

Biblical Generations

I. Generations of the heavens and earth (Genesis 1-4)

A. Creation (Genesis 1)

1. **First day: creation of light** (1:3–5): “Then God said, ‘Let there be light.’ “ He divides the light from the darkness.
2. **Second day: creation of space and water** (1:6–8): He separates the waters, skyborne upper water from the earthly, lower water.
3. **Third day: creation of plant life** (1:9–13): Separates the water from the land. Earth then brings forth green grass, plants, trees, and vegetation of every kind.
4. **Fourth day: creation of sun, moon, and stars** (1:14–19)
5. **Fifth day: creation of fish and fowl** (1:20–23)
6. **Sixth day: creation of land animals and people** (1:24–31; 2:7–20)
7. **Seventh day: God rests** (2:1–6): His creative work is complete and is pronounced good. God blesses and sets apart the seventh day.

Parallelism & Chiasm in Hebrew Literature

Parallelism -- pairs of lines in Hebrew poetry which seem to echo each other. Within Psalm 2:1-5 for example there is a kind of “thought rhyme” as the lines echo and repeat.

The Rabbis noticed this in the middle ages and Bishop Robert Lowth, in 1753, published his *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones Academicae* which marks the beginning of widespread and systematic analysis of this phenomenon.

It has been conventional to distinguish three major sorts of relation between the lines: synonymic, antithetic and synthetic -

1. **synonymic** seen in Psalm 2:1-5;
2. **antithetic** in Ps 2:12 but better in Prov 10.1 (this form is especially common in Proverbs);
3. **synthetic** is where the thought simply progresses Ps 2:6-7 - only a similarity of line length produces parallelism.

Chiasm (the adjective is “chiastic”) is the arrangement of elements (e.g. of a text) in the form of mirror-like reflection: ABba or abcd*DCBA. Since we became aware of how much biblical authors like to arrange texts in patterns we have discovered many examples of chiasm. These are both large scale (where the echoed element is a phrase, sentence or idea), and small scale (where it is words or sounds that are echoed in the Hebrew text).

E.g. Am 5:4-6a:

For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel:

“**Seek** me and **live**; a
but do not seek **Bethel**, b
and do not enter into **Gilgal** c
or cross over to Beer-sheba; *
Gilgal will surely go into exile, C
and **Bethel** shall come to nought.” B
Seek the LORD and **live**, A

lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph,
and it devour, with none to quench it for Bethel.

Is 1.21-26 provides an example on a larger scale:

- 21 See how the **faithful city**
has become a harlot!
She once was full of justice;
righteousness used to dwell in her-
but now murderers!
- 22 Your silver has become **dross**,
your choice wine is **diluted with water**.
- 23 Your **rulers** are rebels,
companions of thieves;
they all love bribes
and chase after gifts.
They do not defend the cause of the fatherless;
the widow’s case does not come before them.
- 24 Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty,
the Mighty One of Israel declares:
“Ah, I will get relief from my foes
and avenge myself on my enemies.
- 25 I will turn my hand against you;
I will thoroughly purge away your **dross**
and remove all your **impurities**.
- 26 I will restore your **judges** as in days of old,
your **counselors** as at the beginning.
Afterwards you will be called
the City of Righteousness,
the **Faithful City**.”

V. 26b echoes v. 21, vv. 25-26a echo 22-23 and v. 24 is the hinge upon which the thought turns, thus this verbal structuring device also indicates the message, which speaks of reversal.¹

¹ <http://www.bible.gen.nz/amos/literat.htm>

Views of Creation Account

1. **Reconstruction Theory (Gap Theory)**

Popularized by Scotsman Thomas Clamers (1780-1847) and C.I. Scofield. Seeks to reconcile Genesis with recent scientific discoveries by positing a great catastrophe between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. Suggests that v. 2 should be translated “and the earth *became* formless and void.” Action of Satan destroying in view. Perhaps also death of animals during this period. Says that Satan’s fall took place during this gap period, and caused cosmological destruction. Takes liberties with Hebrew.

2. **Concordist Theory (Day-Age Theory)**

Began in 1800s. Hugh Miller, Henri Deveaux, Daniel Vernet, Derek Kidner among proponents. Day of Scripture is figurative. Like “day” in Psalm 90:4 where we find, “...a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday.” Argument is made from the fact that the seventh day has no morning or evening. It does not end. Problems are the mixture of metaphor with the concrete and that in middle of week, sun and moon come for defining time making a “day” now specific.

3. **Literal Interpretation**

Seven, twenty-four hour days. Classic view. Among moderns, some take catastrophe of Reconstruction Theory and place it as Genesis flood while others believe in appearance of age. Adam created without going through steps of childhood, rings in trees.

4. **Literary Interpretation (Framework Theory)**

Held to by Augustine, perhaps Aquinas, Ridderbos, Ramm, Kline, et al. Week is an artistic arrangement. Moses’ intention is not chronological but themes of creation.

B. Man as Male and Female (Genesis 2)

1. Man names animals
2. Man, however, is alone
3. God creates “a helper suitable for him.” (2:18)
4. “She shall be called ‘woman’”

אִשָּׁה [*ishshah* /ish·shaw/] n. f. 780 occurrences; AV translates as “wife” 425 times, “woman” 324 times, “one” 10 times, “married” five times, “female” twice, and translated miscellaneously 14 times. **1** woman, wife, female. **1A** woman (opposite of man). **1B** wife (woman married to a man). **1C** female (of animals). **1D** each, every (pronoun).

5. “Because she was taken out of ‘man’”

אִישׁ, אִישׁ [*iysh* /eesh/] n. m. 1639 occurrences; AV translates as “man” 1002 times, “men” 210 times, “one” 188 times, “husband” 69 times, “any” 27 times, and translated miscellaneously 143 times. **1** man. **1A** man, male (in contrast to woman, female). **1B** husband. **1C** human being, person (in contrast to God). **1D** servant. **1E** mankind. **1F** champion. **1G** great man. **2** whosoever. **3** each (adjective).

6. Marriage established (v. 24). Note that predates fall. What implications are there from this?
7. Note the wonder of sexuality, male and female here
 - a. Not enough to have two men as companions
 - b. Procreation's role in this

C. Fall of Man (Genesis 3)

1. Note the twin foci of Satan's temptation
 - a. Woman, by seeking to realign her relationship to man. "He said to the woman..." v. 1
 - b. Man(kind) by seeking to corrupt his relationship to God by means of undermining God's Word. "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" v. 1
2. Note particularly the chronology of vv. 6-7
 - a. Woman eats
 - b. Man eats
 - c. Then their eyes are opened
3. Immediate effects of fall
 - a. Nakedness brings shame v. 7
 - b. Hiding from God v. 8
 - c. Fear of God v. 10
4. God's punishment
 - a. Serpent curious mingling of metaphorical and literal here
 - i. Cursed above all cattle
 - ii. Goes on belly in dust
 - iii. Enmity with woman
 - iv. Her Seed will bruise serpent's head, he will bruise Him on the heel
 - b. Woman
 - i. Pain in childbirth
 - ii. Desire will be for husband
 Calvin on Genesis 3:16
 "For this form of speech, 'Thy desire shall be unto thy husband,' is of the same force as if he had said that she should not be free and at her own command, but subject to the authority of her husband and dependent upon his will; or as if he had said, 'Thou shalt desire nothing but what thy husband wishes.' As it is declared afterwards, Unto thee shall be his desire, Thus the woman, who had perversely exceeded her proper bounds, is forced back to her own position. She had, indeed, previously been subject to her husband, but that was a liberal and gentle subjection; now, however, she is cast into servitude."
 iii. Feminist reinterpretation of curse
 1. Equality becomes servitude
 2. Answer
 - a. Service was always intended. Submission always in view

- b. Now it is harder.
- c. Some suggest “desire for husband” to be desire to rule him.
- c. Man
 - i. Cursed is the ground “All creation is in bondage”
 - 1. Thorns, thistles
 - 2. Eat plants of field
 - 3. Sweat for bread
 - ii. Return to dust

II. Generations of Adam

A. Adam to Flood (Genesis 4-5)

B. Disruption of generations in Flood (Genesis 6-9)

C. Generations of Noah & Tower of Babel (Genesis 10-11)