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Overview

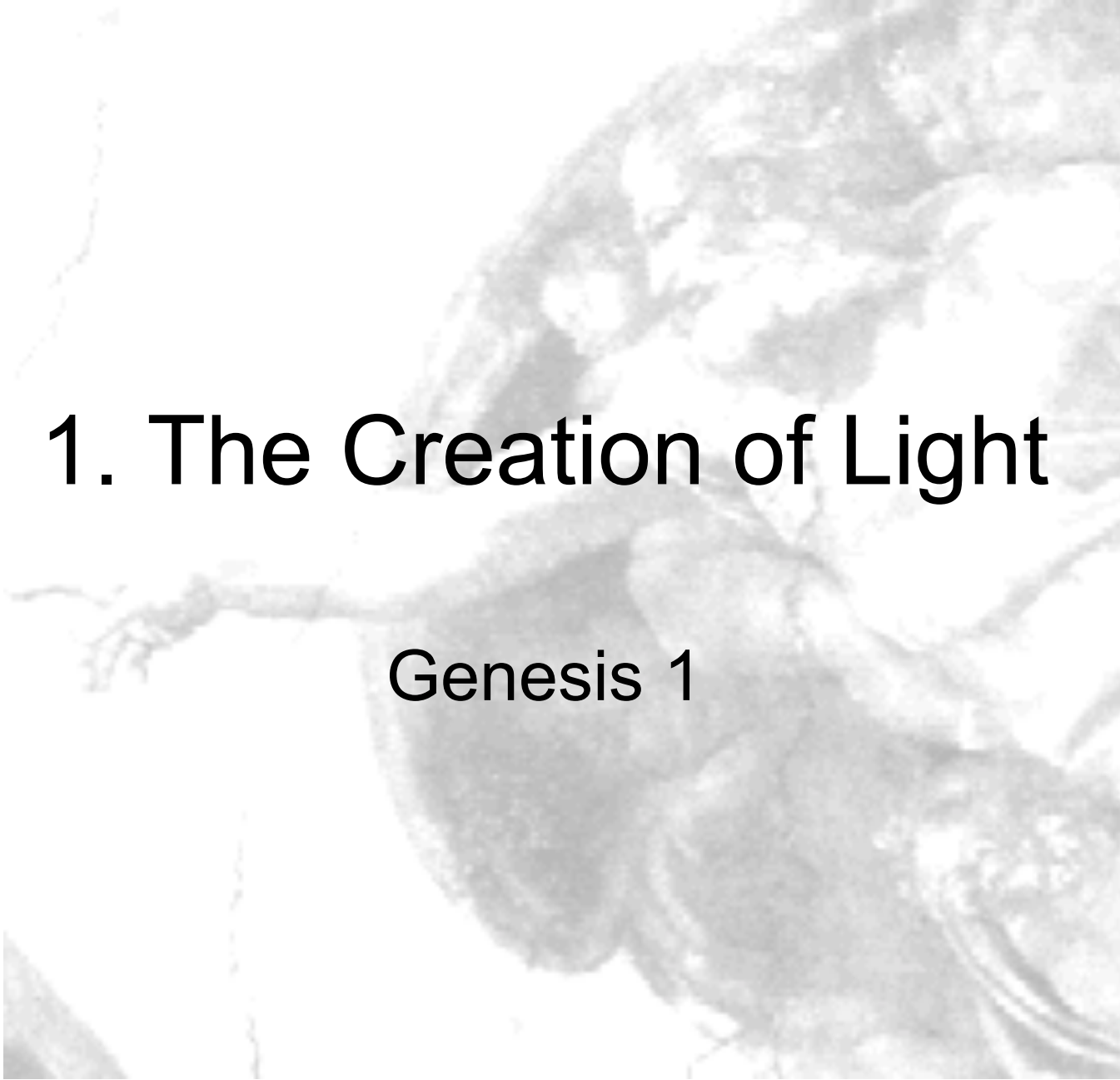
- A series of eight talks on light given to a young people's camp at French Creek State Park in Pennsylvania, August 1979.
- The first two talks look at light as it is in nature, in order to understand the biblical analogies which make up the remaining six talks.

Series Contents

- 1. The Creation of Light (Genesis 1)
- 2. Light Revealing God (Psalm 19)
- 3. God's Word as Light (Psalm 119)
- 4. Messiah the Light (Isaiah 8-9)
- 5. God, Our Light in Bad Times (Micah 7)
- 6. God is Light (1 John 1-2)
- 7. Walk as Children of Light (Ephesians 5)
- 8. Let Your Light Shine (Matthew 5)

1. The Creation of Light

Genesis 1



Introduction

- In order to understand the Bible's use of light as an illustration of various spiritual truths, it is helpful to understand some things about light in the physical world.
- Here we will look at the creation of light by God in Gen 1:3-5, and the appearance of light sources in Gen 1:14-19.

The Creation of Light

Genesis 1:3 (NIV) And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning the first day.

The Creation of Light

- God created light as part of His plan in organizing the matter He had created earlier.
- The Genesis account gives no creation of darkness, as dark is merely the absence of light.
- As we shall see, however, darkness has a symbolic function in the Bible.

God Speaks

- God said, “Let there be light.”
- God speaks and it happens!
- This is true of everything God does, but it doesn’t mean that God does not often use various means to bring about His will.
- God is rather like the author of a novel, who determines what occurs in the novel, even though various characters may cause these events to happen.

What Was Created Here?

- Was this pure light, independent of anything else?
- Was it some sort of electrical light?
- Was it the flash of the big bang?
- Was it sunlight?
- We aren't told, so commentators have made various suggestions.
- I think this was sunlight; see my PP talk "Genesis One & the Origin of the Earth."

God Sees the Light as Good

- What is this light good for?
- Here light is mentioned without any source being seen.
- Even if we can't see its source, this light is good for:
 - Illumination
 - Heat
 - Giving & sustaining life

Appearance of Light Sources

Genesis 1:14 (NIV) And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. 16 God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. 17 God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, 18 to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

Appearance of Light Sources

- This happens after God has done further work on the earth since the creation of light in 1:3-5.
- This work includes:
 - Earth's Atmosphere
 - Dry land
 - Plants
- Were these light sources made right here in verses 14-19, or were they caused to appear after having been made back in verses 3-5?
- I think these appear now because God has caused to atmosphere to clear up.

Purposes of the Light Sources

- We are told these light sources function to:
 - Separate day and night
 - Act as signs
 - Mark the seasons, days & years
 - Illuminate the earth
 - Govern the day (sun) & govern the night (moon).
- How do they do this?

How do they do this?

- Some of these things were not known by humans in ancient times; others were.
- To separate day & night.
 - Clearly the sun does this by illuminating our atmosphere.
 - The ancients knew that the sky lit up as the sun rose; they may not have known why or how.
 - God knew.

How do they do this?

- To function as signs:
 - Not sure if author intends anything more than marking off seasons, days & years here. Eclipses, comets, etc. might be included.
- To mark seasons & years:
 - Already in ancient times, before the development of detailed calendars, farmers knew from the relative positions of stars & sun when to plant their crops.
 - And people marked the passing of a year by the return of the sun to its same position among the stars.

How do they do this?

- To mark the months:
 - The phases of the moon mark off the months.
 - In ancient calendars, the months actually corresponded to the moon's phases, though they don't in our current Western calendar.
- To illuminate the earth:
 - This was rather obvious to the ancients, and included both the sun and the moon, and possibly the stars also.

To Govern Day & Night

- Probably “govern” should be translated here as “dominate.”
- Clearly the sun dominates the day.
- When it is up at night, the moon dominates the night (and dominates the stars also).
- All these light sources are, like the light itself, “good.”

Conclusions

- God created light, which is necessary for all of life as we know it.
- It is easy for us to be laid-back, to take such things for granted, to be unthankful.
- We need to continually remind ourselves that God given us everything good we have.
- James 1:17 (NIV) Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Conclusions

- Along with light, and partly because of the light, God has given us:
 - Life
 - Illumination
 - Warmth
 - Time-keepers
- Are we using these things in such a way that shows we know where they come from?

