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Renew: Origin Story

Session 1: The Creator

I. Series Intro.

GOAL:

To understand our

in order to

of and find
in our lives.

The Meaning of
Meaning:

II. Book Intro.

What is Genesis?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Genesis was written to _____
_____ using language both _____ and
_____ in order to tell them the true story of their
_____ and _____ the false stories so that
they would know the true _____ of their lives.



III. Main Character Intro.

Attributes

Genesis 1:1-4 (English Standard Version)

Nature

(1) In the beginning, God created the heavens
and the earth.

(2) 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.

(3) And God said, "Let there be light," and there
was light.

(4) And God saw that the light was good. And
God separated the light from the darkness.

John 1:1-18



Q&A Session

Use the space provided below to take notes during the Question & Answer Session.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Weekly Reflection & Application Questions

The content from this class is a lot to process in one sitting. To help you think more deeply about these ideas and how to apply them to your life, consider answering the following reflection and application questions in the weeks prior to the next class.

Week 1:

1. In what ways have you been intrigued by or interested in origin stories in your own life (e.g. books, movies, family ancestry, family of origin therapy, etc.)? Why do you think you have this interest/curiosity?
2. Before this class, how would you have defined the concept of “meaning”? How did this class challenge and/or confirm your definition?
3. In your own words, what would you say is the meaning of your life right now? Are you happy with this answer? How might the Genesis origin story change your answer?

Week 2:

1. Before this class, how familiar were you with the Genesis creation story? How did this class challenge, confirm, or expand your understanding?
2. In the “Book Intro.” section of the class we outlined 4 answers to the question “What is Genesis?” Which of these 4 descriptors of Genesis is easiest for you to accept? Hardest? Why?

Week 3:

1. When was the last time you experienced genuine awe? How did it make you feel?
2. When was the last time you experienced relational closeness in your life? How did it make you feel?
3. Spend some time this week reading and meditating on John 1:1-18 and Hebrews 1:1-3. In what ways does Jesus move you to awe? In what ways does he draw you in and make you feel loved?



Resources

Books

- [Seven Days that Divide the World](#) – John Lennox
- [Genesis 1-4 Commentary](#) – C. John Collins
- [The Lost World of Genesis One](#) – John Walton
- [The Unseen Realm](#) – Michael Heiser
- [Genesis 1-11:26 Commentary](#) – Kenneth A. Mathews
- [Christian Beliefs](#), Chapters 2-4 – Wayne Grudem

Articles

- [The Gospel Coalition Resources on Creation](#)
- <https://biologos.org/common-questions/is-genesis-real-history>
- <https://evidenceunseen.com/old-testament/genesis/did-genesis-borrow-the-creation-and-flood-from-mesopotamian-myths>
- https://www.samstorms.org/enjoying-god-blog/post/god-created-us-for--exceeding-inexpressibly-great-happiness-?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- <https://henrycenter.tiu.edu/2018/09/truth-usefulness-and-phenomenological-language/>
- <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/the-psychology-behind-superhero-origin-stories-4015776/>
- <https://www.its.caltech.edu/~squartz/Martela-Steger-JOPP.pdf>
- https://lexundria.com/j_aj/1.1-1.26/wst
- <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2025/09/awe-wonder-political-emotion-darkness-overcome/684209/>

Video/Audio

- [Systematic Theology, Attributes of God: Classes 14-23](#) – Dr. Bruce Ware, BiblicalTraining.org
- [Wesleyan Theology, Attributes of God](#) – Dr. Kenneth Collins, BiblicalTraining.org
- [John Lennox: 7 Days That Divide the World](#)
- [Jack Collins on Reading Genesis Well](#)
- [The God Who is There](#) – D.A. Carson
- [Genesis 1-11](#) – BibleProject.com
- [God](#) – BibleProject.com



ORIGIN
STORY

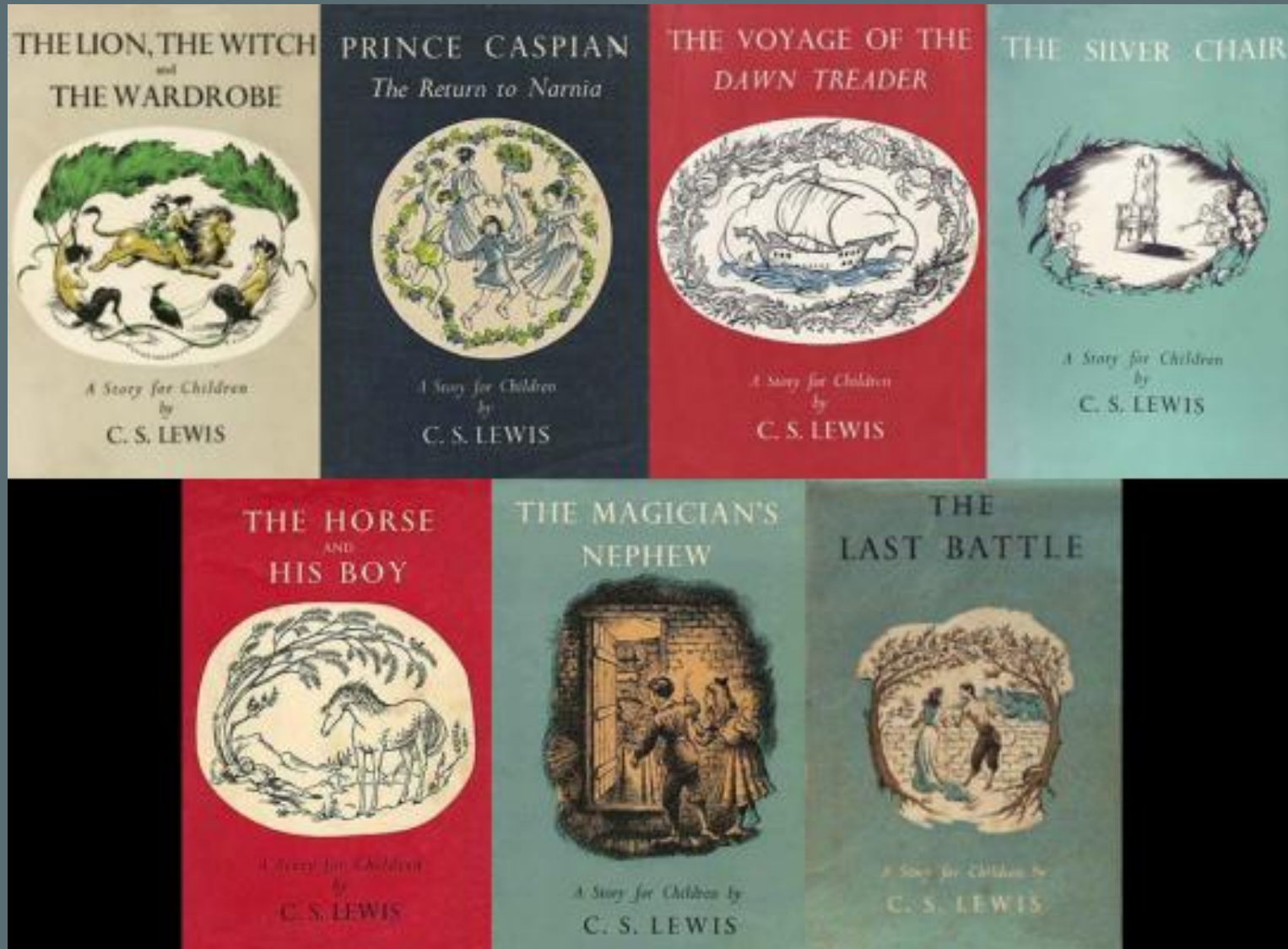
RE
NEW



Session 1: The Creator

I. Series Intro





SERIES GOAL

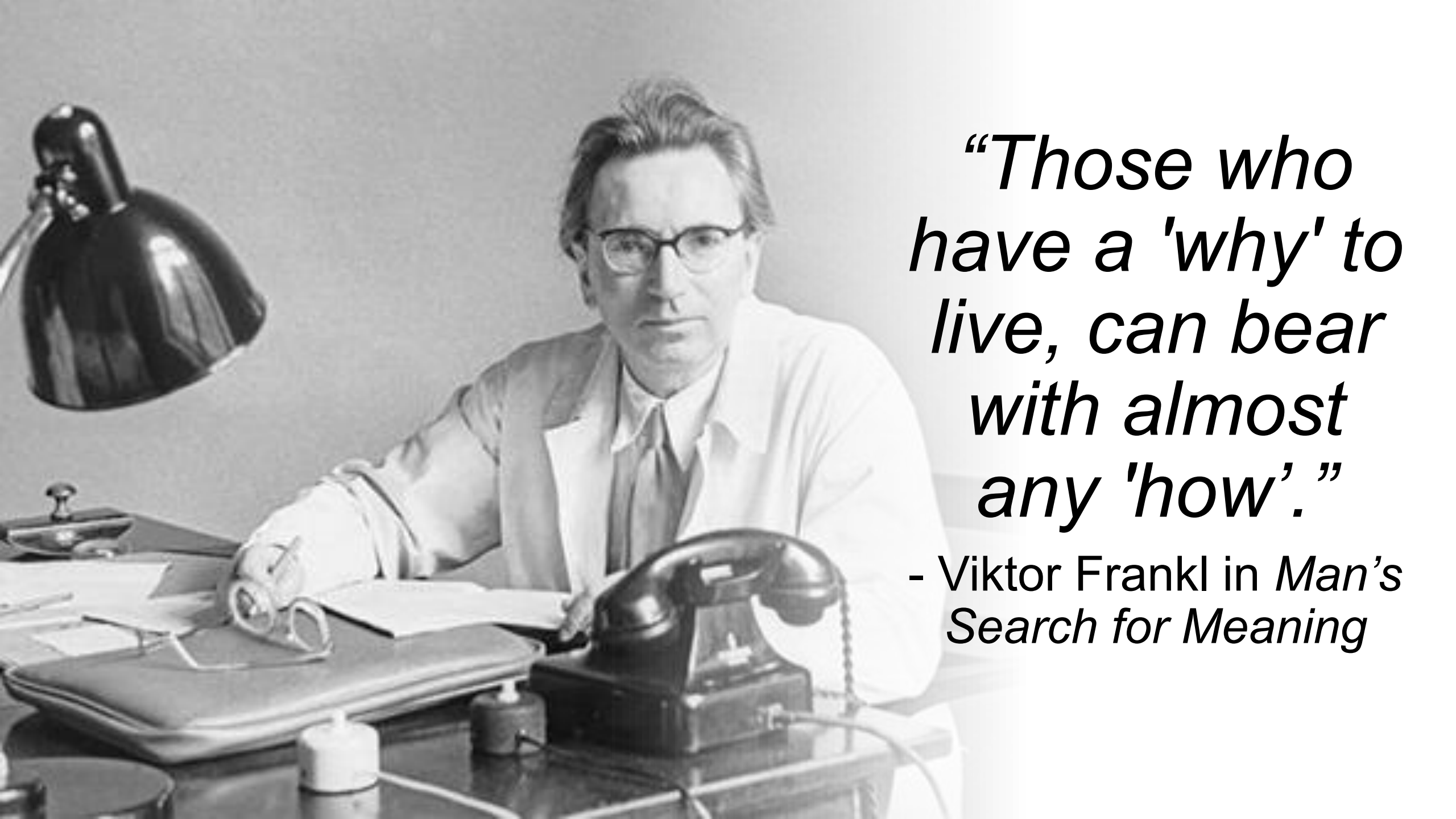
*To understand our origin story
in order to make sense of
and find meaning in our lives.*



WHAT DOES MEANING MEAN?

- *Coherence*
- *Purpose*
- *Significance*





*“Those who
have a 'why' to
live, can bear
with almost
any 'how'.”*

*- Viktor Frankl in *Man's
Search for Meaning**

SERIES LAYOUT

1. *The Creator (Genesis 1:1-4)*
2. *Nature (Genesis 1)*
3. *Humanity (Genesis 2)*
4. *The Fall (Genesis 3)*



II. Book Intro





“The first qualification for judging any piece of workmanship from a corkscrew to a cathedral is to know what it is—what it was intended to do and how it is meant to be used.”

- C.S. Lewis in A Preface to Paradise Lost

WHAT IS GENESIS?

1. *Scripture*
2. *Narrative*
 - *Wayyiqtol verb*



GENESIS 1:3-4

*(3) And God said, “Let there be light,”
and there was light. (4) And God saw
that the light was good. And God
separated the light from the darkness.*



WHAT IS GENESIS?

1. *Scripture*

2. *Narrative*

- *Wayyiqtol verb*
- *Moses wrote it*
 - *In the 2nd Millenium B.C.*
 - *To the Exodus Israelites*



WHAT IS GENESIS?

3. *Alternative Story*



GENESIS 1:14

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



WHAT IS GENESIS?

3. *Alternative Story*

- *Correcting details of other stories; giving true interpretation*





Dr. Michael Heiser:

“The biblical creation story isn’t at all about science, but about dissing other gods and the myths written about them.”

WHAT IS GENESIS?

3. *Alternative Story*

- *Teaching true origin story; exposing false stories*

4. *History*

- *Chs. 1-3: Exalted prose narrative*
- *Phenomenological language*



“The Holy Spirit had no intention to teach astronomy; and, in proposing instruction meant to be common to the simplest and most uneducated person, he made use by Moses and the other prophets of popular language...the Holy Spirit would rather speak childishly than unintelligibly to the humble and unlearned.”

- John Calvin in his commentary on Psalm 136



WHAT IS GENESIS?

1. *Scripture*
2. *Narrative*
3. *Alternative Story*
4. *History*



WHAT IS GENESIS?

*Genesis was written to ancient Exodus
Israelites*

*using language both beautiful and
understandable*

*in order to tell them the true story of
their origins and correct the false
stories*

*so that they would know the true
meaning of their lives.*



III. Main Character Intro



Me listening to a song pretending
I'm the main character



GENESIS 1:1

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*



GENESIS 1:1

In the beginning, God...



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*

- *Aseity – self-existence*



GENESIS 1:1

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.



GENESIS 1:1-2

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (2) 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.



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*

- *Aseity – self-existence*
- *Independence*



GENESIS 1:3

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*

- *Aseity – self-existence*
- *Independence*
- *Omnipotence*



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*
2. *Immanent*



GENESIS 1:1-2

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (2) 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.



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*

2. *Immanent*

- *He's present*



GENESIS 1:3

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*
2. *Immanent*
 - *He's present*
 - *He's personal*



GENESIS 1:4

And God saw that the light was good...



THE CREATOR'S ATTRIBUTES

1. *Transcendent*

2. *Immanent*

- *He's present*
- *He's personal*
- *He's happy*



“[Children] always say, “Do it again”; and the grown-up person does it again until he is nearly dead. For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony. But perhaps God is strong enough to exult in monotony. It is possible that God says every morning, “Do it again” to the sun; and every evening, “Do it again” to the moon...It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we.”

- G.K. Chesterton in *Orthodoxy*



THE CREATOR'S NATURE

- *A Trinity of Persons*



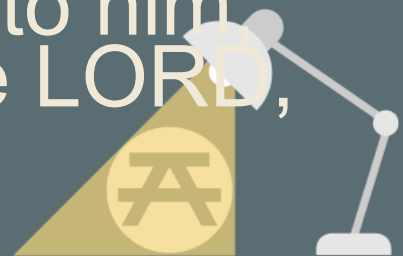
GENESIS 1:1-3

(1) In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (2) 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. (3) And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.



GENESIS 15:1-6

(1) After these things the **word** of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” (2) But Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” (3) And Abram said, “Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.” (4) And behold, the **word** of the LORD came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.” (5) And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” (6) And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.



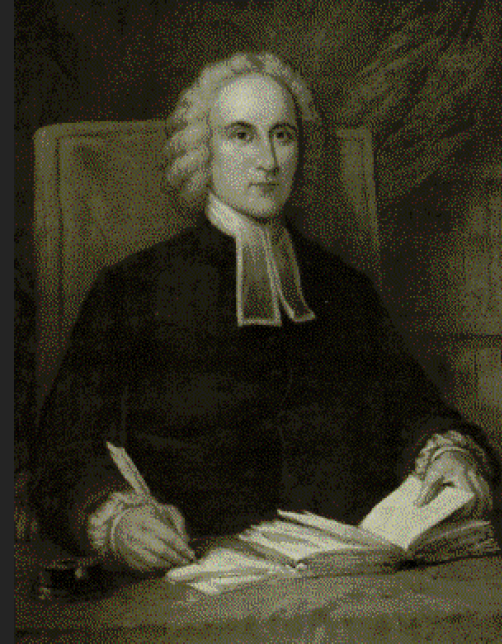
THE CREATOR'S NATURE

- *A Trinity of Persons*
 - *God, Spirit, Word → Father, Spirit, Son*
 - *Eternal relationship of happiness/love*



*“It seems evident then,
that what moved God to
create the world was his
goodness or his propensity
to communicate his own
happiness to something
else.”*

- Jonathan Edwards



John 1:1-18

(1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (4) In him was life, and the life was the light of men. (5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it...(10) He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. (11) He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (12) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God...(14) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ...(17) For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. (18) No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.



MEANING

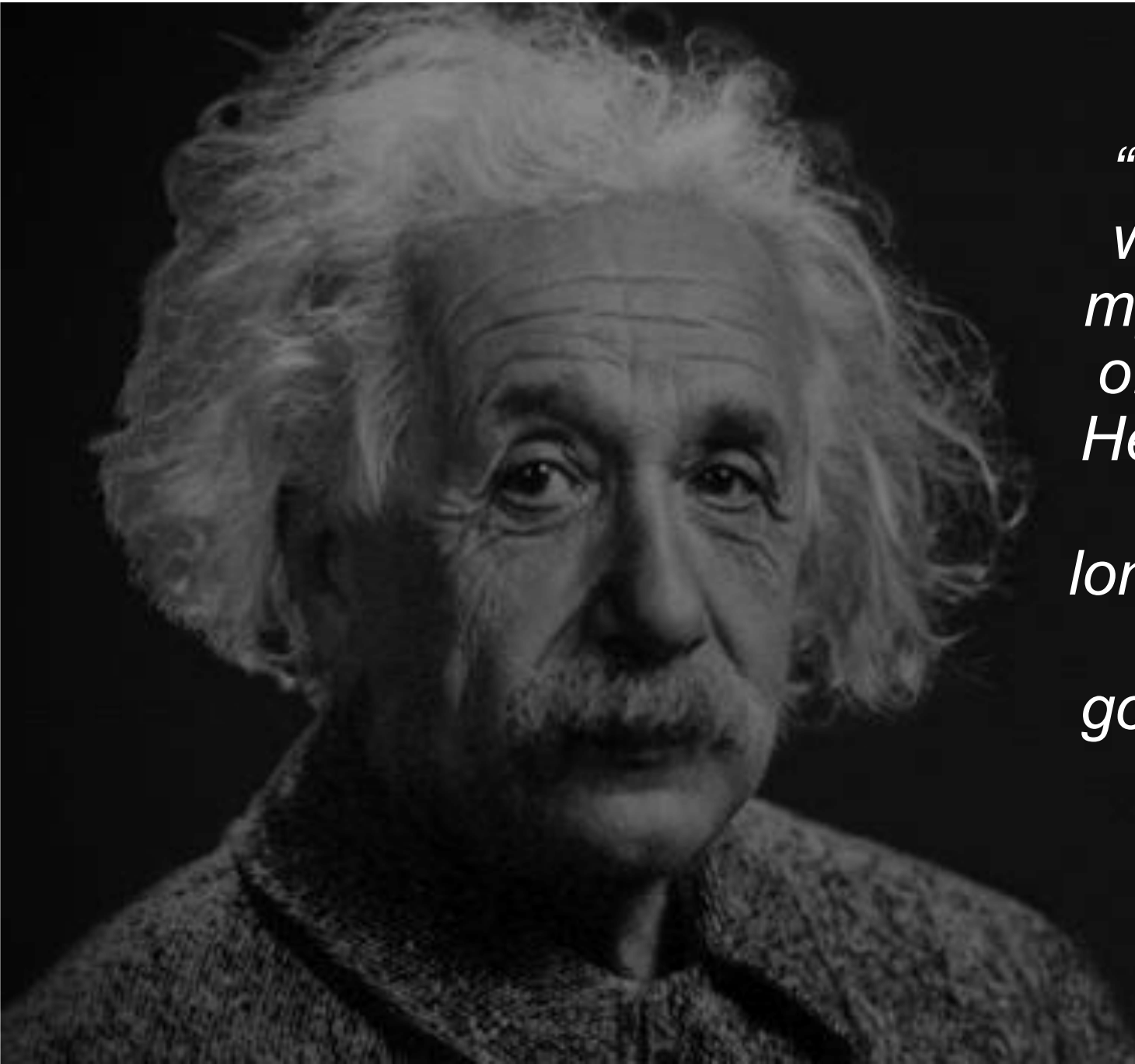
TRANSCENDENCE + IMMANENCE



MEANING

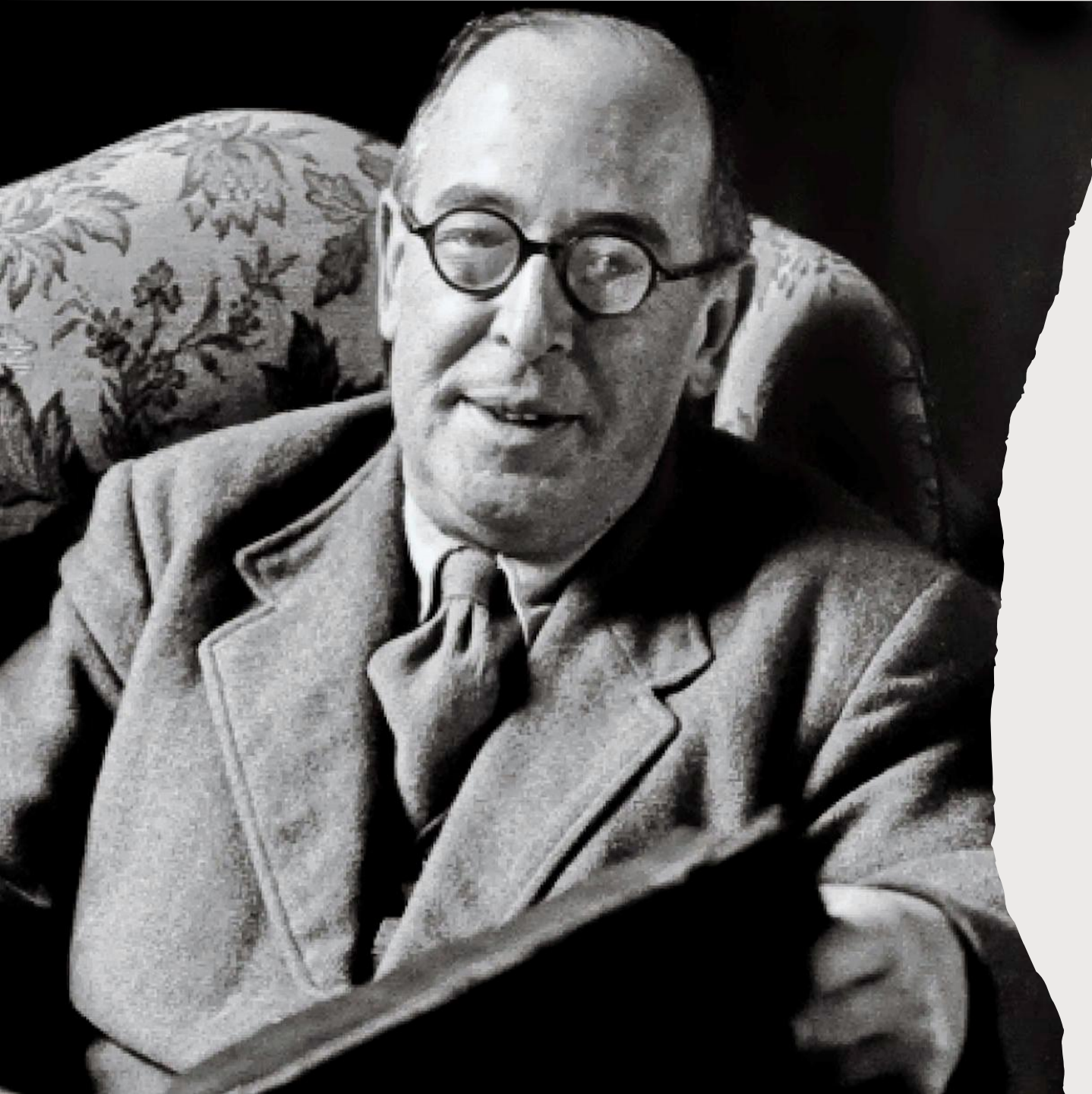
AWE + RELATIONAL INTIMACY





“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.”

*- Albert Einstein in **Living Philosophies***



"I was by now too experienced in literary criticism to regard the gospels as myths...And no person was like the Person [the Gospels] depicted; as real, as recognizable, through all that depth of time...yet also numinous, lit by a light from beyond the world, a god. But if a god – we are no longer polytheists – then not a god, but God. Here and here only in all time the myth must have become fact; the Word, flesh; God, man. This is not a 'religion,' nor 'a philosophy.' It is the summing up and actuality of them all."

- C.S. Lewis in *Surprised by Joy*

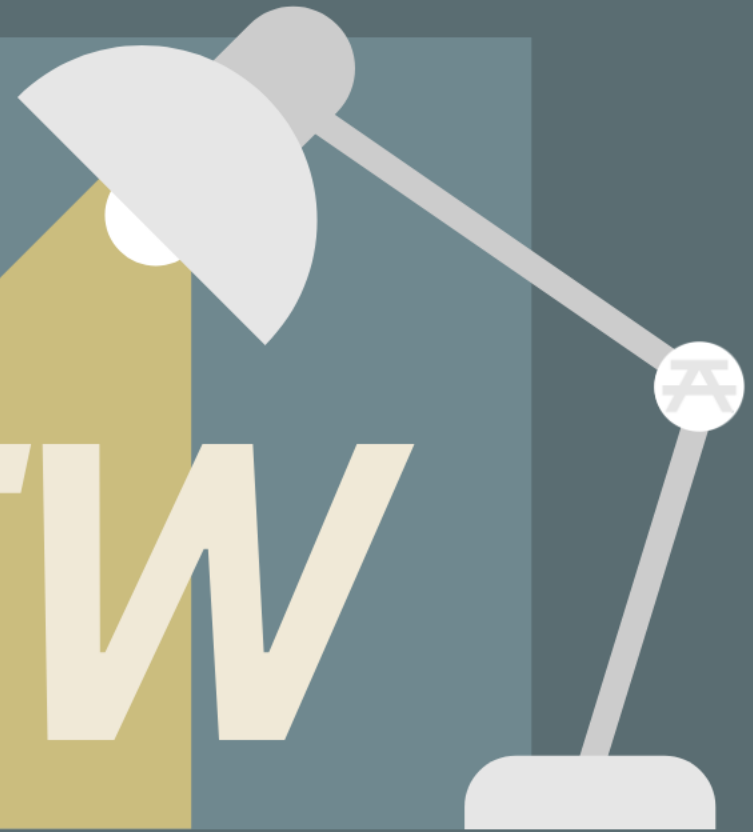
John 1:12

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.



OCT
15
7:00

RE
NEW



ORIGIN STORY: Session 2

Renew: Origin Story

Session 2: The Creation – Part 1

I. Text & Interpretation

Interpretation #1:

OR

Interpretation #2:

?

{Test #1: Literary Context}

PREFACE (1:1-2)



DAYS 1-6 (1:3-31)

<u>DOMAIN</u>		<u>INHABITANTS</u>
Day 1: Day & Night	➔	Day 4: Sun & Moon
Day 2: Sea & Sky	➔	Day 5: Sea & Sky Creatures
Day 3: Land, Sea, Vegetation	➔	Day 6: Land Creatures & Mankind

DAYS 1 & 4 (1:3-5, 14-19)

DAY 6 (1:24-31)

DAY 7 (2:1-3)



{Test #2: Historical Context}

{Test #3: Scripture}

{Test #4: Senses}

II. Themes & Application

Creation is _____

Creation is _____

Creation is _____

The Beginning & The End...



Q&A Session

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Weekly Reflection & Application Questions

The content from this class is a lot to process in one sitting. To help you think more deeply about these ideas and how to apply them to your life, consider answering the following reflection and application questions in the weeks prior to the next class.

Week 1:

1. Regarding the interpretation of the Genesis creation account shared in this class...
 - a. What did you find compelling? Why?
 - b. What did you disagree with? Why?
2. Read Psalm 104.
 - a. Which verses resonate with you the most? Why?
 - b. One day this week, find a quiet place alone outside and pray this psalm.

Week 2:

1. Which of the three big themes of creation did you find most interesting or relevant? Why?
2. Read through Clyde Kilby's *10 Resolutions for Mental Health* on page 5 of this handout.
 - a. Which 3 resonate with you the most? Why?
 - b. Spend every day this week trying to practice the 3 that you chose. At the end of the day, journal about your experience: how did you do it? Did it lead to any new emotions or insights?

Week 3:

1. Do you agree that there is a meaning crisis in our culture? Why or why not?
2. Read Revelation 21-22.
 - a. Which part of this picture of the new creation resonates with you the most? Why?
 - b. Have you drank from “the spring of the water of life without payment”? Have you placed your faith in Jesus? If no, what is holding you back?



Resources

Books

- [In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis](#) – Henri Blocher
- [Seven Days that Divide the World](#) – John Lennox
- [Genesis 1-4 Commentary](#) – C. John Collins
- [The Lost World of Genesis One](#) – John Walton
- [Genesis 1-11:26 Commentary](#) – Kenneth A. Mathews

Articles

- [The Gospel Coalition Resources on Creation](#)
- <https://truthunites.org/2010/05/03/why-the-framework-view-of-genesis-1/>
- <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/articles/notable-christians-open-to-an-old-universe-old-earth-perspective>
- <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/questions-from-social-media/how-reliably-determined-is-earths-age>
- <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/articles/the-dynamics-of-dating>
- <https://biologos.org/articles/creation-evolution-and-christian-laypeople>

Video/Audio

- [Steven Bartlett Asks the Question Haunting Our Age](#) – SpeakLife
- [How Genesis 1 Communicates What the Whole Bible is About](#) – BibleProject.com
- [The Creation Project](#) – The Henry Center for Theological Education
- [Creation Lecture](#) – Dr. Gerry Breshears, BiblicalTraining.org
- [How is Creation Good](#) – Craig Bartholomew
- [How to Read Genesis Literally](#) – Kevin Vanhoozer
- [Creation Debate: Dr. Albert Mohler v. Dr. Jack Collins](#)
- [John Lennox: 7 Days That Divide the World](#)
- [The God Who is There](#) – D.A. Carson

Clyde Kilby's "10 Resolutions for Mental Health"

For a brief introduction to Clyde Kilby and where these resolutions came from, visit:
<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/10-resolutions-for-mental-health>

1. At least once every day I shall look steadily up at the sky and remember that I, a consciousness with a conscience, am on a planet traveling in space with wonderfully mysterious things above and about me.
2. Instead of the accustomed idea of a mindless and endless evolutionary change to which we can neither add nor subtract, I shall suppose the universe guided by an Intelligence which, as Aristotle said of Greek drama, requires a beginning, a middle, and an end. I think this will save me from the cynicism expressed by Bertrand Russell before his death when he said: "There is darkness without, and when I die there will be darkness within. There is no splendor, no vastness anywhere, only triviality for a moment, and then nothing."
3. I shall not fall into the falsehood that this day, or any day, is merely another ambiguous and plodding twenty-four hours, but rather a unique event, filled, if I so wish, with worthy potentialities. I shall not be fool enough to suppose that trouble and pain are wholly evil parentheses in my existence, but just as likely ladders to be climbed toward moral and spiritual manhood.
4. I shall not turn my life into a thin, straight line which prefers abstractions to reality. I shall know what I am doing when I abstract, which of course I shall often have to do.
5. I shall not demean my own uniqueness by envy of others. I shall stop boring into myself to discover what psychological or social categories I might belong to. Mostly I shall simply forget about myself and do my work.
6. I shall open my eyes and ears. Once every day I shall simply stare at a tree, a flower, a cloud, or a person. I shall not then be concerned at all to ask what they are but simply be glad that they are. I shall joyfully allow them the mystery of what Lewis calls their "divine, magical, terrifying and ecstatic" existence.
7. I shall sometimes look back at the freshness of vision I had in childhood and try, at least for a little while, to be, in the words of Lewis Carroll, the "child of the pure unclouded brow, and dreaming eyes of wonder."
8. I shall follow Darwin's advice and turn frequently to imaginative things such as good literature and good music, preferably, as Lewis suggests, an old book and timeless music.
9. I shall not allow the devilish onrush of this century to usurp all my energies but will instead, as Charles Williams suggested, "fulfill the moment as the moment." I shall try to live well just now because the only time that exists is now.
10. Even if I turn out to be wrong, I shall bet my life on the assumption that this world is not idiotic, neither run by an absentee landlord, but that today, this very day, some stroke is being added to the cosmic canvas that in due course I shall understand with joy as a stroke made by the architect who calls himself Alpha and Omega.

ORIGIN
STORY

RE
NEW



Session 2: The Creation

You can view the video here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOg5xHn2XIY&t=319s>

The relevant clip is the first 2:20 of the video.



SERIES GOAL

*To understand our origin story
in order to make sense of
and find meaning in our lives.*



I. Text & Interpretation

(What does it say and mean?)



Interpretation #1:

LITERALISTIC

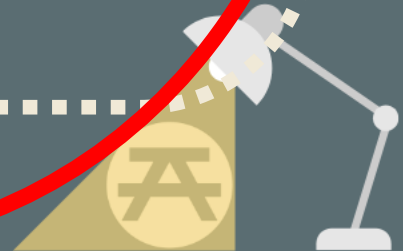
- *Days = literal*
- *Sequential*
- *Young earth*

OR

Interpretation #2:

LITERARY

- *Days = figurative*
- *Maybe not sequential*
- *Open to old earth*



I. Text & Interpretation

Test #1: Literary Context



PREFACE

(1:1-2)



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)

DAYS 1 & 4

(1:3-5, 14-19)

DAY 6

(1:24-31)

DAY 7

(2:1-3)



PREFACE

(1:1-2)



GENESIS 1:1-2

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (2) 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.



PREFACE

(1:1-2)

- Takes place before main storyline (the 7 days)
- No time frame!



PREFACE

(1:1-2)



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)

DOMAIN

INHABITANTS

Day 1: Day & Night -----> Day 4: Sun & Moon

Day 2: Sea & Sky -----> Day 5: Sea & Sky Creatures

Day 3: Land, Sea, Vegetation -----> Day 6: Land Creatures & Mankind



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)

- Lots of repetition
- Language of analogy
 - God sees, speaks, rests
 - 6-day workweek also an analogy?



PREFACE

(1:1-2)



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)

DAYS 1 & 4

(1:3-5, 14-19)



DAYS 1 & 4

(1:3-5, 14-19)

- Light before luminaries



Day 1 vs. Day 4

Genesis 1:3-5 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. (4) And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. (5) God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Genesis 1:14-19 And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night...(16) 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. (17) And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, (18) to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness...



DAYS 1 & 4

(1:3-5, 14-19)

- Light before luminaries
- Maybe not about sequential order



PREFACE

(1:1-2)



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)

DAYS 1 & 4

(1:3-5, 14-19)

DAY 6

(1:24-31)

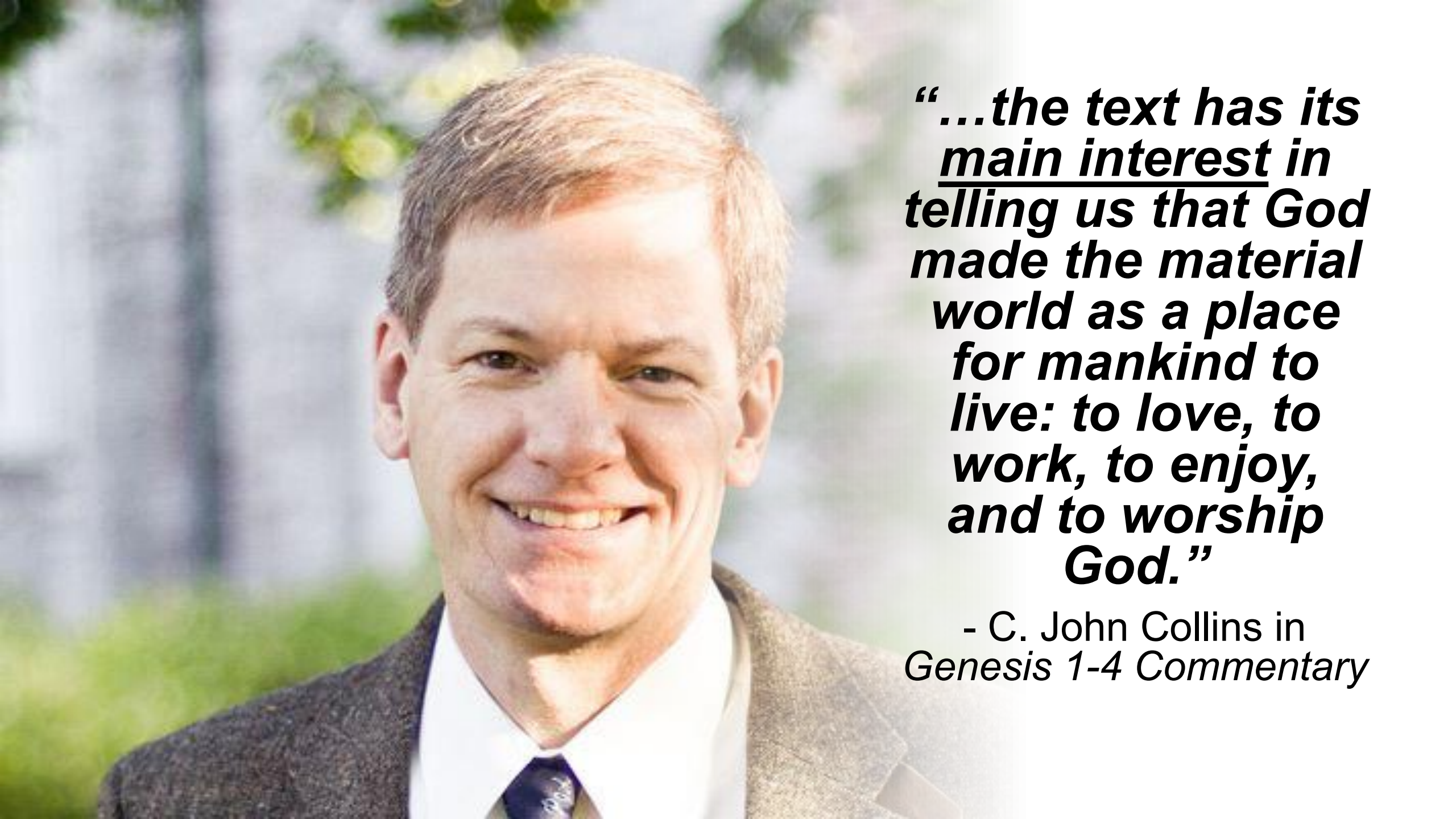


DAY 6

(1:24-31)

- Longest description
- Ends with “very good”
 - *Climax of the account!*





***“...the text has its
main interest in
telling us that God
made the material
world as a place
for mankind to
live: to love, to
work, to enjoy,
and to worship
God.”***

***- C. John Collins in
Genesis 1-4 Commentary***

GENESIS 1:27

So God created man in his own
image,

in the image of God he created
him;

male and female he created
them.



DAY 6

(1:24-31)

- Longest description
- Ends with “very good”
 - *Climax of the account!*
- POETRY!



PREFACE

(1:1-2)



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)

DAYS 1 & 4

(1:3-5, 14-19)

DAY 6

(1:24-31)

DAY 7

(2:1-3)



DAY 7

(2:1-3)

- No creation – just rest
- No “evening & morning”
 - *Maybe not 24 hour days?*
- A lot of 7s!



I. Text & Interpretation

Test #2: Historical Context



WHAT IS GENESIS?

*Genesis was written to ancient Exodus
Israelites*

*using language both beautiful and
understandable*

*in order to tell them the true story of
their origins and correct the false
stories*

*so that they would know the true
meaning of their lives.*



Test #2: Historical Context

- Ancient Israel = probably not concerned about chronology
- Using common motifs to contrast with other origin stories



I. Text & Interpretation

Test #3: Scripture



Test #3: Scripture

- Rest of Scripture = lots about creation; very little about the days of creation



I. Text & Interpretation

Test #4: Senses



Test #4: Senses

- Literalistic view → Bible right; science wrong





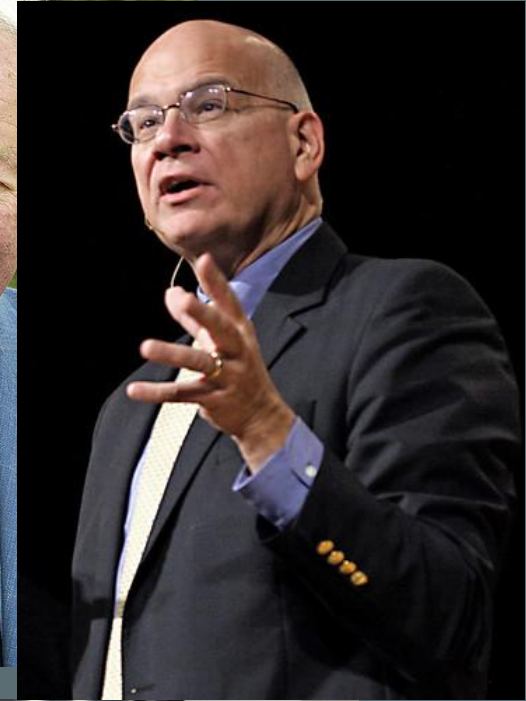
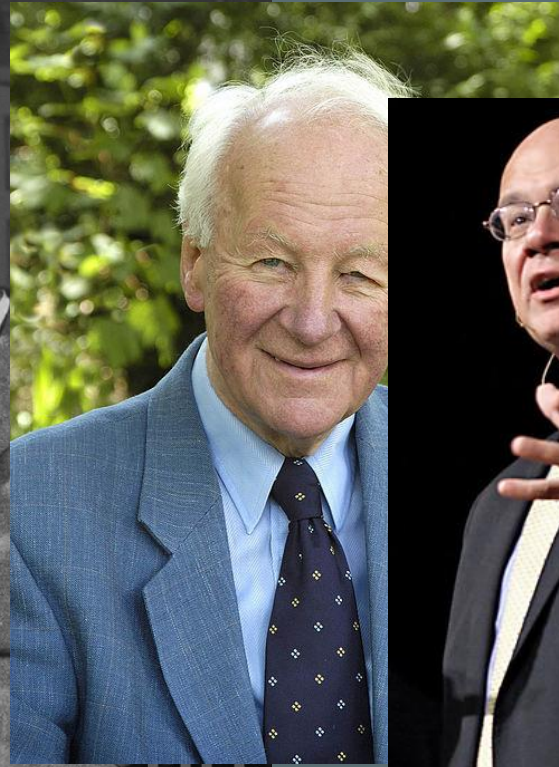
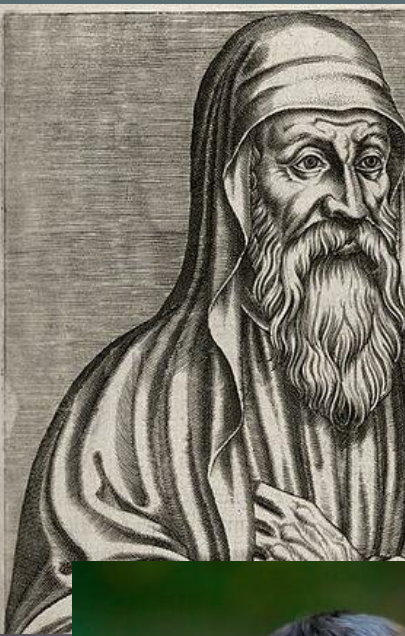
“If [unbelievers] find a Christian mistaken in a field which they themselves know well and hear him maintaining his foolish opinions about our books, how are they going to believe those books in matters concerning the resurrection of the dead, the hope of eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven, when they think their pages are full of falsehoods on facts which they themselves have learnt from experience and the light of reason?”

- Augustine of Hippo in *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*

Test #4: Senses

- Literalistic view → Bible right; science wrong
- Literary view → Bible right; science right





II. Themes & Application

(Why does it matter & what should I do with it?)



Creation is Orderly

- Diversity placed into...
 - *Categories*
 - *Hierarchy*
- Application:
 - *Live wisely within the order of creation.*



Proverbs 8

(1) Does not wisdom call? Does not understanding raise her voice...(22) “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. (23) Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. (24) When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. (25) Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, (26) before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. (27) When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, (28) when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, (29) when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, (30) then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, (31) rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man. (32) “And now, O sons, listen to me: blessed are those who keep my ways. (33) Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. (34) Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. (35) For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the LORD, (36) but he who fails to find me injures himself; all who hate me love death.”





“When we study non-biblical religions, we constantly discover a fascination with intermixture and a kind of longing for a universal dissolution of differences. Techniques are applied to break up categories, in the hope of releasing spiritual power.”

-Henri Blocher in *In the Beginning*

Creation is Orderly

- Diversity in...
 - *Categories*
 - *Hierarchy*
- Application:
 - *Live wisely within the order of creation.*
 - *Real meaning = accepting diversity & limits*



Creation is Good

- Good = moral, functional, beautiful
- Application:
 - *Enjoy creation.*



GENESIS 1:4

And God saw that the light was good...





Touch Grass



Creation is a Temple

- Day 7 = rest = Temple



Psalm 132:7-14

(7) “Let us go to his dwelling place; let us worship at his footstool!” (8) Arise, O LORD, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might...(13) For the LORD has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his dwelling place: (14) “This is my resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.



Isaiah 66:1

Thus says the LORD: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?”



Creation is a Temple

- Day 7 = rest = Temple
- The cosmos is meant to be God's temple
- Application:
 - *Be enchanted by creation.*
 - *No such thing as sacred & secular.*



Breathe with unconditional breath
the unconditioned air.

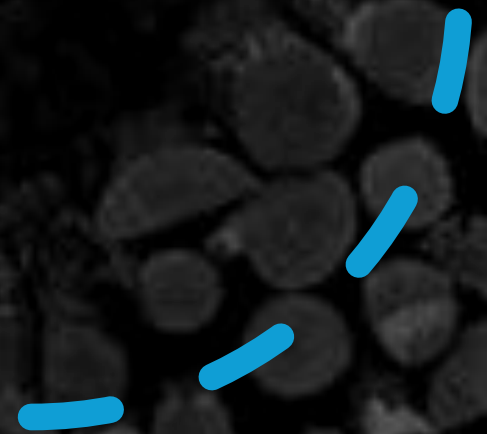
Shun electric wire.

Communicate slowly. Live
a three-dimensional life;
stay away from screens.

Stay away from anything
that obscures the place it is in.

There are no unsacred places;
there are only sacred places
and desecrated places.

- Wendell Berry in *How to Be a Poet*"



Creation is a Temple

- Day 7 = rest = Temple
- The cosmos is meant to be God's temple
- Application:
 - *Be enchanted by creation.*
 - *No such thing as sacred & secular.*
 - *Leads to worship!*



Isaiah 46:9-10

(9) ...I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me,
(10) declaring the end from the beginning...



Revelation 21:6 & 22:13

(6) *And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.*

(13) *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*



Jesus, the Beginning & End

- The Source of Creation
- The Goal of Creation



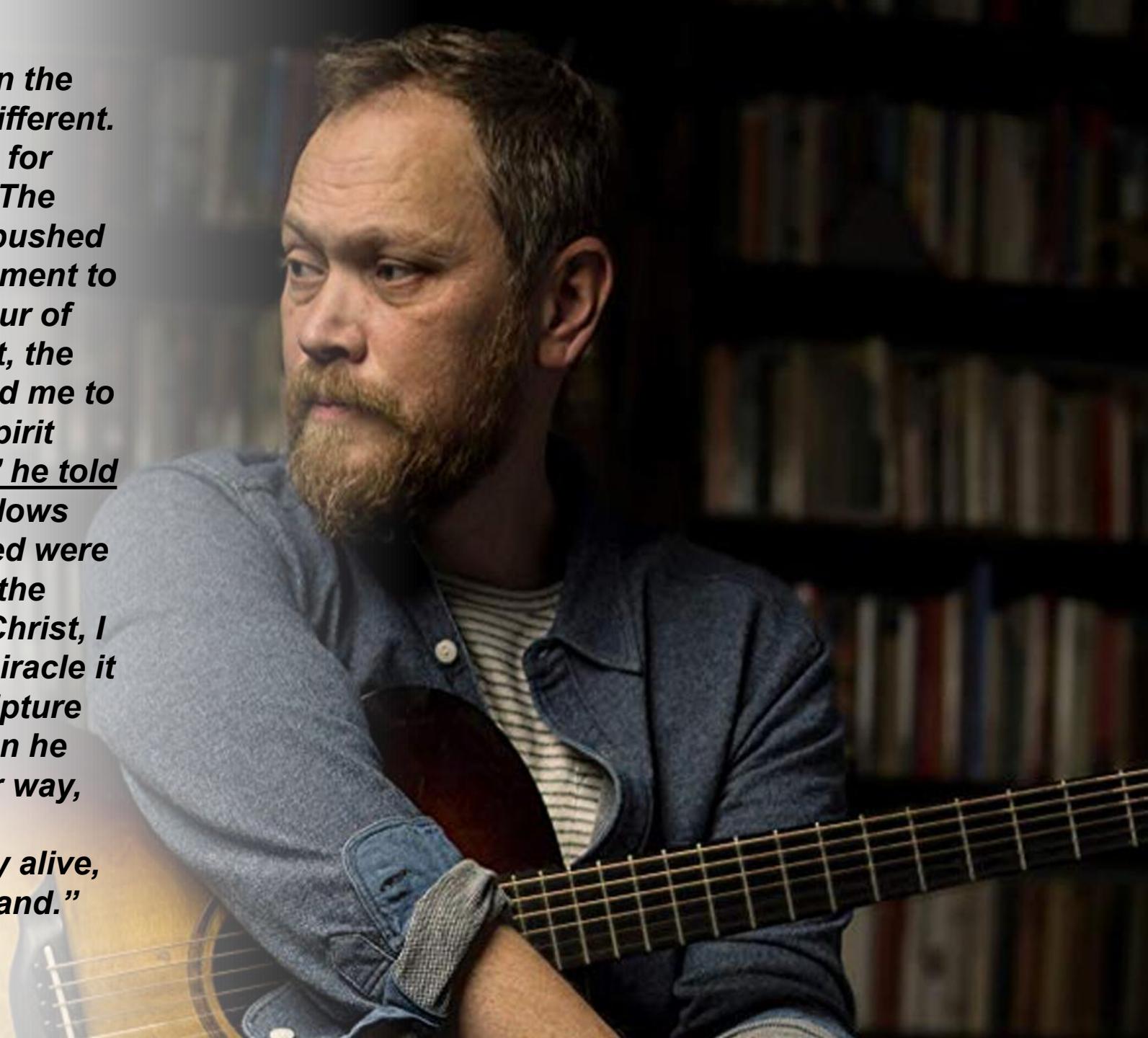
Revelation 21:6 & 22:13

*To the thirsty I
will give from the
spring of the water of
life without payment.*



“But that morning when I was nineteen on the hillside in East Tennessee, things were different. Life itself – the one I was actually living – for once outshone the life I had yearned for. The Maker of this beautiful, broken world ambushed me. He had lain in wait for the perfect moment to spring: the perfect song at the perfect hour of the day, the contrition of my hungry heart, the intricate staging of the beauty that had led me to that dewy lawn, and his holy, brooding Spirit draped over the valley like a mist. ‘Drink,’ he told me, ‘and thirst no more.’...When the shadows cast by my disappointment and self-hatred were banished by the light of the forgiveness, the acceptance, and the infinite affection of Christ, I could see the world around me for the miracle it was. I could see myself as a miracle. Scripture tells us that when God looks at a Christian he sees Christ’s righteousness – in a similar way, the Christian is now free to see Christ in everything. Even himself. I was gloriously alive, and I was at home in the palm of God’s hand.”

- Andrew Peterson in Adorning the Dark



NOV
19
7:00

RE
NEW



ORIGIN STORY: Session 3

Renew: Origin Story

Session 3: The Creation – Part 2

What is essential about creation?

God created from _____ everything that _____ to exist.

He originally created everything _____ and for his _____.

This includes _____.

I. People

Adam & Eve...

...were _____
_____ human beings.

...are _____ for
_____ human beings.

What are humans?

The Bible's Answer:

We are _____.

R _____

R _____

R _____

VS.

Culture's Answers

_____ism.

We are _____.

_____ism.

We are _____.



II. Place

Where is our place?

[illegible][illegible]

W _____

III. Presence

[illegible]

We were made to belong to other _____, belong to a _____, & belong to _____.

IV. What Now?

IV. What Now?

[illegible]

Q&A Session

Use the space provided below to take notes during the Question & Answer Session.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Weekly Reflection & Application Questions

The content from this class is a lot to process in one sitting. To help you think more deeply about these ideas and how to apply them to your life, consider answering the following reflection and application questions in the weeks prior to the next class.

Week 1:

1. Before this class, what would you have considered “essential” truths about the doctrine of creation? Would you add anything to the essential truths listed during the class? If so, why?
2. Before this class, how would you have answered the question: “what is a human?” How did this class confirm or challenge your beliefs?

Week 2:

1. Out of the 3 “W’s described during the class, which one do you feel like needs the most attention in your own life in order to find more meaning? What can you practically do about it right now?
2. Is there anyone that you currently think about or treat as less than human? Why? How can the truths learned in this class help you to honor them as a member of humanity just like yourself?

Week 3:

1. Read Romans 8:28-29.
 - a. Verse 28 makes a shocking promise. Write it down in your own words.
 - b. Verse 29 tells us what our destiny is, if we love God and are called and known by him. What is this destiny? How does that relate to what you learned in this class?
 - c. How might God be using circumstances in your life right now to bring you closer to this destiny?
2. Do you believe that all the threads of human meaning come together in the person of Jesus? If not, what's holding you back?



Resources

Books

- [In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis](#) – Henri Blocher
- [Seven Days that Divide the World](#) – John Lennox
- [Genesis 1-4 Commentary](#) – C. John Collins
- [The Lost World of Adam and Eve](#) – John Walton
- [Genesis 1-11:26 Commentary](#) – Kenneth A. Mathews
- [The Epic of Eden](#) – Sandra Richter
- [The Unseen Realm](#) – Michael Heiser
- [The God of the Garden](#) – Andrew Peterson

Articles

- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/theological-triage-and-the-doctrine-of-creation/>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/sinned-in-a-literal-adam-raised-in-a-literal-christ/>
- <https://biologos.org/series/book-review-the-genealogical-adam-and-eve/articles/theological-response-to-joshua-swamidass-the-genealogical-adam-and-eve>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/genealogical-adam-eve-swamidass/>
- <https://henrycenter.tiu.edu/2020/08/the-genealogical-adam-and-eve-introducing-the-symposium/>
- <https://peacefulscience.org/articles/wlc-genetic-challenge/>
- <https://biologos.org/common-questions/were-adam-and-eve-historical-figures>
- <https://truthunites.org/2015/02/08/furthering-the-dialogue-on-creation-some-thoughts-on-doug-wilsons-piece/>
- <https://truthunites.org/2017/03/16/a-review-of-adam-and-the-genome/>
- <https://reasons.org/explore/blogs/the-cells-design/adam-and-eve-a-primordial-pair-or-a-population>
- <https://bibleproject.com/articles/were-adam-and-eve-priests-eden/>
- <https://www.theatlantic.com/books/2025/11/paul-kingsnorth-against-the-machine/684848/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/matrimony-no-more>

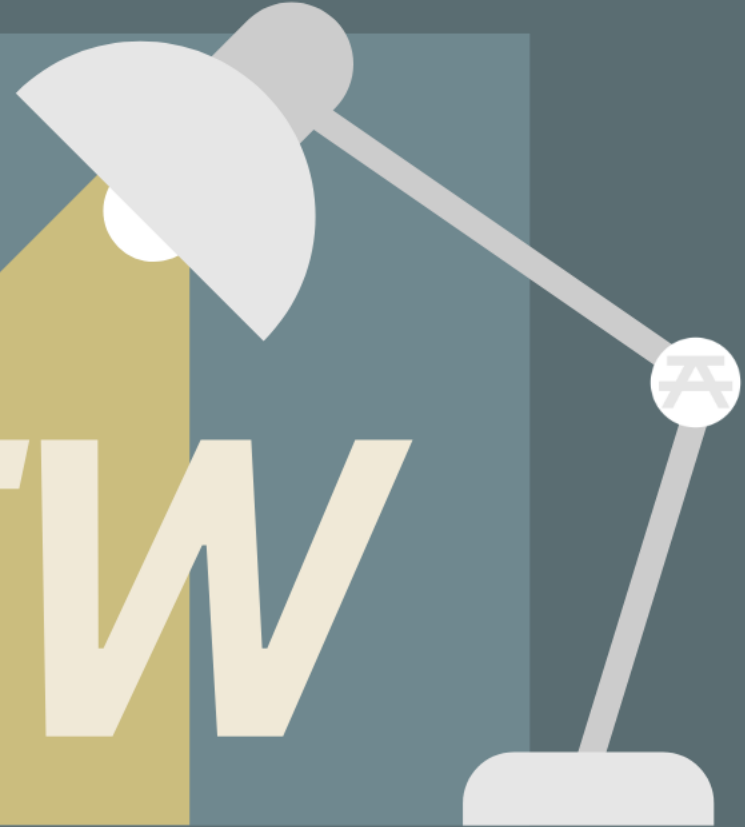
Video/Audio

- [Non-Negotiable Beliefs About Creation](#) – The Gospel Coalition
- [The Relationship Between Genesis 1 & 2](#) – Reasons to Believe
- [Were Adam & Eve Historical People?](#) – Gavin Ortlund, Truth Unites
- [What is Humanity's First & Final Calling?](#) – Sandra Richter, Henry Center
- [You're Supposed to Rule the World \(Here's How\)](#) – BibleProject.com
- [Royal Priests of Eden](#) – BibleProject.com
- [This is the War Against Human Nature](#) – Paul Kingsnorth & Ross Douthat, NYT



ORIGIN
STORY

RE
NEW



Session 3: Humanity



***In essentials unity,
in non-essentials liberty,
in all things charity.***

- Peter Meiderlin in "An Earnest
Exhortation for Church Peace"

Test #4: Senses

- Literalistic view → Bible right; science wrong
- Literary view → Bible right; science right



What is essential (about creation)?

God created from nothing everything that began to exist.

He originally created everything good and for his glory.

This includes human beings.



***“The people of God in
the place of God living
in the presence of God.”***

- Dr. Sandra Richter in *The Epic of Eden*



I. People



PREFACE

(1:1-2)



DAYS 1-6

(1:3-31)

DAYS 1 & 4

(1:3-5, 14-19)

DAY 6

(1:24-31)

DAY 7

(2:1-3)



Adam & Eve...

- ...were real historical humans.
 - *Genealogies*



Genesis 5:1-3

(1) This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. (2) Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. (3) When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.



Adam & Eve...

- ...were real historical humans.
 - *Genealogies*
 - *The New Testament*



Luke 3:38

the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.



Adam & Eve...

- ...were real historical humans.
 - *Genealogies*
 - *The New Testament*
- ...are representatives for all humans.
 - *Names*
 - *The Old Testament*
 - *The New Testament*



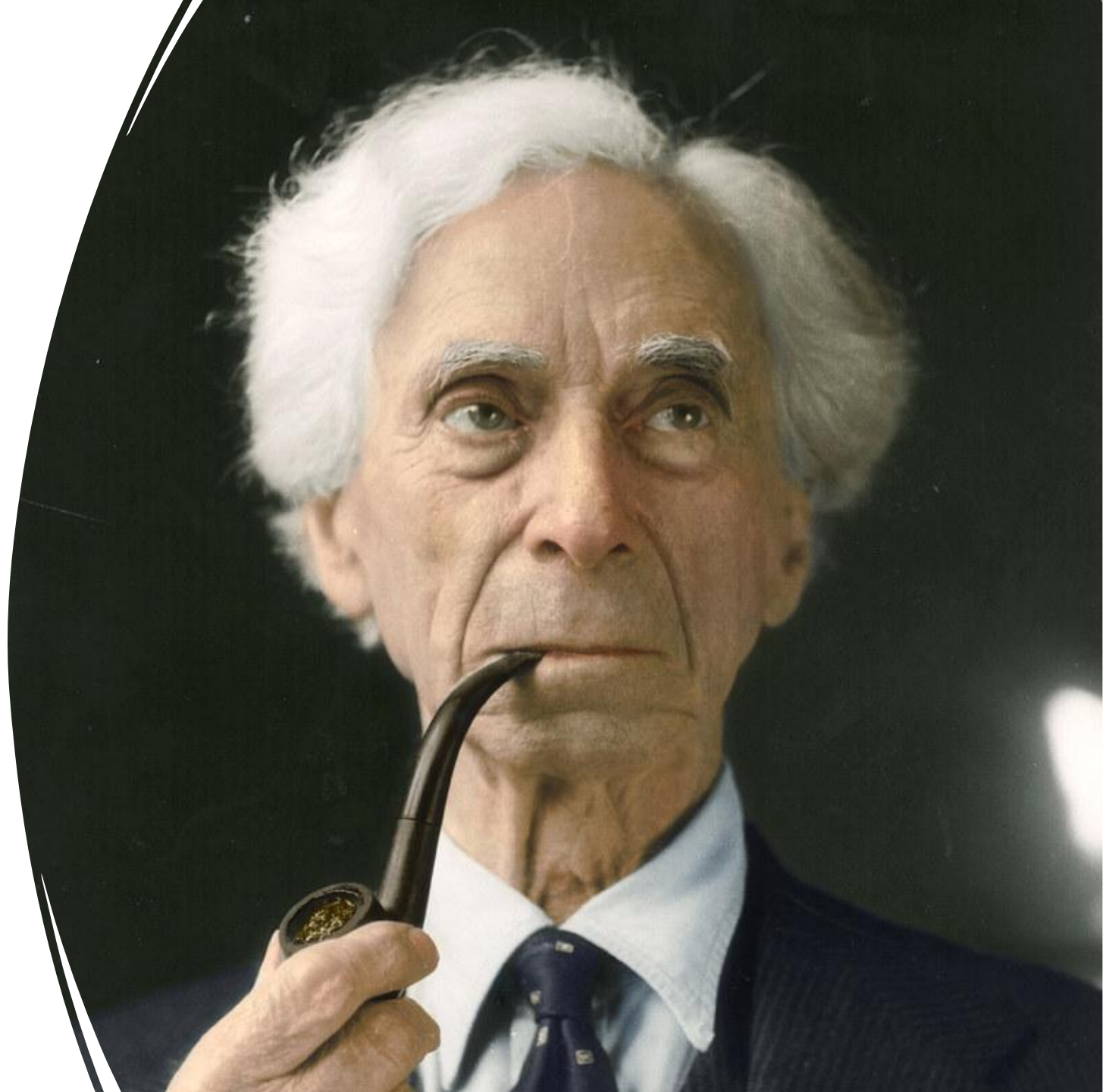
What are we?

- Our culture's answers:
 - Materialism:



“Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; ...his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms.”

- Bertrand Russell in “A Free Man’s Worship”



What are we?

- Our culture's answers:
 - Materialism: We are accidents.
 - Transhumanism:





***“Transhumanism
literally means
‘beyond human.’ It’s
using science and
technology to
radically change and
improve the human
species and
experience.”***

- Zoltan Istvan

What are we?

- Our culture's answers:
 - Materialism: We are accidents.
 - Transhumanism: We are potential gods.
- The Bible's answer:
 - We are images.



Genesis 1:26-27

(26) 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.” (27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.



What are we?

- Our culture's answers:
 - Materialism: We are accidents.
 - Transhumanism: We are potential gods.
- The Bible's answer:
 - We are images.
 - Resemblance



Genesis 5:1-3

(1) This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. (2) Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. (3) When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.



What are we?

- Our culture's answers:
 - Materialism: We are accidents.
 - Transhumanism: We are potential gods.
- The Bible's answer:
 - We are images.
 - Resemblance
 - Representation





Genesis 2:7

then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.



***“Within the
worldview of the
ancient Near East
the message here
is clear: we are
the nearest
representation of
Yahweh that
exists.”***

***- Dr. Sandra Richter in
The Epic of Eden***



What are we?

- Our culture's answers:
 - Materialism: We are accidents.
 - Transhumanism: We are potential gods.
- The Bible's answer:
 - We are images.
 - Resemblance
 - Representation
 - Royalty



Genesis 1:26-27

(26) 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.” (27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.



What are we?

Humans are images of God who resemble him as children and represent him as vice-regents over creation.



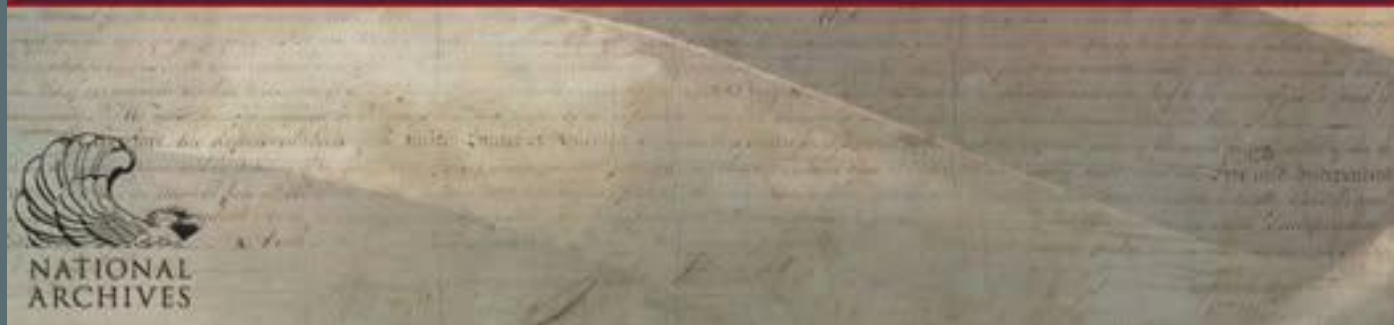
Image Implications

- ALL humans are images of God.
- The image is broken, but not lost.
- We are not the main character, but also not NPCs.
- We are not accidents.
- Our destiny is not “beyond human” but MORE human.
- This is where human rights come from.





"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."



Genesis 9:6

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.



II. Place



Where is our place?

- The Garden of Eden



Genesis 2:8

And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.



“...the original task of humanity was to make the entire Earth like Eden. Adam and Eve lived in the garden. They cared for it. But the rest of the earth needed subduing. It wasn't awful—in fact Genesis 1 tells us that it was habitable. But it wasn't quite what Eden was. The whole world needs to be like God's home. He could do the job himself, but he chose to create human imagers to do it for him.”

- Dr. Michael Heiser in *The Unseen Realm*



Where is our place?

- The Garden of Eden
- The WHOLE WORLD



What do we do in this place?

- Wedlock



Genesis 2:18-24

(18) Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”...(21) So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. (22) And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man...(24) Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.





“They want that freedom, living off the grid; They want those three dogs that they call their kids; And that good surf, no hypocrites; They want it all; They want a contract with Real Madrid; They want that spring break that was...lit; And then that video taken off the internet; They want it all; And they should have what they want; They deserve what they want; I hope they get what they want; I just want you; Have a couple kids, got the whole block lookin' like you; We tell the world to leave us...alone, and they do; Got me dreamin' 'bout a driveway with a basketball hoop...”

- Taylor Swift in Wishlist

What do we do in this place?

- Wedlock
 - *We need deep human relationships.*
- Work



Genesis 2:5, 15

(5) ...there was no man to work the ground.

(15) The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.



What do we do in this place?

- Wedlock
 - *We need deep human relationships.*
- Work
 - *We are connected to this physical earth.*
- Worship



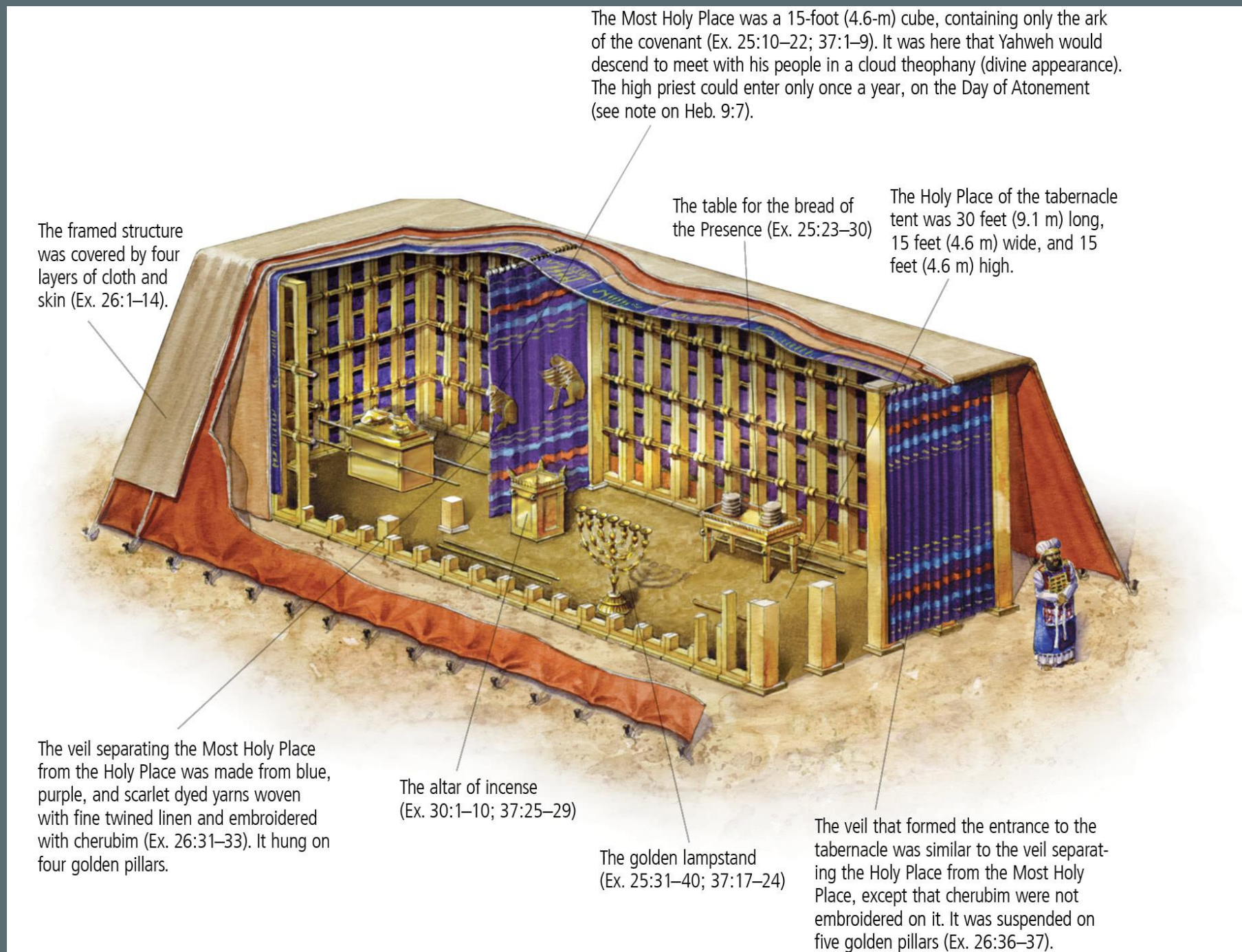
III. Presence



The Presence of God

- World = temple; Garden of Eden = center





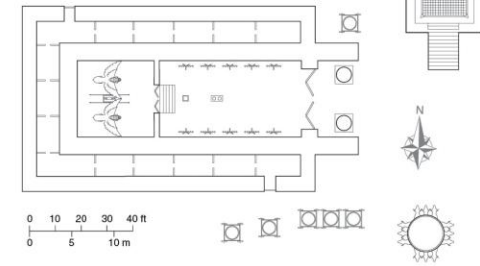
A structure with three levels was built around the walls of the temple. The lower chamber was 7.5 feet (2.3 m) wide, the middle chamber was 9 feet (2.7 m) wide, and the upper chamber was 10.5 feet (3.2 m) wide (1 Kings 6:5–6, 8, 10).

Two ornate wooden doors, overlaid with gold, separated the inner sanctuary from the nave (1 Kings 6:31–32).

The nave had clerestory windows with recessed frames (1 Kings 6:4).

The vestibule was 30 feet (9.1 m) wide and 15 feet (4.6 m) deep (1 Kings 6:3; cf. 2 Chron. 3:4).

Temple Architectural Plan



The hollow bronze pillar on the north was called "Boaz," and the one on the south was called "Jachin" (1 Kings 7:21; cf. 2 Chron. 3:17).

Two ornate wooden, folding doors, overlaid with gold, separated the nave from the vestibule (1 Kings 6:33–35).

The bronze altar for burnt offerings was 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 30 feet (9.1 m) long and wide (cf. 2 Chron. 4:1).

The inner sanctuary (or Most Holy Place) was a 30-foot (9.1-m) cube (1 Kings 6:15–29; 2 Chron. 3:8–14). Such rooms were often elevated in temples of the ancient Near East. Two massive golden cherubim stood on either side of the ark, each 15 feet (4.6 m) tall with 15-foot (4.6-m) wingspans (1 Kings 6:23–28). The ark of the covenant stood between the two cherubim (1 Kings 8:1–11; cf. 2 Chron. 5:2–14).

The nave (or Holy Place) was 60 feet (18 m) long and 30 feet (9.1 m) wide (1 Kings 6:15, 17–18; cf. 2 Chron. 3:5–7). It contained the golden altar of incense; the golden table for the bread of the Presence; and 10 golden lampstands, five on the north and five on the south (1 Kings 7:48–49; cf. 2 Chron. 4:7).

Ten bronze wheeled stands, each holding a large basin, contained water for rinsing off the animal parts that were used for the burnt offerings (1 Kings 7:27–38; cf. 2 Chron. 4:6).

The "sea" was a metal basin 7.5 feet (2.3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) in diameter. It held 12,000 gallons (44,000 liters) of water for the priests to wash in. It was supported by 12 bronze oxen in sets of three, facing in each direction (1 Kings 7:23–26; cf. 2 Chron. 4:2–5).



The Presence of God

- World = temple; Garden of Eden = center
- Humans = priests
 - *Made to worship*
 - *Made to share God's presence*
 - *Made to rest in God's presence*



1 Day & Night (1:1-5)	2 Waters Above (the heavens) & Waters Below (the oceans) (1:6-8)	3 Land & Vegetation (1:11-12)	6b Man & Woman to rule: land animals, fish, birds, “all the earth.” “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it, rule over... every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (1:26)	7 God to rule: humanity, land animals, fish, birds, “Thus the heavens and the earth were completed... and God rested... God blessed & sanctified that seventh day.” (2:2)
4 Sun to rule the day Moon to rule the night (1:16-18)	5 Birds to rule the heavens; fish to rule the seas “And God said be fruitful, multiply... fill your domain.” (1:22)	6a Land Animals & Humanity “Let the land produce living creatures.” (1:24-26)		

Summary

We were made to
belong to other people,
belong to a physical place, &
belong to God.



Summary

We were made to be
DEPENDENT



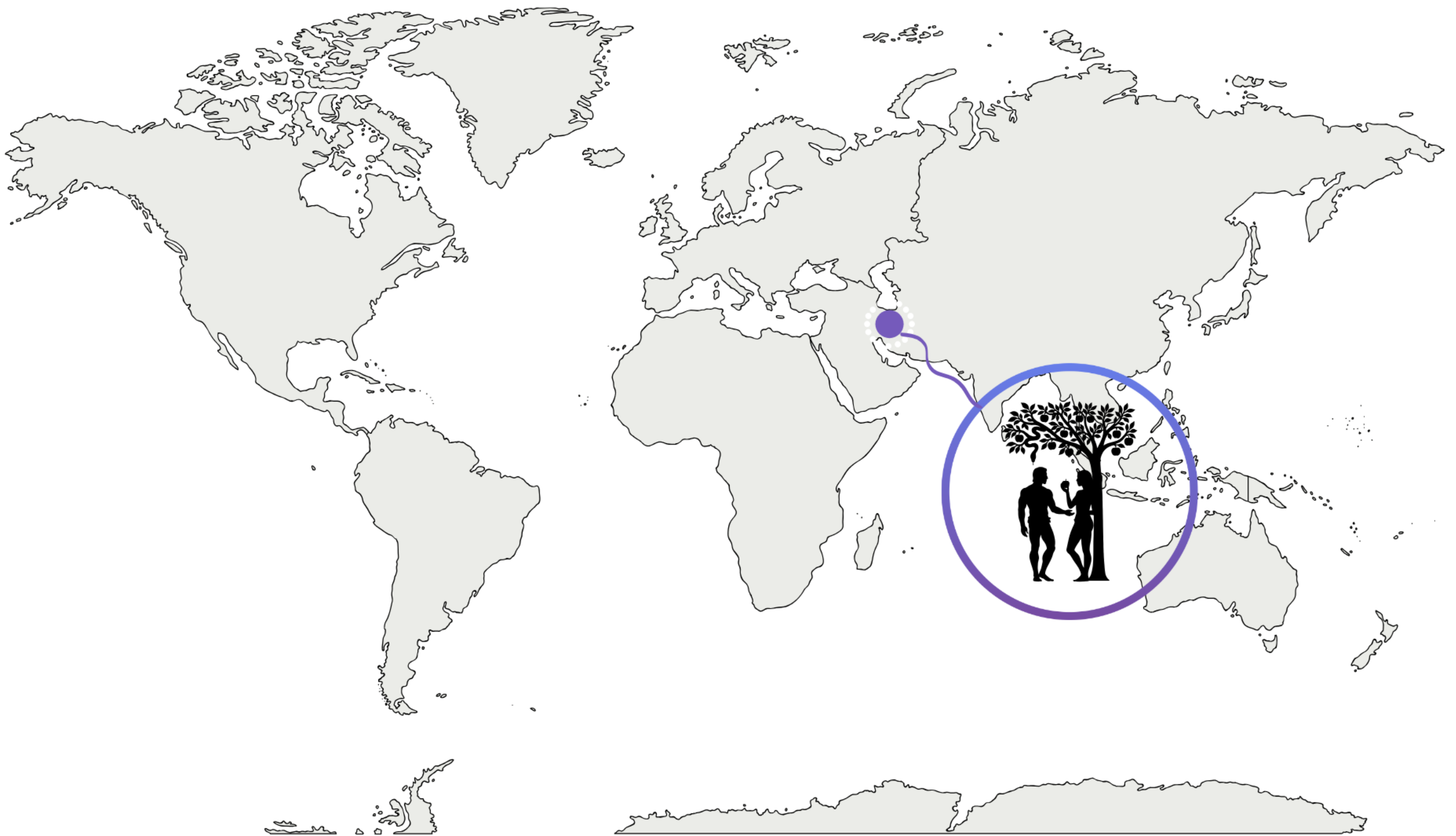
IV. What Now?



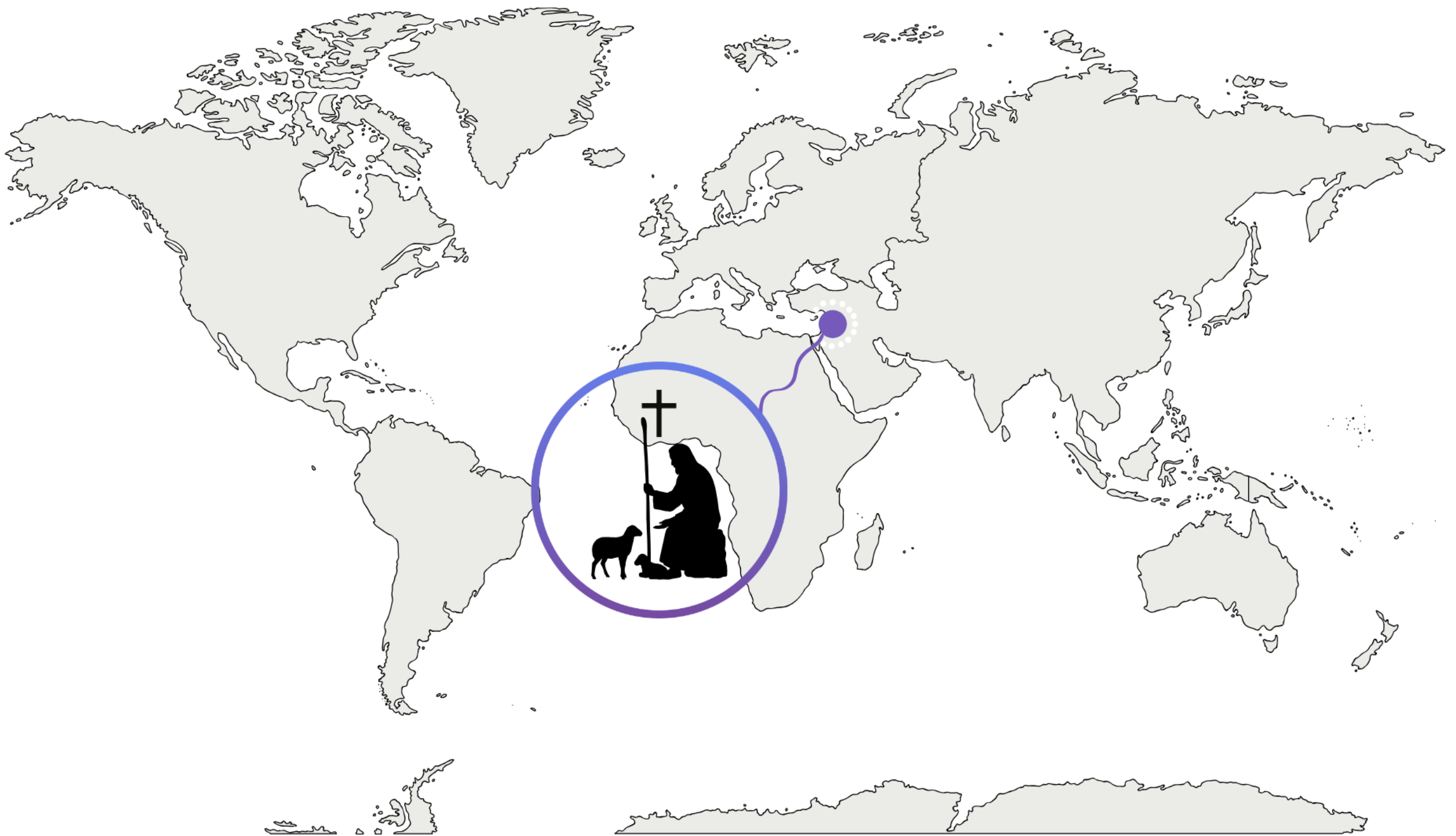
Revelation 21 & 22

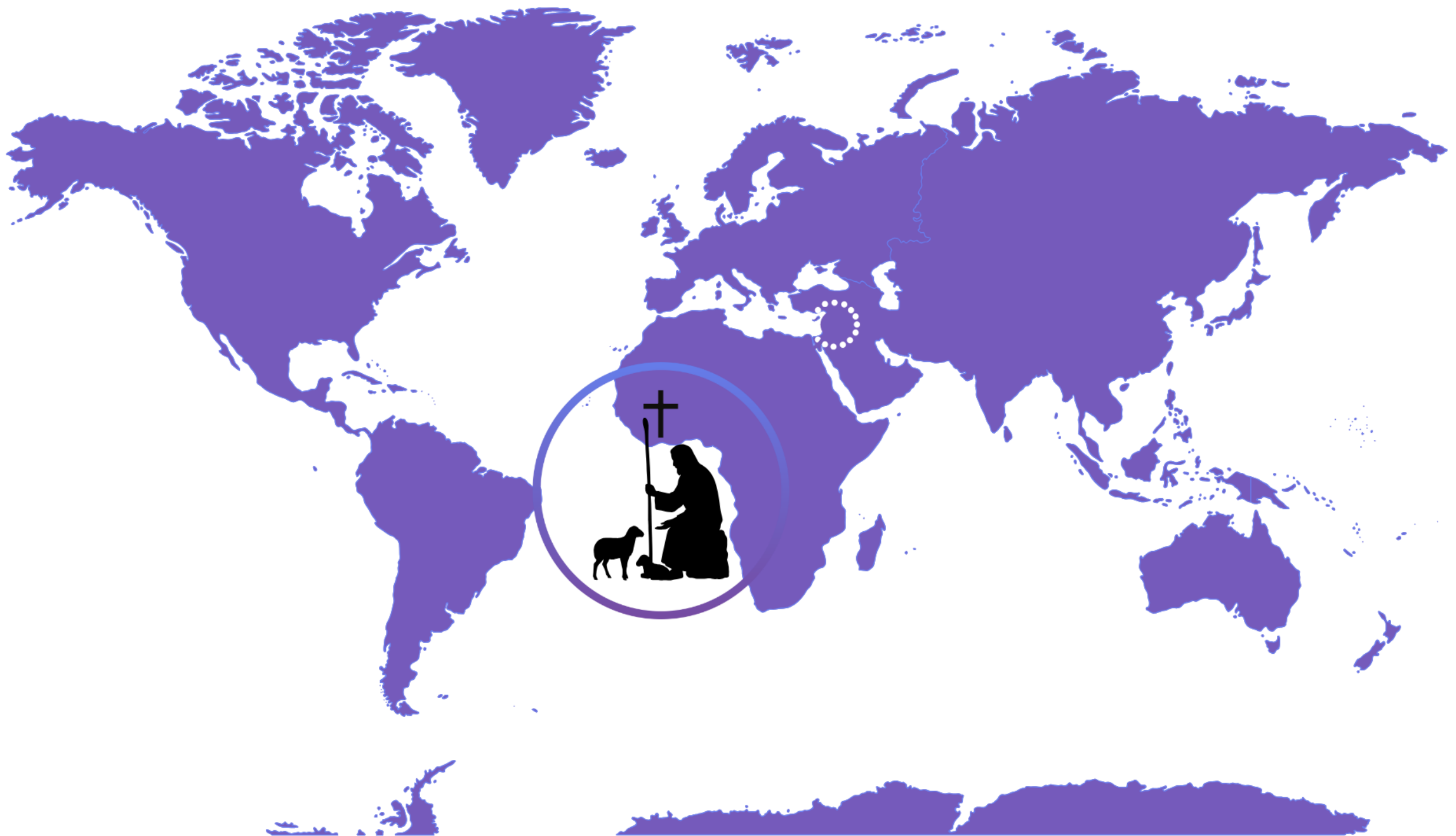
(21:1) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...(3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. (4) He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”...(22:1) Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb (2) through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations...











PEOPLE

PLACE

PRESENCE



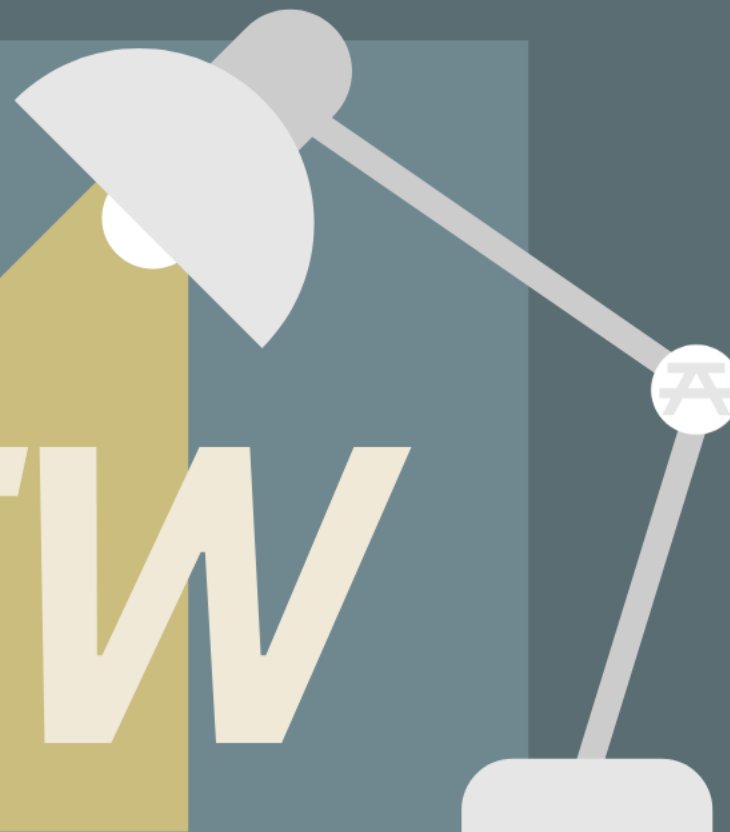
Colossians 1:15-20

(15) He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) For by him all things were created...(17) And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together... (19) For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, (20) and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.



JAN
21
7:00

RE
NEW



ORIGIN STORY: Session 4