

Intro:

This year our Christmas theme is suggested to us by the Moravian star and a series of passages associated with it. We introduced the theme last Sunday afternoon, if you happened to miss that message we can get you a copy.

The first passage associated with the Moravian star is Gen 1.3:

“Let there be light!”

That is the title of our message this morning.

There is an incredible amount of material that we could talk about in the first five verses of Genesis. In fact, I have eight full pages of notes in my study file for this message. There is no way I can give you all of that, and with that I am only scratching the surface!

But in our look at our text today, we want to concentrate on the theme of *light*. Of course we are talking in our passage about our natural, material universe, but light and darkness are emblematic of spiritual themes, not only in the Bible but in the consciousness of man. Thus we see these themes recurring in other religions as well, albeit corrupted as all false religions are.

It is only as we consider the theme of *light* in the Bible that we really understand it properly.

But more than mere understanding, I am going to submit to you that the theme of *light* and your personal relationship to it, as well as the Biblical presentation of it, speaks very loudly to man’s absolute need of and dependence on God.

Read Gen 1.1-5

Proposition: The creation of light is essential for life to come out of darkness.

I. The essential need of light for any life to exist at all

A. The amazing energy of light:

“*The energy of light*. The most basic of all forms of energy is light energy, including not only visible light but all forms of radiant energy, from the very short wave length rays as x-rays and cosmic rays at one extreme to the long wave length rays manifested by heat and the electromagnetic rays used in radio and television communications. All these forms of light move in waves, at a tremendous rate of speed known as the velocity of light. Furthermore, the energy of radioactivity whereby matter is disintegrating—and even the energy of the atom itself are also associated with light energy. The Einstein equation relates matter and energy by a simple constant, and that constant is the velocity of light.

“Light energy is thus the primal form of energy ...

“The light, or radiant energy coming from the sun to the earth, is now known by science to be the source of practically all of the earth’s energy by which the processes of nature and life itself are maintained upon the earth. In fact, all of the earth’s energy, except that of its own rotation and the atomic energy of its matter, has come originally from the sun. It has been calculated that all of the earth’s energy stores—its coal, oil, and gas reserves, its timber and other burnable material, even its uranium and other fissionable atoms—could supply a total amount of power equal only to that which reaches the earth from the sun in just three days’ time.

[Eugene Ayres and Charles A. Scarlott, *Energy Sources*, 1952, p. 186.] Truly, with respect to physical phenomena and biological life on the earth, the sun is ‘the light of the world.’”¹

B. The state of creation before the first Word of creation (Gen 1.1-2)

1. A brief comment on the Gap Theory

a. *i.e.*, a gap of time exists between Gen 1.1 and 1.2, allowing for a long time, a prior creation, rebellion, judgement, and chaos – so Gen 1 is a ‘re-creation’ rather than Creation

b. *Not* an inadequate response to Darwin

1) Taught by early Jewish writes and some church fathers

2) Thomas Chalmers 1814 – prominent teacher of notion (Darwin’s book 1859)

3) Many commentators and Christians have held it since

c. Still an *inadequate* interpretation of the text

2. The beginning is the beginning of all things (1)

“The statement, that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, not only precludes the idea of the eternity of the world *a parte ante* [from before birth], it shows that the creation of the heaven and the earth was the actual beginning of all things.”²

¹ Henry M. Morris, “The Power of the Word”, *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1959; 2002). 116:58-59.

² Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 1:46-47.

3. The first step is to create a 'blank canvas' (1-2)
 - a. Consists of 'heaven' and 'earth' – *i.e.*, the entire breadth of the universe and the earth, the focal point of creation (1)
 - b. The earth is in an unorganized state (2)
 - 1) 'Without form and void' = unorganized, empty, lifeless
 - 2) 'Darkness was upon ... the deep' = a world of water with a material (solid) core
 - 3) 'Spirit ... moved upon ... the waters' = though dead, though formless, an active God surveys his initial creation

“The chaotic mass in which the earth and the firmament were still undistinguished, unformed, and as it were unborn, was a heaving deep, an abyss of waters ..., and this deep was wrapped in darkness. But it was in process of formation, for the Spirit of God moved upon the waters.”³

4. The significance of the darkness (and other terms, like formless and void)
 - a. Gap Theorists and others take this verse very negatively, as if this state of the earth is the product of evil, thus darkness = evil
 - 1) There is an association with wickedness and evil in the metaphor of darkness in the Bible
 - 2) But God didn't entirely do away with darkness in Gen 1, and everything he made is 'very good' (31)
 - 3) Indeed, in Isa 45.7, it says God created darkness
 - b. Essential assumptions concerning “in the beginning” until “she took from its fruit and ate”
 - 1) The whole of creation was good at this point
 - 2) Evil had not marred one bit of creation (except perhaps the mind of the serpent, and that only at about 3.1)
 - 3) The fall of Satan coincides with Gen 3, not any time prior

³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 1:48-49.

- c. Darkness, then, does not represent evil in Gen 1.2
 - 1) Instead, it represents absence of light (light not yet created)
 - 2) And it represents absence of life (life not yet created and life impossible without light), *i.e.*, deadness (but not yet death)

Now I want you to hold this idea in your mind: darkness = absence of life = deadness → and will equal death.

C. The first creative decree of God: ‘Let there be light’ (Gen 1.3)

- 1. We have seen from the energy of light how essential it is to life
- 2. The first step in Creation is to add “LIGHT” to the blank canvas of the watery, formless, void, un-living world
 - a. Useless to speculate where that light came from in terms of a material light source
 - b. But there was light. Why? because God *spoke*.
 - 1) Called “creation by fiat”

An arbitrary order or decree. Authorization or sanction: *government fiat*. [Medieval Latin, from Latin, *let it be done*, third person sing. present subjunctive of *fiere*, *to become, to be done*; see *bheu-* in Indo-European roots.]⁴

2) Creation by fiat = creation by decree

“The work of creation commences with the words, ‘*and God said.*’ The words which God speaks are existing things. ‘He speaks, and it is done; He commands, and it stands fast.’ These words are deeds of the essential Word, . . . , by which ‘all things were made.’ Speaking is the revelation of thought; the creation, the realization of the thoughts of God, a freely accomplished act of the absolute Spirit, and not an emanation of creatures from the divine essence.”⁵

- 3. There is not yet life, but the first thing life needs is light... life is coming

⁴ fiat. Dictionary.com. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/fiat> (accessed: December 05, 2008).

⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 1:49.

D. The divine commentary on the first creative decree (Gen 1.4-5)

1. Evaluation: God saw light was good

Good = “Good, pleasant, beautiful, delightful, glad, joyful, precious, correct, righteous.”⁶ Can even mean “expensive, valuable”

2. Function: God divided the light from the darkness

- a. We are moving away from a universe where there is no light and no life
- b. We are moving to a universe where there is much light and a world where there is abundance of life

By the way, the whole creation story is told from the perspective of someone on the surface of the earth, watching it all happen from that perspective.

- “The Spirit moved upon the waters” – the eyewitness inspires Moses

3. Designation: God called the light day and the darkness night

- a. At this point, the rotation of the earth appears to begin (or at least be evident)
- b. The earth makes one full rotation, exposing every point on its surface to Light: and it is the first day

This is where life begins – light is essential for life, so the whole earth is bathed in light from the Word of God for one day...

And creation continues through an increasing complexity leading to the ultimate form of life: man.

⁶ *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Bibleworks electronic edition, © 2003.

II. The incredible sin against light which affected all existing life

A. Recall the significance of God's Word in creation

“Speaking is the revelation of thought; the creation, the realization of the thoughts of God, a freely accomplished act of the absolute Spirit, and not an emanation of creatures from the divine essence.”⁷

1. Speaking is revelation of thought
2. God's speaking is the revelation of His thought
3. Revelation = Light; God's speech is light
 - a. God's creation is all simply the revelation of his thought
 - b. In a sense, all creation is a further expansion on 'let there be light'

B. Consider this light from God: Gen 2.16-17

1. Do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
 - a. 'Good' = same word for God's description of creation
 - b. This Word from God is an enlightening decree for the mind of man
2. Failure to keep God's decree means that in that day 'dying you shall die'
 - a. Reject light
 - b. Lose life

C. Consider the essential anti-Word, anti-Light, anti-God core of Satan's temptation (Gen 3.1)

1. "Hath God said?"
2. Every sin is a rebellion against the Word of God || it is a sin against light
 - a. The pagan without God sins against the light of general revelation (nature and conscience)
 - b. The religious man sins against the light of special revelation: the Word of God

⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 1:49.

Every deed you do against the Word of God...

Every word you say against the Word of God...

- Is a choice of death and darkness instead of light and life

D. Notice what Adam and Eve did after their sin (Gen 3.7-8)

1. They covered themselves from the light
2. They hid from the eyes of God

They sinned in the light, and against the light, and fled to darkness to hide themselves.

Symbolically, they hid from life in death.

III. The flaming sword and the Man who is the Light of life

A. Notice that the barrier to the Tree of Life is a flaming sword (3.4)

1. The man who attempts to partake of the tree of life is barred by an object of light
2. The man who attempts to partake of the tree of life will die

B. One day, we will find, by and by, The Word of God will taste death (Heb 2.9)

1. The Word of God said: "Let there be light"
2. The Word of God was made a little lower than the angels 'for the suffering of death'
3. The Word of God tasted death for every man

In a sense, the Word — the Son, Jesus — entered the Garden by facing the angel with the flaming sword, and died ... for every man.

And by his death, he made a way to the tree of life for every man who will believe.

C. Listen to the Word of God speaking: Jn 8.12

John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

Conclusion:

Proposition: The creation of light is essential for life to come out of darkness.

Are you in the Light? Or still in darkness?