

The Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

Based on Genesis 1:1-26

Prepare to hear the Word:

- There are two creation stories in Genesis, this one was probably written after the Garden story in Ch 2.
- In ancient times there were many creation stories eg the Australian Aboriginal myth of The Rainbow Serpent.
- This story is not a scientific account, it is a theological story.
- Background information including a diagram of the Hebrew world view can be found in *Expressions*, Book 6, and in *Teaching the Bible*, by M Ryan.

You will need:

- Posters
 - 1 Day and Night
 - 2 Divided Waters - Sky and Earth
 - 3 Land and Plants
 - 4 Sun - Moon and Stars
 - 5 Birds and Fish
 - 6 Animals including humans
 - 7 Sabbath
- Class Bible

When children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story, place the gold box/bag, containing the materials you will need, carefully beside you.

Place class Bible in front of you with your hand on it.

This story comes from our special book, the Bible.

Place Bible beside you.

Move your hand over the space in front of you as you say:

In the beginning there was darkness

Hold Poster 1 in front of you.

and God said, “Let there be light.” God made the day and the night.

God saw that it was good.

Place Poster 1 on the floor to your far right facing the children.

Hold Poster 2 in front of you.

Then God made the waters. There was water in the sky and water on the earth.

Place Poster 2 on the left of Poster 1.

Hold Poster 3 in front of you.

Next God made the earth and plants of every kind.

Place Poster 3 on the left of Poster 2.

Hold Poster 4 in front of you.

In the sky God placed the sun to give us day and the moon to give us night. God also made the stars of the night sky. God saw that it was good.

Place Poster 4 on the left of Poster 3.

Hold Poster 5 in front of you.

In the waters God made sea creatures of every kind. In the sky he made birds to fly. God saw that it was good.

Place Poster 5 on the left of Poster 4.

Hold Poster 6 in front of you.

On the land God also made living creatures – animals that would walk and run and hop and crawl and creep. Then God made human beings like you and me.

Place Poster 6 on the left of Poster 5.

Hold Poster 7 in front of you.

God looked at the whole of creation and saw that it was very good. After all this work God rested. God gave us the gift of rest which we call the Sabbath.

Place Poster 7 on the left of Poster 6.

The Word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God

Point to and name each poster, or ask the children to tell you about the posters beginning with the first

Pause quietly for a moment, and then begin to wonder together.

I Wonder:

- I wonder if any part of this story could be left out?
- I wonder what this story is telling us about creation?

Genesis 1:1-26

Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then 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 a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky 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. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. 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 dome of the sky 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 dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon 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 bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. 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 of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind* in his image,

in the image of God he created them,*

male and female he created them. ... God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day....

And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

Prepare to hear the Word Teachers

- The Judeo Christian Creation Story is not a recount or an informational text. Its genre is that of open-ended questioning and reflection about faith. Where do we

come from? Where are we going? What is the reason for life, death and suffering? What is our relationship with our God, one another and our world?

- The Biblical creation stories affirm that God loves the world and that human beings are intended to live in harmony with the environment.
- Human life certainly started one day, with whom, where and how? It is for science to answer these questions not the Bible. Scientists and theologians should be companions in their respective fields of inquiry. Both search for an explanation of the place of humanity in the world. Science and theology ponder the mysteries of our place in the universe.
- Creation is assigned to six days culminating on the Sabbath. This is a liturgical arrangement not a scientific one. It is used to establish the importance of the Sabbath and reflection. It has a pastoral implication and in today's world asks us to reflect on the desire to produce, to work and to make time for loving stillness and wonder. Sabbath enables us to rekindle the fires of creativity.
- The creation texts were produced during the Exile, this adds extra significance to it as an act of faith.
- The Old Testament represents life as blessing. Genesis calls us to be stewards of all creation. Because we are stewards of creation and are made in the image and likeness of God, we all possess inalienable dignity. The spiritual dimension of human life shows that we are so interrelated, that if anything diminishes the well-being of one person it diminishes the well-being of humanity at large. Because God is the provident and faithful one we, too, must provide for and be faithful to those with whom we share the earth.

Awakenings Curriculum Theological Background Level 4