

God's Story, Our Story

Lesson 7: Creation

God creates the world in wisdom and love
(Gen 1-2, CCC 279-354)



The world was created for the glory of God.
(CCC 293)

CCC 285

CCC 116

CCC 290, 296, 318

CCC 295-301

CCC 325-37

CCC 329-331

CCC 339-342

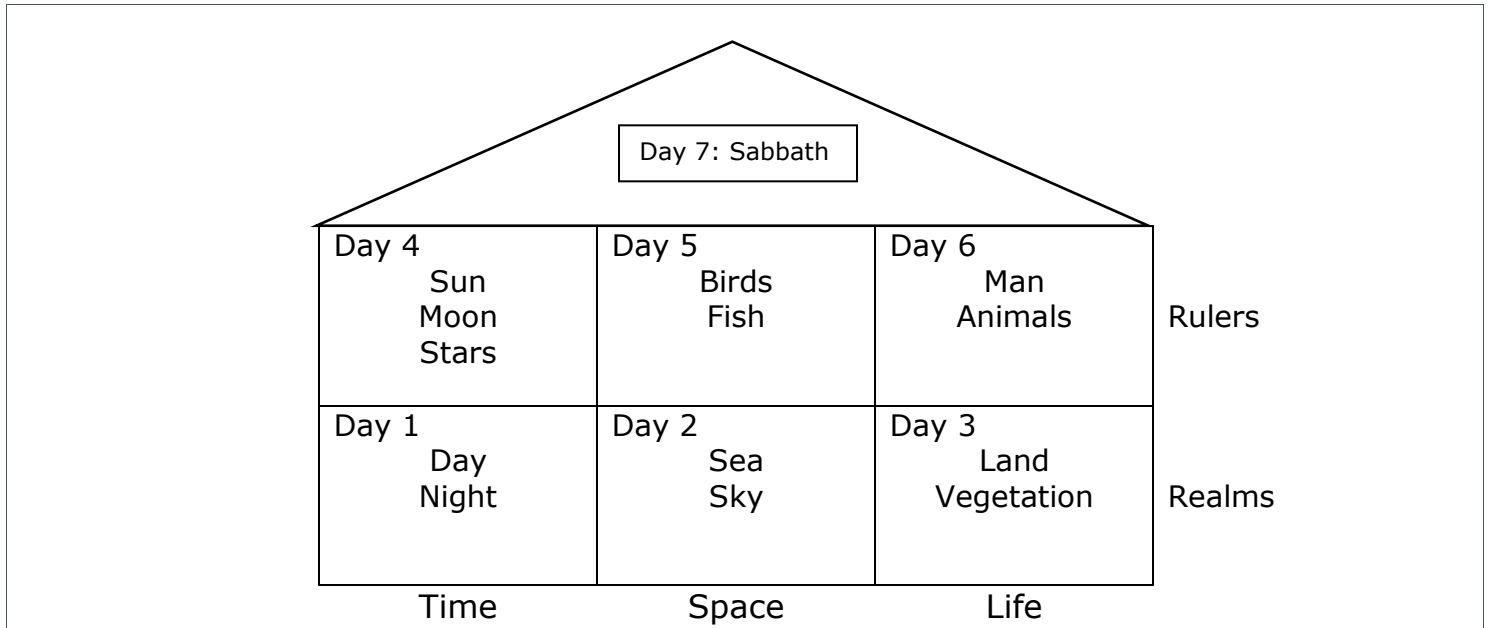
Gen 1:26-27

CCC 347

Gen 1-2 & Ex. 39-40

1. Some theories about the creation of the world:
 - a. Pantheism – everything is God.
 - b. Gnosticism – the world comes from and returns to God, and is inherently evil.
 - c. Dualism/Manichaeism – permanent conflict of good and evil.
 - d. Deism – God made the world and then left it to itself.
 - e. Materialism – world is an interplay of matter that has always existed.
2. The Bible does not teach science. The Church allows for both a literal or mythical interpretation of the story of creation.
3. God created the universe out of nothing (*ex nihilo*).
4. God created in wisdom and love a good, ordered world for man; he transcends creation yet sustains it at every moment.
5. God created an invisible (spiritual) and visible (corporeal) world and they are closely united.
6. Angels are part of the invisible world. They are God's messengers: intelligent, spiritual creatures who are personal and immortal.
7. The visible world is good and its beauty reflects the beauty of the Creator.
8. Man is the crown of creation. By nature, we are God's creatures and servants and are given sanctity of life, dignity of labor and sacredness of family love, so we can live, work and love like God.
9. The Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between God and creation, of the union of heaven and earth, God and man, male and female. It points to our end with God for all eternity.
10. The world is a "macrotemple" – a holy place for God's presence and man's worship in sacrifice. The first six days of creation are similar to the building of the tabernacle.
11. The Garden of Eden was a sanctuary of life similar to the later Israelite tabernacle, with its cherubim and menorah representing the tree of life.

<p>CCC 303-308</p> <p>CCC 311-312, Rom 8:28</p>	<p>12. Adam is high priest of humanity called to sanctify creation, as Aaron was later high priest of Israel.</p> <p>13. Creation is not yet complete, but in a journey toward perfection. God guides his creation towards perfection and cares for all through his providence. Humans enter this divine plan through their actions, prayers and sufferings.</p> <p>19. God permits evil because he respects our own free will. He can always bring out good from evil.</p>
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Questions for Discussion

1. What is pantheism? Gnosticism? Dualism? Deism? Materialism? What are the problems with these worldviews? How is the biblical view different?
2. Do you find God's glory in creation? What are his greatest creations?
3. How should we interpret Genesis 1-2? Can we reconcile this story with what science tells us?
4. How is the world a temple and the Garden of Eden a sanctuary? What was Adam's role in the Garden?
5. How do we fit in the story of Creation? How does it influence how we treat each other?
6. God created us "good." What significance does this have for our lives? How can we participate in God's creative work?
7. What three qualities do we have because we are created in God's image?
8. What does it mean to be a "steward" of the created world, and how should this affect our behavior?
9. Do you believe that other creatures have the same rights and dignity as human beings? What is the significant difference between God's creation of us compared to his creation of everything else?
10. God holds us in existence. What should be our response to this?
11. What are the consequences of being given free will by God?
12. What is the connection between God's providence and the existence of evil and suffering in the world?
13. Why is the Sabbath inscribed in creation? What does it represent?