

The Light Scatters the Darkness

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[0 : 0 0] Will you turn with me now, please, to the book of Genesis, the book of Genesis and chapter 1. We're going to look at verses 3 to 5, and we looked last time at verses 1 and 2.

So we'll just read from the beginning of the chapter again, down as far as verse 5. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 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. And 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. The last time as we looked at verses 1 and 2, we did so looking at them in the context of this being a prelude, not only to the rest of the Bible, but also a prelude to the greater work of redemption.

And you remember we saw how God's work of creation, because it's introduced this way in the Bible, is itself, if you like, as we called it, God really building the stage of creation, of the created universe, on which this great drama of redemption was going to be performed.

[1 : 3 3] And we noticed how it was even to the extent of God himself in Jesus Christ, taking that creation and to himself adding our human nature, which is part of his creation, in order to become our Redeemer and rescue us from our sins.

And we noticed how, at the end of verse 2 there, we see the Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters. And we took note of the meaning of that word hovering, that it's really something in the sense of brooding over, and it brings into your mind the idea of something that's just about to happen that's very productive positively.

We use the illustration, as the word sometimes can be used, of a mother hen as she broods over a cluster of eggs. And it shows you, while that brooding process is going on, something's happening in those eggs, and then you're just waiting for that moment when the chicks arrive.

Well, there's something like that, as we saw in the word hovering, and the way it's described there, the Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters. You're waiting for something to happen.

You're waiting for something significant to take place, because the Spirit of God, as we know from the rest of the Bible as it unfolds, is the agent, if you like.

[3 : 0 1] It's God, of course, the third person of the Trinity, but very often it's the Spirit of God that's specified as the one by whom life is brought about, and life is brought to us, and life is applied to us.

And that's why in the next few verses, you find that what you're waiting for at the end of verse 2 is then brought about. And God said, Let there be light.

And there was light. Illumination. Because darkness was on the face of the deep.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. Now, when you read Genesis chapter 1, you can't really expect Genesis chapter 1 to be a scientific report.

Some people make that mistake. They come to Genesis chapter 1, and they expect something there to prove or disprove what science has actually brought to us in its investigations and conclusions, and that's not really what it's about.

[4 : 10] The Bible is not anti-science. The Bible doesn't say the exercises of science, the investigations of science, are entirely wrong, and you should just stick to what the Bible says.

Many of the greatest scientists that ever lived were actually Christians as well, and believed Genesis chapter 1 to be factually and historically accurate as an account of the creation of the universe and how it came into being.

So you're not coming to chapter 1 of Genesis expecting that it's a scientific report, as you'd find in a scientific magazine. That's not what God is about. God is giving us, in Genesis 1, an account of the creation in order to prepare the way for what the Bible speaks about in terms of redemption as our salvation in Christ.

So He's setting that, and He's giving us the necessary details without going into any specifics, as science sometimes does. So here you find illumination.

God said, let there be light. And there was light. Now we noticed last time that the creation is brought about by God creating, and that's His exercise uniquely.

[5 : 28] That's His ability. Only He can create, call things out of non-existence into being. But now God, in the rest of the chapter, we see God bringing about a formation of what He has brought into being.

And in that, He will be adding other elements of the creation that He's going to bring into being as well, such as here, the creation of light. Let there be light, and there was light.

God speaks light into being. There was no light until God said, let there be light. It still hasn't reached the part of the chapter that speaks about our sun and our moon as we receive light from them on this planet Earth.

This just simply says, let there be light, and there was light, because light is greater in its concept than what you find coming from the moon or from the sun. Light in its nature is something integral to this creation of God.

God said, let there be light, and there was light. And it's very significant that the first thing that God specified in the forming of the creation was the creation of light, because, as we'll see, light in its properties is designed by God to scatter darkness.

[6 : 51] In its own nature, it's designed to deal with darkness. But you notice something here that's very interesting. God said, let there be light, and there was light.

There's no embarrassment about that. There's no embarrassment in God speaking about this as he gives us this account of the creation. There's nothing to suggest that somehow this just couldn't be, that God would speak, and as God spoke, light all of a sudden was created and appeared where it didn't exist before.

And there's no embarrassment for a Christian coming to the first chapter of Genesis and saying, I believe that in the way that it's stated. I believe that God created light because God is telling me that's what he did.

And that's what this God does. And that's what this God has the capacity to do right through to this very day, including in our dark hearts.

And it reminds you too of something later that you find, especially in the Gospels, where the immediacy, in terms of giving effect to God's word, the immediacy is obviously when God said, let there be light and there was light.

[8 : 14] There's an immediate appearance of light where God says, let it be. Reminds you of the miracles of Jesus. Jesus who came into the world, as we'll see, as the light of the world, as the revelation of God of himself redemptively, as the one who created all things, and without whom nothing was created, including light.

And when Jesus came to those people that he would heal, such as blind Bartimaeus, what will you have me to do? What do you want me to do for you, Lord, that I might receive my sight?

And immediately, he received his sight. Not after a while, not after some protracted process, immediately.

When Jesus came to the grave of Lazarus, to the sepulcher, where Lazarus' body had been for four days, which really put the whole thing beyond dispute for those who were there at the time, nobody could argue that this man hadn't really been dead.

And Jesus came to the grave of Lazarus, and what did he do? He spoke. He spoke towards that grave. He spoke to that dead body of Lazarus, and what did he say? Lazarus, come out!

[9 : 38] And he came out, still bound with the clothes that he was buried in. But as soon as Jesus spoke the word, the effect was immediate.

this is not some charlatan that's trying for the sake of making lots of money to pass himself off as a faith healer. This is not some account in Genesis chapter 1 of something that people imagined in order to make personal profit out of.

This is God saying, this is who I am. This is what I do. This is how I go about things. This is how I put my purposes into being.

This is how my plan comes to fruition. I say, let there be light, and there is light. And it's darkness that's dissipated by the light.

Let there be light, and there was light. It follows on, as we've seen, from darkness being on the face of the deep. And isn't it significant that light is the first thing God creates, and it's especially in relation to this darkness.

[10 : 49] Now, it's interesting that darkness is not something that's specified as created by God. It simply says darkness was on the face of the deep, because God wants us to understand that the important thing there is the creation of light, and it's light that scatters the darkness, and the properties of light are to actually come into where darkness exists, and to actually make darkness disappear.

That's inherent in the natural quality of light. It scatters the darkness. Darkness is what you have in the absence of light, if we can put it that way.

Darkness is what you have in the absence of light. And right at the beginning of your Bible, you find something that's going to become hugely important right throughout the Bible and right throughout our understanding of redemption.

As God is setting the stage on which this drama of redemption is going to be performed by him in Jesus Christ, it's going to be a matter of light scattering the darkness.

It's going to be a matter of light in our own hearts coming to be created by God in the darkness that we are spiritually and morally. And all the way through, God is emphasizing for us, I am the light, I have charge of the light.

[12 : 14] I create light where there is darkness, and when I create light in the darkness, the darkness disappears. It has no option. It cannot stand against the light and in the power of the light and with the effect of the light.

God deals with darkness. darkness. And you see, it then says, God saw that the light was good.

Because God is in the business of evaluation. And there again at the beginning of the Bible, as you take your time over these verses and just sit over them and read them, these are the kind of things that hit you.

Here is God evaluating right at the beginning of your Bible. He is not just the God who creates and the God who calls things into being by His Word. He then evaluates.

He assesses. He reaches a conclusion about what that is like. And He comes to His own conclusion. And He is always right. God saw the light that it was good.

[13 : 23] And I am not just saying that in terms of light in itself and what it is, but its properties as we say are that it scatters darkness, that it dissipates darkness, and it is in relation to that as well that God is saying the light is good.

He has evaluated that light. He has looked at the light as He has created it. He has looked at it as it has overcome the darkness, as it is greater than the darkness, if you like, as it gains victory over the darkness and God saw the light that it was good.

Now you put that in New Testament terms. You take that with you into the drama of redemption itself on the stage of this creation. And there is Jesus saying, I am the light of the world.

Whoever believes in me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. And what does God say about His own Son, our Savior, as the light of the world?

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. God saw the light and He saw that it was good because He sent His Son as the light of the world to scatter the darkness that we had brought about, the spiritual and moral darkness that this world lies in.

[14 : 48] God saw the light that it was good. And in John 1 and chapter 5 we find a wonderful description there of the theology, if you like, that lies behind all of these things, both of creation and of redemption as John combines them, where he says, this is the true light, the light that has truth at the heart of it, this Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

And what he says, he was the light was shining in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it. The words are difficult to translate, perhaps they're different translations of it, but the emphasis is absolutely clear.

This light that Jesus is, that was revealed when Jesus came, the light of God, the light of truth, was shining in the darkness and as hard as the darkness, spiritual darkness, moral darkness, as hard as it might try to extinguish that light, the light was not overcome by it.

That's what fills us today with thankfulness, isn't it? That all the attempts of the darkness will ultimately come to nothing. that light is greater than darkness.

That the light of the world in Jesus Christ is greater than the darkness that you might say is exemplified in Satan and his dark forces. This world is not ruled by darkness.

[16 : 26] There's a lot of darkness about. There are people who are still in darkness and are darkness. But this world is not ruled by darkness. This world is ruled by your God, by your God and King, who is light and who is light in himself.

As John put it in his first epistle where he describes God as light. God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

And that's reflected in the light that God created where he said, I see the light and it is good.

Where would we be today without the light of the world? If God had said, that's fine, they've brought darkness upon themselves.

They've rebelled against me. They've chosen the way of evil instead of the way of good as I gave them choice. So let's be done with it and let's leave them in the darkness.

[17 : 46] Just imagine as much as you can what that would mean. No church, no Bible, no fellowship, no faith, no hope, no relationship with God other than one of terror, no future filled with light.

God said, let there be light and he saw that the light was good. That's the first thing, illumination. But secondly, there's separation.

And God called the light day and God separated the light from the darkness and God called the light day and the darkness he called night and there was evening and there was morning the first day.

Now there's this very interesting emphasis on separation. So we're seeing creation and formation and illumination but now there's separation and that too is a hugely important feature of the Bible's teaching and especially it's teaching on redemption or salvation because this separation really comes into that as well, doesn't it?

We saw recently in the conversion of the thief on the cross that there was a separation there at that time that Christ was crucified between that thief on one side and the other thief on the other side.

[19 : 14] The cross divides, the cross separated them the one was saved the other was lost the one accepted Jesus the other railed against him. What is what he's saying here? God separated the light from the darkness because the darkness has come in as the Bible unfolds you can see how the darkness represents what is sinful what is evil what is against God what is opposed to God and in spiritual and moral terms darkness is really what describes what we are in our own sinfulness what the world is in its worldliness what opposition to God is in its opposition its darkness and so God makes very distinct the difference between light and darkness in the creation and he does so as well in our salvation.

Remember in Exodus chapter 10 where you find an account of the plague of darkness that God caused to be brought upon the Egyptians and of course very interestingly the place in which a part of Egypt in which the people of Israel lived was called the land or the region of Goshen which in Hebrew means light and in the plague of darkness as you find in Exodus chapter 10 verse 23 you find especially mentioned that the darkness that came upon Egypt was so thick that people couldn't even get up and go about their daily business the Egyptians just could not move they were paralyzed due to the thickness of the darkness why is God telling us that why is God specifying it in such detail because he wants to contrast it with what comes next but the children of Israel had light in all their dwellings the children of Israel had light in all their dwellings there's darkness in every Egyptian home in all the regions of the Egyptians but the children of Israel had light in all their dwellings they didn't just live in this region called

Goshen when the plague of darkness invaded Egypt the people of Israel were entirely separated from that darkness they had light in all their dwellings that's how it is for God's people as well they're surrounded by darkness they were themselves part of that darkness to begin with but as God has brought them out of the darkness and made them his people and set them apart so he separates us from the darkness that's what you see elsewhere throughout the Bible let's just think of a few verses just in passing really John 3 19 where Jesus has spoken of us the light that has come into the world and where you find him saying there that this is the condemnation that light has come into the world and people chose darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil they were against God for those who do that evil don't come to the light they hate the light they don't come to the light lest their deeds should be exposed you see that's the property of the light isn't it that's why an atheist a confirmed atheist hates the idea of coming to actually subject their mind for a brief moment even to the light of God's truth they don't want that now I know they make the excuse and it really is an excuse of saying well I don't believe that and I don't believe it's relevant the thing that really is at the bottom of that is that they don't want exposure to the light because deep in the heart of man there's a hatred of the light there's an antipathy to the light because God has separated between light and darkness and that separation is brought out when you see the way in which people react to the light of

Jesus Christ the light of the gospel until God opens our eyes to see the light until God creates light within our dark hearts then we hate the light we don't come to the light we're afraid our deeds will be exposed and this God who evaluates will evaluate our lives and will condemn us for it he that does truth however comes to the light that it may become manifest that their deeds are wrought in God and you can go through the New Testament picking out these passages that deal with light 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 9 he who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light so that you should show forth his praises or his prowess as God Ephesians 5 verse 8 you were once darkness but now you are light in the Lord you see what that's saying it's not just saying you were once in darkness darkness it's saying to the

Ephesians you once were darkness darkness is what you were you were by nature darkness but now you are children of light walk therefore as the children of light now you are light in the Lord and it's exactly the same as you find here in the prelude of the creation where God says let there be light you find that in it's equivalent in the spiritual moral universe as well which means in our hearts in our lives how does God deal with the darkness that we are by nature as he says in Ephesians he creates light 2 Corinthians chapter 4 God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness not into darkness but out of darkness has shone or shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of

[25 : 38] Jesus Christ that's a wonderful text because it tells you here's the link with the creation of light where God created light as he created the universe as he was setting the stage for redemption and in that redemption as part of that redemption not only has Christ the light of the world come into the world but the application of that light the application of that redemption of that salvation to me and to you individually is that God in our dark hearts creates the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ he creates light spiritual light life in our hearts and as is the property of light naturally so it is spiritually that light then comes to invade every part of your being your mind your understanding your conscience your will your affections the light comes to scatter the darkness out of all these regions of your being you are light in the Lord and God called the light day and the darkness he called night our time is gone so we'll just need to sum up on these few details

God called a light day in the darkness he called light in the evening there was morning the first day you see this is also very interesting it is God who gives names to the light to the darkness it is God who gives names to everything else that he goes about creating until he comes to the animals where it is in fact Adam who gives names to the animals as he does to Eve his wife as well but here is God showing us that it's not just that he gives names to them he called the light day and the darkness he calls night that really is saying more than just God is naming them it's saying God understands them he knows the nature of them and in fact it's more than that really because it's God that's giving meaning to them he's placing them in relation to each other in a way that puts meaning across to us there's a meaning to the light there's a meaning to the darkness

God defines it for us God explains it to us God is saying to us this is the property of darkness and this is the property of light and I'm separating between them so that you can see the properties and that you can see especially that light is greater than darkness and scatters the darkness and that passage we read in Colossians another wonderful passage that deals with the person of Jesus Christ and his greatness and his preeminence in all things where Paul says that it is this God you notice what he's saying we're giving thanks to the father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light see you pass over these words so easily don't you and you don't really I don't sometimes either think of well that's interesting why does he say the inheritance of the saints in light because it all fits in with the way that God has created light and the properties of light and spiritual light and what all that's about and then he goes on to say about

Jesus in whom we have redemption he is the image of the invisible God the firstborn of all creation for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth visible and invisible all things were created through him and for him and he is before all things and in him all things hold together some people make misuse of these words the firstborn of all creation as if they meant that Christ is the first one to be created by God one of the greatest figures of the church of all time was a man called Athanasius Athanasius was born in 296 AD and pretty much as a result of him and his leadership a famous council took place in Nicaea in 325 AD and that was the council that defined very accurately who

Jesus in terms of his person is as far as being God is concerned is he like God is he almost God notice as an atheist he is God and these words he said mean not that he is the first creature to be created but that he is the creator creator of all the creatures the first born the one who gives birth to all creation the light the one who was as John put it from all eternity and so you see you find when you bring that into relation to Genesis that here's the light that by him all things were created nothing nothing was made that was made without him staggering fact isn't it that as you come to the rest of the Bible and take it all with you as God's word

[31 : 10] Jesus Christ appears to you in the opening verses of Genesis God said let there be light and he saw that the light was good that he separated the light from the darkness and that separation is still in continuance and always will continue one of the most solemn phrases that Jesus used is the phrase outer darkness where those who will not be saved will actually refine themselves throughout eternity outer darkness Luke chapter 22 and verse 13 it's a separation you see between light and darkness because heaven is all light the reconciled universe is all light there's no darkness in it it's been dispelled but there is an outer darkness a place where the unsaved will spend eternity my friends that word separation should fill us with dread to be separate from all for all eternity from the

