero event which is not dependent on any other (considered independent) to occur, will happen independently and repeatedly within that same infinite possibility.}*

As the “Works of William Shakespeare” could only be generated through the specific intent and design of one person, the author *{I am not going to debate the new, common suggestion that William Shakespeare was a pseudonym or/and was used by many people}*, so too the creation of the universe, all reality, and our very existence could only be by the specific, intentional design and plan of the Sovereign, Creator God; the Author of all things; and not by random chance, but by divine intent.

This act of creation, the uniqueness of the simple act of Creation from nothing, is one of the greatest proofs for the Sovereignty of God. Only a Sovereign God, *{possessing the aspect of “being” within Himself}*, could create something from nothing. Only a Sovereign God could choose to create; therefore, nothing which is created was capable of resisting or opposing His Sovereign Will *{in this act of creation}*, to avoid being created: just consider Jeremiah's potter. (Jeremiah 18, see also Romans 9:21)?

If you believe that everything happens by chance, by “dumb luck”, then life itself can have no meaning or purpose: it is therefore valueless and pointless. There is no such thing as human dignity, no value to a human life, nor can there be any “morality”; neither is there good or evil, nor truth or falsity, everything becomes relative and there are no consequences. Sounds like the modern, American popular culture, doesn't it?: abortion on demand; believing that a man can become a woman (or vice versa); releasing unrepentant, remorseless felons for fear of being called a racist; no national borders and dis-unity among the people within the country. Chaos and insanity must reign.

However, if you believe that God created, then life has purpose and value: there are absolutes in life, because of His Sovereign plan and direction. To know the value of a human life, to know the purpose of our lives, we need only read the Scriptures; they are the only place to learn and understand these truths. Here we learn about the truth, we learn who is the only Truth *{and the Way, and the Life}* (John 14:6) against whom all else is judged as being false and a lie. We learn the goodness of the LORD's Holy Law, and the wickedness and evil that we all do, in every

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<sup>3</sup> Infinite Monkey Theorem – [www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infinite\\_monkey\\_theorem](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infinite_monkey_theorem)

moment of our lives, by our transgressing it. Only here, we learn of the Hope found in Jesus Christ; only here, we understand that our “chief end” is to “worship God and enjoy Him forever” (WSC 1), only from sacred Scripture.

How great and wonderful is our God! So...do you believe in miracles?

Creation is now but a distant memory for us, as individuals and as a collective people; whether we think of it as being billions of years ago, or only some 5,000ish years ago, it is far enough back, that the moment of creation is not personal, or personally relate-able to us as individuals, because it is beyond our experience. However, the Sovereign LORD's creative and generative work still matters for us today; which is why the LORD creating is critical and foundational to our life and faith.

Jesus was teaching in Galilee. Crowds of people came to hear His words; the rich, poor, young, old, frail, feeble, and whole. At the center of His “Sermon on the Mount” discourse, Jesus spoke these words to them, perhaps the most important words they (or we) would ever hear *{and if you've ever learned anything about Jewish or Rabbinical argument, then you know that the “center” is the point of greatest import and not the “conclusion” as in our “western” debate}*. Jesus said, *“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious...”* (v 25, v 34).

Us not being anxious, has been built up across Jesus' entire “Sermon”, pointing us to and refocusing us on God, our Father, and His Sovereignty over everything and everyone in His creation instead of ourselves: Jew and Gentile, righteous and wicked, the Elect and the Reprobate. *“...do not be anxious...”*

*“Don' worry, 'bout a ting, cuz ev'ry liddle ting's, gonna be alright.”* (“Three Little Birds”, Bob Marley and the Wailers)

So, what do you worry or get anxious about?

I'm sure the people listening to Jesus had serious concerns about their daily needs: where is their next meal coming from?; what clothes should they wear?; where will they sleep?; where is their next paycheck coming from?; are they safe from predators, whether man or beast?; I don't think our concerns today are very much different from theirs; anxiety and worry is still a problem for all fallen, sinful humanity.

Many years ago, Dr James Kennedy, of Coral Ridge Presbyterian, crafted a program to help people share the Gospel, called “Evangelism Explosion”. Some of you may have heard of it. It is great for relational and conversational evangelism; teaching a clear and concise Gospel presentation which is relevant and relate-able to anyone, in any circumstance; however, I want to skip to a moment in “the middle” of the conversation.

After speaking with the person for a few minutes, after having asked them some questions gauging their understanding of how a person is saved (by works or by grace); next, we offer them a personal reason to continue this conversational path with us, so that we can then tell them about how the Gospel impacted us. We become vulnerable to them, open ourselves up and show them that we are not perfect, that we have had (and still have) problems of our own, and begin explaining how the Good News of Jesus Christ, has helped us in our lives; practically. *{This is like an “elevator pitch”, used when trying to get investors for your business.}* This is only meant to whet their appetite, so that they will want to know more.

Typically, my example is:

- Once, I was an anxious kind of person (not that you could tell). I was not worried, but I would get so concerned about things, that I had to be in constant control. I wouldn't delegate responsibility at work, because I believed that it was all up to me (and only me) to get things done and done correctly. This wore me out, exhausted me, drained all the joy from my life, and left me feeling miserable, but prosperous.
- However, once I understood the free gift of grace and salvation I have in Jesus Christ, then I was able to rest secure knowing that everything was in His hands, and under His control. I gave up my worry, stress, and anxiety and so now I can rest in Him. I no longer believe that it is all up to me.

Simple and a bit simplistic but, this is still true for me today. Whenever I begin to think that I am in control of things, I get stressed and anxious; so, I still need to be reminded that Jesus is in control; that God is God, and I am not. I need to hear the Gospel of Christ. I need to not try to be the Lord of my life.

That is what Jesus was explaining to the crowds when He said, “*Is not your life more than food, and the body more than clothing?*” (v 25), that God is Sovereign and in total control. He was not saying that those things are unimportant, He knew that they are, we need these things in life; but, it is when these things become our focus and driving force in life, instead of focusing on the Sovereign One who made them, and provides them to all people as a “common grace”, that we fall into a spiritual hole.

We worry. We get anxious because we do not have the power to create the things we need, nor all the things that we want. We begin to strive for these things {, *not because of their intrinsic value, but*} from our own selfishness, our self-centered-ness, our self-absorption...striving from the sense of it being all about me: from our idolatry of self.

I'm guilty of it, we all are. We each need to repent of this, sometimes daily and sometimes more or less often. Repent and receive Christ's forgiveness, for only in Him are we forgiven.

We think that we are important to the rest of the world, that everything is all about us...but then Jesus reminds us of just how unimportant we are in the “grand scheme of things”, but also of how important we are to God. Reminding us that “*our Father in Heaven*” feeds the birds of the air and the fish of the sea with enough food, and that He clothes the flowers of the field so beautifully...all these things which He has created; and that if our Father does this, so much better than we ever could, then how much better will He provide for us?

That is very humbling isn't it? That these temporary things, which God gave mankind dominion over, are cared for so well by Him, yet we treat them as being disposable. However, we can take comfort knowing that to God, people are greater, and more valuable, and more important to Him than the birds or flowers; therefore, He will take care of us even better. Thus, He showers all people with His “common grace”, divine Providence, and a bounty in life: for both the saved and the unsaved; so that the reprobate have no excuse or argument against Him, having experienced His Goodness in life, even though they refuse to turn to Him in repentance, or give thanks for all His good gifts.

So, how much more will He give to us, whom He has already given the faith to believe? Jesus promises, “*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*”

We seek Him and His Kingdom by living out our faith, living as “*strangers in a strange land*” (Exodus 2:22); because He has called us to Himself, we have been declared righteous by the Blood of Christ, shed on the cross; we have been given the righteousness of Jesus as our possession, and have our wickedness and sinfulness atoned for. We are forgiven when we earnestly repent; we receive this mercy solely through His Sovereign, Providential Grace, **AND** we have “*all these things*”, all the things that our heavenly Father knows we need added to us; for this life and in our eternal life with Christ in the Kingdom to come.

What more could we ever need or should we ever want, than this?

We serve a Sovereign LORD. He is our Creator, our Father, our Provider, and our Savior. He has promised us that He will give us all we ever need, because He is the only One who can. That is why our faith, our hope, and trust is in Him, in Jesus Christ alone – and not in ourselves. Nor is our hope and help found in other people; they are just as bad off (if not worse off) as we are. Nor is our hope or help found in earthly government {whether city, state, or federal}: in this sinful, fallen world governments come and go for politicians come and go: the *Pax Romana* ended with the fall of Rome to the Goths, Soviet Russia collapsed due to their failed economy, the British Empire divided and ended in rebellions. All these governments, while considered sovereign within their territories, received their temporary authority from the Sovereign LORD, and each lost it due to sin.

“*I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.*” (Psalm 121:1-2)

Our God is the Sovereign LORD and He has given us freedom in our dependence on Him. This is Good News that I love to share. Dependent on Him, Christ has freed us from our bondage to fear, from our worries and anxieties in this life while giving us the promise and hope for eternity in Glory, because He has freed us from our sins and the power of death, by His Sovereign work and will. He alone is God, and I am not; we don't need to be.

Only Jesus died, for us to live. Only Jesus triumphed over death, for us. Now, Jesus reigns in heaven, for us. Jesus will return, for us. He will make all things new then, in the great re-Creation of the New Heavens and New Earth.

That is some seriously Good News.

So, believe in the only Sovereign LORD who is dependable. Take joy and comfort in the Sovereignty of God. Rest freely in faith, remembering that He is God and you are not.

Our Sovereign LORD is in control; Jesus is in control, so you do not need to be. **AMEN**