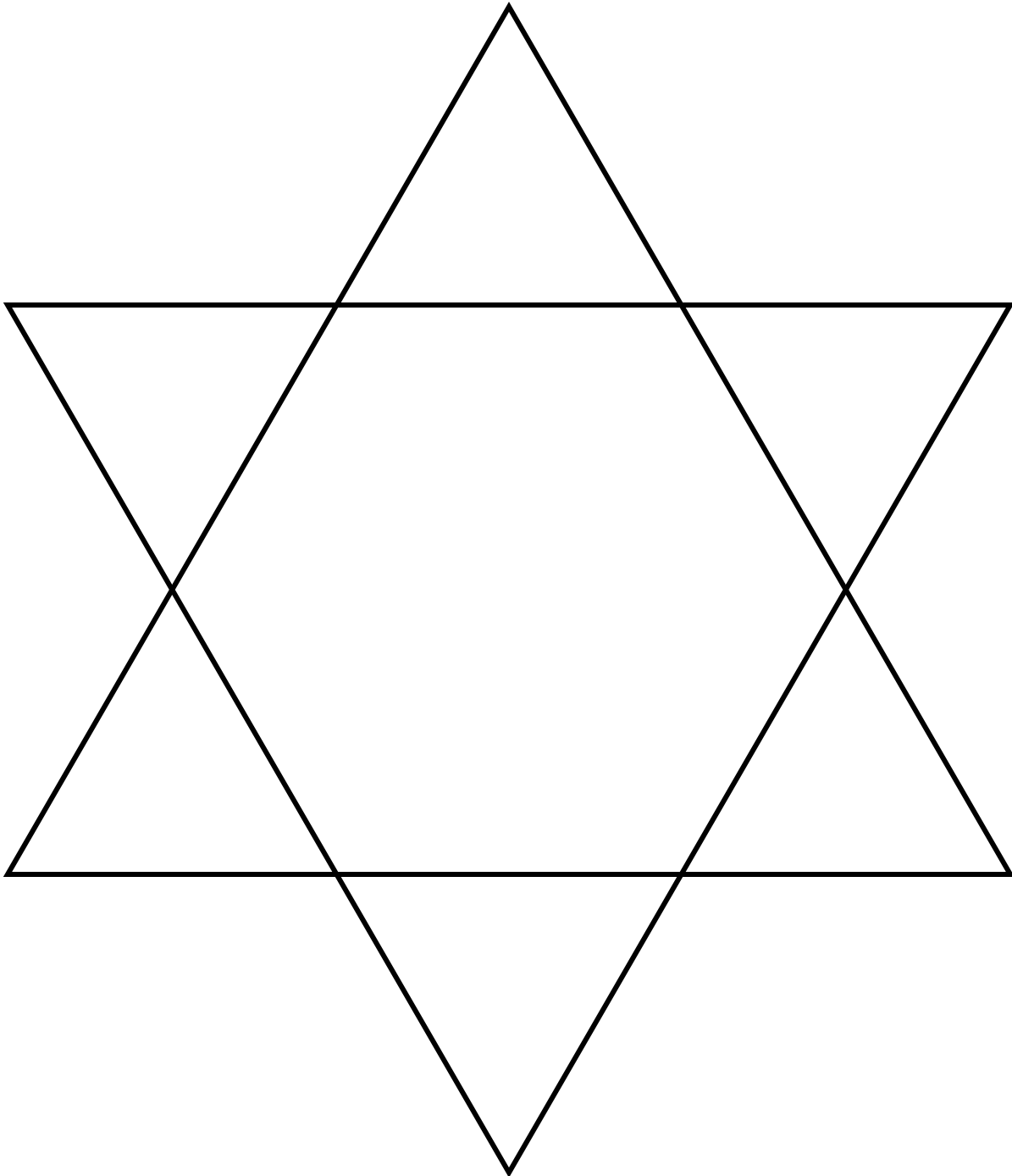


Christian Doctrine

#1 - Where did we come from?

#2 - The Creator's Star is simply a memory device for the days of creation, one that also shows the orderliness of God's creation.



#3 – The hydrological system of the world may have been rather different before the flood, especially in view of the statement in Genesis 1 that, “God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it.”

#4 - God created everything out of nothing. He used no raw materials or previously existing elements. He used only the power of his Word.

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible (Hebrews 11:3).

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm (Psalm 33:6,9).

#5 - The six days of creation were six twenty-four hour days. The creation account, as well as other biblical references to creation, indicate that these creations days were twenty-four hour days. If each of these days were truly intended to mean millions or billions of years, it would seem awfully far-fetched for God to set up the weekly, seven-day Sabbath cycle on what had been a time period which covered billions of years.

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. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth... And there was evening, and there was morning – the fourth day (Genesis 1:16-17,19).

#6 - The six days of creation were six twenty-four hour days.

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (Exodus 20:11-12a).

#7 - God created all living things with the ability to be fruitful and increase in number, but he limited and directed that reproductive ability so that plants, animals and human beings can reproduce only according to their kinds.

Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:11-12).

#8 - According to their kinds

So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:21).

And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:24-25).

#9 - Notes on the Creation of Mankind

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:26-27).

#10 - God deliberated before creating the first people. It was also God's design that the human race should have control over the creation. Man was to be God's representative on earth. Most importantly, the fact that they were created in God's image meant that the first people, Adam and Eve, were sinless, like God himself, and that they naturally reflected the will of God in their hearts and lives. The first man and the first woman were the "crown" of God's creation.

#11 - In Genesis 2, we have a flashback to the creation account. Our Lord shows us how he established the first marriage and family.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

#12 - The first marriage and family

The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh (Genesis 2:20b-24).

#13 - The first marriage and family

- God expended personal effort to make man, unlike the rest of creation which he called forth out of nothing, with nothing but his Word.
- God provided a pleasant home for the first human beings and gave them satisfying work.
- In bringing Adam to see that he was incomplete without a corresponding companion, and in creating woman as a suitable helper for the man, God established the first marriage, home and family.

#14 - The Theory of Evolution

In trying to account for the beginning of the world and of the human race, some people have devised theories which disagree with the biblical record. Some scientists have observed present processes in nature and have suggested that our world came into existence billions of years ago by an accident in space. Biologists have assumed that life on this planet began by a form of spontaneous generation. According to such a view, there was no life present when this planet was formed, but it arose when conditions became favorable for life, about 2.7 billion years ago. Man, according to this theory, is descended from a long line of animal ancestors, which goes back over long periods of time to the simplest living cells. Plants and animals are said to be in a continuing process of development to this day. This explanation of origins has been called The Theory of Evolution. Atheistic evolution claims the universe came about without the power of a supernatural being. Theistic evolution claims that a supreme being aided in the process of the universe's evolution.

The biblical account of creation is to be accepted by faith.

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible (Hebrews 11:3).

Evolution is also based on faith, not science, since what it proposes has never been observed. Countless individuals, national parks, museums, documentaries, school systems and scientific journals endorse, support and promote this godless theory. Why? It allows people the “luxury” of explaining the origins of the universe without accepting moral responsibility before God. It theorizes God right out of the picture. If evolution were true, human beings would have no other reason for existence than pleasing and serving themselves. Many human beings find that an attractive alternative.

#15 - The Apostle Peter identified this sinful attraction long ago:

But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed (2 Peter 3:5-6).

The Bible's account of the origin of the universe is far different. God's creation process took six days, not billions of years. The universe came into existence by God's Word and decree, not by chance or accident. In God's revelation, man is a special creation, not merely a superior descendant of the apes which fought and scrapped its way to the top of the food chain. According to the Bible, human beings find their purpose in serving and honoring God, and they are accountable to thank and obey God.

#16 - The Unbelief of Evolution

- It rejects the Word of God
- It deliberately ignores that there is a God who created the world.
- It deliberately ignores that there is a God who flooded the world.
- It removes accountability to God.
- It scoffs at a future judgment.
- It calls Jesus a liar.

#17 - The words of Jesus

Pray that this will not take place in winter, because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now – and never to be equaled again (Mark 13:18,19).

#18 - Angels

#19 - The Good Angels

Earlier in this lesson, in a passage from Exodus 20, the Bible told us that in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them. Included in that “all” would be the angels. From other passages, such as the ones listed below, we learn that the good angels are spirits, that they are very numerous and strong, that they praise God and carry out his commands, and that they especially serve those who trust in the Lord.

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14)?

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders (Revelation 5:11).

Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will (Psalm 103:20-21).

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone (Psalm 91:11-12).

The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried (Luke 16:22).

#20 - The Evil Angels

Not all the angels remained in the good and holy condition in which they were created. Scripture offers no concrete answers as to why a large number of angels rebelled against the Lord, so we must content ourselves to know what we can about the evil angels. We know that many of them sinned when they rebelled against the Lord, that they are forever rejected by God and doomed to hell, that they and their leader (the Devil [the slanderer] or Satan [the accuser]) are cunning and powerful, that they seek to destroy the works of God and that they want to lead us into eternal damnation.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment (2 Peter 2:24).

Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many" (Mark 5:9).

Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:11-12).

But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ...and the enemy who sows them is the devil (Matthew 13:25,39a).

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings (1 Peter 5:8-9).

#21 - The Law in Eden

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:15-17).

#22 - Concerning the placement of a tree in the middle of the garden of Eden which bore "forbidden fruit," some may think, "God was just asking for trouble. That was nothing more than providing an opportunity for sin. Why would God do that?" Martin Luther and others have been helpful in rightly explaining the placement of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" right smack dab in the middle of the garden. As God's special creatures in the perfect world, Adam and Eve would have been eager to express their thanks to God for everything he had given them, not the least of which was the loving and close relationship they enjoyed with God himself. To give them an opportunity to freely express their thanks, God placed a special tree in the garden and said, "This is not for food." Thus, by obeying God, they were saying, "Thank you" to God.

#23 - Enter the devil. Nothing has been the same since.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was

afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” The man said, “The woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:1-15).

As it was in the beginning, so it is now. Initially, the devil used the subtle approach, trying to cast doubt into Eve’s mind. “Why, Eve, is God not allowing you to have this fruit? It sure looks to me like he’s trying to withhold something good from you. He must not really have your best interests in mind.” Then Satan presented a bald-faced lie. God had said, “If you eat from that one tree, you will die.” The devil said, “If you eat from that one tree, you will not die.” Eve believed the lie. The first sin was what we call coveting, having a desire (an evil desire) for something which God has forbidden. The actual eating of the fruit was an expression of Eve’s unbelief. She failed to trust that God’s ways are right and good. And what shall we make of the devil’s promise, that eating the fruit would make Adam and Eve like God, knowing good and evil? Adam and Eve had already been created like God. Had they not sinned, their experience of not eating the fruit of the tree would have continually let them realize and experience the difference between good and evil. The devil’s promise was an utterly empty one.

#24 – The Lord’s response to sin

Drastic changes resulted. The God with whom Adam and Eve had walked together as the best of friends now became a God of whom they were afraid. Their first experience with sin, the first recorded “passing of the buck” (in reality an attempt to blame God), was their desperate but futile attempt to escape that which human beings have always tried to escape – personal responsibility to God for their actions. Since they were completely helpless to rectify their ruined situation, God himself divulged the perfect plan to restore them to a right relationship with their Maker. To accomplish this, the budding friendship between Satan and human beings would need to be ended. The devil’s power would need to be crushed. Sin would need to be eliminated. All these needs would be met through the Savior whom God promised. Speaking to Satan, God said...

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel (Genesis 3:15).

#25 - The rest of the Bible makes it perfectly clear that this one special “offspring of the woman” is the Son of God, our one and only Savior, Jesus.

#26 - Jesus came to crush the devil’s head.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work (1 John 3:8).

#27 - Preservation, Providence and Protection

God still preserves the world which he created. He protects and prospers us.

If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all mankind would perish together and man would return to the dust (Job 34:14-15).

And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else (Acts 17:25).

He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate – bringing forth food from the earth (Psalm 104:14).

The LORD will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore (Psalm 121:7-8).

...and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me (Psalm 50:15).

You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives (Genesis 50:20).

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).

Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits (Psalm 103:1,2).

#28 - THE FIRST ARTICLE (Creation)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God created me and all that exists, and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.

And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home, spouse and children, land, cattle and all I own, and all I need to keep my body and life. God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil.

All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it.

For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him.

This is most certainly true.

