

Genesis 1:8-19

Last week our attention was drawn to the little word midst found in Genesis 1:6, and the possibilities it might suggest.

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."

We're not going to repeat our full investigation of this Greek word tâvek (taw-vek), but the bottom line is, when God said the **"midst,"** He meant the middle.

We came to this conclusion after examining other passages of scripture where the same word was used, and, in each case, noting the surrounding context.

For instance, in Genesis 14, the word **"midst"** is used to describe the path

taken by the children of Israel when they crossed the Red Sea.

Genesis 14:22 **"And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left."**

Obviously, if there were walls of water on both sides, they weren't skirting around the edge.

No, they were going right through the middle.

So when God used this same word in Genesis 1:6, **"Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters,"** we would expect this firmament to be right in the middle.

And if that were true, the two bodies of water on either side of this firmament (or atmosphere) would be equal.

Obviously the waters "**under the firmament**" would supply the lakes, rivers, and oceans upon earth.

But what about the waters "**above the firmament**"?

What about that massive quantity of water which at least approximately equalled to the water upon the earth?

That's an awful lot of water, isn't it?

Of course we have clouds in our atmosphere today, but they couldn't account for that much water.

In fact, they only amount to 1/1000 of 1% of the available water in our universe, and besides that, they're not located "**above the firmament.**"

So by no stretch of the imagination could the word "**midst**" or middle, describe our present day situation.

However, what it could describe is a great canopy of water vapour surrounding the earth.

Now, we shouldn't envision this great canopy of water as a tremendous blanket of clouds.

First of all, clouds are always found in our atmosphere, while V 7 locates this great store of water "**above the firmament.**"

That would place it up in the high-temperature region now known as the ionosphere, and possibly even out into space.

The other reason why this canopy couldn't be clouds is the fact that clouds are made up of water droplets, which, in such a tremendous quantity, would completely block out the sun's rays.

Actually, they would have put the world right back in the condition we found it

in V 2, where **"darkness was upon the face of the deep."**

On the other hand, water vapour, unlike water droplets, is completely invisible even in vast quantities.

So even with a huge blanket of water vapour surrounding the earth, the heavens would remain completely visible, as we see them in Genesis 1:15: **"And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so."**

And if this canopy actually existed, it would necessitate a completely different form of irrigation from the one we have today, and it would create a completely different type of climate.

Could the world have been so different from our own?

Well, the truth is, some very big changes
have occurred in our earth, and not one
of them has been an improvement.

In fact, we are now living in the third
downsizing of our planet.

Let me explain briefly.

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After Adam and Eve were expelled from the
Garden of Eden, the plant life became
more hostile and defensive --- **"Thorns
also and thistles shall it bring forth to
thee."**

Again, after the universal flood of Noah's
day, the animal kingdom changed.

They became the hunter and the hunted,
rather than the docile creatures that
Adam once named -- Genesis 9:2. **"And the
fear of you and the dread of you shall be
upon every beast of the earth, and upon**

every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea."

So the scoffers are totally wrong when they tell us that all things have continued **"as they were from the beginning of the creation."**

And not only have there been changes over the ages, but there's another one coming, and this one will be a step up.

Yes, when Christ reigns over this earth, there will be a great restoration.

Paul speaks of this in Romans 8:19-22.

Before we read these verses, let me point out the fact that the word "creature" used here in the King James Version should be translated "creation."

Romans 8:19-22 **"For the earnest expectation of the creature** (or creation) **waiteth for**

the manifestation of the sons of God.

20: For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

21: Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22: For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

So after Eden, and after the flood, the fauna and the flora changed, and they will not be restored until the Millennium.

However, we are quite certain there have been other changes on our earth, and that's what we want to talk about now.

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Today, our poles are frozen in ice, while
the centre of our earth is excessively
hot.

Because of the direct rays of the sun in and
around the equator, South Americans and
Africans are roasting in a perpetual
summer, while the Eskimos are freezing,
or would be if they didn't know how to
cope.

And what do we have between these extremes?
Why, we have Canadians complaining about the
weather!

It's sort of a national pastime with us!

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Also, because of these wide differences in
temperature, our weather can be
troublesome at times, and even downright
violent.

And this entire system is completely energized by the direct rays of the sun.

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Of course, we all know that the red line running across a map merely marks out the equator.

It doesn't really exist in the real world.

But Pat, who was making his first ocean voyage, was not aware of that fact.

So, immediately, upon stepping on board, he asked the red-haired captain if he would mind pointing out the equator when they got there.

"Why, certainly," said the captain, and a few days later he called him up on the bridge.

"Now, Pat, we're getting pretty close to that famous red line, but not close enough to see it with the naked eye.

However, if you will just look into this telescope, I'm sure you'll be able to see it clearly."

In great anticipation, Pat put his eye to the telescope, and as quick as a wink, the captain pulled a hair out of his head and held it in front of the lens.

"Now Pat, do you see that red line over there on the horizon?"

"Oh, do you mean the one with the camel walking along it?"

Well, I had better get back to our lesson while I still have a class.

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As I said before, our weather conditions are not really ideal, and I'm not just saying that because I'm a Canadian.

However, if we had a canopy of water vapour surrounding the earth and defusing the

sun's rays evenly around the globe, it would create a sort of greenhouse effect, and we would be enjoying a universally temperature climate.

Now today we are concerned about the negative possibilities of the greenhouse effect.

And I suppose we should be, with millions of tons of frozen water just waiting to dump on us.

However, if all that water was safely floating around over our heads, that wouldn't be a problem, would it?

In fact, it would be an advantage.

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Of course we don't have such a canopy to protect us from the sun's rays, but that doesn't mean we never had one.

And if these special conditions did exist in past ages, then we would expect to find signs of a universally temperature climate.

And, actually, that seems to be the case.

Archaeologists tell us that they have found fossilized tropical vegetation way up in the Arctic.

In fact, they claim to have discovered a fossilized forest within 1,000 kilometres of the North Pole.

Now I know because of the theory of evolution, we have to take what they say with a grain of salt, sometimes with a pound of salt.

However, in many cases, it is their interpretation of the evidence, not the evidence itself, that is untrustworthy.

Of course, this is not biblical proof, but it is noteworthy, and it does indicate that a universal-temperature climate did exist in past ages.

And certainly a great canopy of water vapour would have that effect.

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And there's another indication in Genesis that such a canopy existed.

Under our present day conditions, huge quantities of water are lifted from our lakes and oceans by the process of evaporation, all powered by the direct rays of the sun, and then returned to us in the form of rain.

However, if these rays were diffused by a great canopy of water vapour, none of this would be possible, and a completely

different system of irrigation would be necessary.

And that's exactly what we find in Genesis 2:6---"**But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.**"

Here we have a system of irrigation that would supply the needs of the world without storms, strong winds, or even rainfall.

A much better system, don't you think?

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And in order to pursue this subject just a little further, let's jump ahead to Genesis 7.

In Genesis 7:11-12, the beginnings of the universal flood of Noah's day, are described.

"--the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

12: And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights."

I believe we are witnessing the demise of that vast canopy of water vapour right here.

Certainly the fountains of the deep would contribute greatly to the flood, but we should also remember that it rained continuously for 40 days and 40 nights.

There just isn't enough water in our atmosphere to provide such a rain.

In fact, someone has estimated that all the water in our atmosphere, if it were discharged simultaneously, would only be sufficient to cover the earth to the depth of one inch.

So if anyone tries to tell you the 40 days' rain in Genesis was impossible, you can tell him that it would be now, but it wasn't then.

In Antediluvian times, one half of the world's water would have been available to "**the windows of heaven**" from its source "**above the firmament.**"

We will be pursuing this subject a little further in future lessons, but for now, we better get back to Genesis 1.

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Genesis 1:9-10 "**And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.**

10: And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters

called he Seas: and God saw that it was good."

This is the first appearance of land in a watery world, but it was just land; a desolate landscape created by God, a blank canvas just waiting for the Master's touch.

V 11-13 "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

12: And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

13: And the evening and the morning were the third day." I

The little phrase "**after his kind**" is the rock upon which the whole theory of evolution makes shipwreck.

And even the principles of genetics have firmly established the fact that inherited life characteristics are implanted in the genes.

Certainly variations within a species are possible, but only as long as they lie latent in the genes of that particular species.

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And not only was each species created independent of all others, but it was created in its fully developed state right from the beginning.

Just skip ahead to Genesis 2:4-5 for a minute, where this point is brought out.

**"These are the generations of the heavens
and of the earth when they were created,
in the day that the LORD God made the
earth and the heavens,
5: And every plant of the field before it
was in the earth, and every herb of the
field before it grew. "**

Yes, God created the entire adult plant,
perfect in every detail, before He
planted it in the earth, and He didn't
take billions of years to do it either.
This flies in the face of evolution, or more
correctly, evolution flies in the face of
God's Word.

Evolutionists insist that plants and animals
were not created in their entirety, but
evolved from a single cell over billions
of years.

But God says no.

I created **"every plant of the field before
it was in the earth, and every herb of
the field before it grew."**

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Genesis 1:14 **"And God said, Let there be
lights in the firmament of the heaven to
divide the day from the night; and let
them be for signs, and for seasons, and
for days, and years."**

Not only do they give light by day and by
night, but they operate so precisely that
we can count our days by hundreds and
thousands of years and be right on.

Of course, in the case of Joshua, God did
make one small exception!

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V 15-16 **"And let them be for lights in the
firmament of the heaven to give light
upon the earth: and it was so."**

16: And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."

Before we consider these **"two great lights,"**

I would like to comment on the little phrase, **"he made the stars also."**

Our finite minds are simply boggled by the immensity of space, and yet the Holy Spirit dismisses it all with the comment, **"--he made the stars also."**

He only used 5 words to describe God's mighty universe, but He has devoted 50 chapters to describe the tabernacle.

I think that rather shows where His priorities lie.

You see, God only needed to speak the word and the universe was brought into being,

but our redemption was gained at
tremendous cost.

So in God's opinion, and that's really the
only opinion that counts, the finished
work of Christ is of far more value than
the finished work of creation.

And that's why the Bible is a book of
redemption rather than a book of science.
Certainly, when it touches upon science, it
is always correct, but that's not its
purpose.

It is a book of redemption, because God is
more interested in people than He is in
planets.

He is more interested in souls than He is in
stars.

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V 16-19 **"And God made two great lights; the
greater light to rule the day, and the**

lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

17: And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

18: And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.

19: And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

If we had nothing more than V 16 to prove that Genesis was divinely inspired, it would be enough.

Had Moses been relying upon his own ability and knowledge when he penned these words, he would have made some serious blunders.

The ancient world he lived in was convinced that the moon was much larger than the sun.

And certainly anyone who has seen a harvest moon--and has no further information-- would be inclined to agree with them.

But Moses called the moon the "**lesser light.**"

And that's exactly what it is.

Astronomers tell us that you could fit 6 million moons inside the sun.

But that's not all.

Moses called the sun "**the greater light,**"

but he didn't call it the *greatest* light.

In fact, the star Antares is so big that it could swallow up 64 million suns the size of our own.

Also, the star Epsilon in the Auriga constellation has a diameter 3,000 times that of our sun, at least that's the prevailing wisdom.

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Today, the average person is well aware of the workings of our own solar system. We all realize that the earth circles the sun once a year, while the moon traverses our globe every 24 hours, so I won't waste your time describing the obvious. However, I would like to use this special relationship between the sun and the moon and the earth to illustrate a spiritual truth.

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We all know that the earth is completely dependent upon the sun for light. While one half is flooded in light, the other half is plunged into darkness. It all depends on our relationship to the sun. And so it is with the Son of God.

As Jesus said in John 8:12 "--- **I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**"

For 33 years, God's Son personally shone upon mankind.

At one point in His ministry, it was said of Christ--- **"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."** Matthew 4:16

But that's not the case today.

No longer does the personal presence of the Son of God lighten our dark world.

However, God has not left us in total darkness.

As He gave us "**the greater light**" for 33 years, He has given mankind a "**lesser light**" during this Age of Grace.

Yes, the Church of Jesus Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, has been given the responsibility of spreading Christ's light.

In fact, Jesus said, "**Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.**"

But you might say, *How can I be "**the light of the world?**" I don't have any light of my own.*

That's OK. Neither does the moon.

However, just like the moon, we have the responsibility of reflecting "**the greater light.**"

And just like the moon, we are well positioned to do so.

Ephesians 2:6, speaking of believers, says,
----"**And hath raised us up together, and
made us sit together in heavenly places
in Christ Jesus.**"

And because we have been given this *exulted*
position, we can and should reflect the
light of Christ.

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I have a question for you.

Does the moon give its light every night of
the year?

No, it doesn't.

Sometimes it is so dark outside that you
can't see your hand in front of your
face.

The moon is still there, faithfully
reflecting the sun's rays, but its light
is completely blocked by clouds.

And that can happen to the church also.

The light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ can be blotted out by the thick clouds of error, even when the church is faithful.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 **"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."**

Yes, there are a lot of funny ideas out there about the church.

Sometimes they are deserved, but many times they are not.

The fact of the matter is, Satan is simply throwing up a smokescreen.

Through his servants, he is propagating lies about the church and about God's Word, and even about God's Son.

One good example of this is the so-called, Da Vinci Code which has taken the world by storm.

So with the dark clouds of error hanging over their heads, the world goes on in its darkness.

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But sometimes, even when the sky is completely cloudless, the earth is still plunged into darkness.

Without a cloud in the sky, the moon's light can be completely blocked by an eclipse.

We all know what causes an eclipse, don't we?

It's when the world comes between the moon and its source of light.

And you know what?

A Christian can be completely eclipsed by
the world.

If he is not seated "**in heavenly places in
Christ Jesus,**" if he has allowed the
world to completely fill his view, he
will stop reflecting Christ.

Certainly outright sin will block the light,
but so will worldly ambitions, or even
just plain busyness.

Jesus warned us in one of His parables that
**"the cares of this world, and the
deceitfulness of riches"** can eclipse us.

And when that happens, we're not the only
losers.

When that happens, the world around us
remains in darkness.

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♪♪ *When the world looks at me, do they see
Jesus?*

*When the world looks at me, what do they
see?*

*Do they see faith? Do they see hope? Do
they see charity?*

*When the world looks at us, what do they
see?*

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No, we're not responsible to provide the
light. In fact, we're completely
incapable of doing so.

But we do have the responsibility to
position ourselves in such a way that we
reflect "**the greater Light.**"

Yes, we're responsible to "**walk in the
light, as He is in the light,**" and that
requires obedience, and time spent in His
presence.

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We can all think of a love song that
features the moon, can't we?

I remember one called "By the Light of the
Silvery Moon," and I suppose that dates
me.

Actually, the moon isn't silvery at all, and
it certainly isn't beautiful.

When the astronauts finally got to the moon,
they confirmed what we already knew.

The moon in itself is a bare, dusty, crater-
filled ball.

It's the sun that gives the moon its beauty,
and that's also true of the Church.

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But even with the sun shining upon it, the
moon isn't all beauty and light.

Some nights we can see dark spots on the
moon that mar its silvery glow.

We call them the *man in the moon*, but,
actually, they're the craters that refuse
to reflect the light.

And sometimes that can happen to the church.
Strife and jealousies and worldly systems
can get into the church.

Yes, sometimes the *man in the moon* becomes
so evident that the beauty of Christ is
marred.

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Next week we will be studying the fifth day
of creation, and that's where the
evolutionist really makes a fool of
himself.

On that very day, God created a million
reasons why the world could not have been
created by evolution.

And they are still with us, and they still
surround us on every side.