



Two Kinds of Creation (God's and Ours)

Biblical writers – and perhaps some of your friends and family – often made a point by saying something over and over (and over). Moses, the writer of Genesis, is no exception. In Genesis 1:1-2:3 he uses the Hebrew word “created” again and again (and again) to emphasize his point. Take a look at his introduction to the bible.

***Genesis** ^{1:1}In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth.... ^{1:21}And God **created** the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind.... ^{1:27}And God **created** man in His own image, in the image of God He **created** him; male and female He **created** them.... ^{2:3}Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had **created** and made.*

God's Kind of Creation (A Very Short Word Study)

When we talk about creating something, we're generally referring to what people produce. We admire a landscaper's creatively designed garden; we brag on our kids' creative projects; we enjoy a choreographer's dance creations. I personally love the way sports writers create impact with their words. (I always read the sports section.)

Genesis, however, uses a special word when God creates something, a word that refers exclusively to Him. That makes sense, because God's kind of creation is unique. While people must use what God has already made to create something, nobody supplies God with anything. He requires no outside resources – the Master of Creation creates all else from within Himself.

Moses and Merisms (A Very Short Grammar Lesson)

When Moses says that God created “the heavens and the earth.” He's using a figure of speech called “merism.” Merisms state a topic's boundaries but actually refer to everything within those boundaries. We speak the same way. If I say my uncle works “day and night” I mean he works *all the time*. When Moses says “heavens and earth” he means that God created everything which heaven and earth contain. *Everything*. All matter – on the earth, in the earth, around the earth – came from God.

Reading Between the Lines – Three Thoughts about Creation

First, a creation cannot precede its creator. If God made everything, that means God was there first, before the “everything.” Some Ancient Near Eastern religions (and many modern thinkers) believe God came second. Ancient religions say the sea or the sun brought forth gods; Marx (and Freud) thought God an illusion produced by mankind to help them feel safe by comforting themselves with false hopes.

The Genesis record, if true, allows no such conclusions. God is the developer and the master of creation. He was there before He spoke creation into existence.

Second, this Creator brings about profound change. Read on in Genesis and you’ll see newness spring into being. Empty spaces fill up. Order replaces chaos. Light invades darkness. It’s wild ... yet controlled. It’s miraculous (and by that I mean way beyond human ability).

Third, God the Creator produces things never before seen. We have no way to predict or anticipate what God will *do* next. But, as we see elsewhere in the bible (e.g. 1 Samuel 15:29, Psalm 102:25-27, Malachi 3:6) while God creates changes that surprise us, *He* does not change. His character stays consistent; His values are dependable. That’s our stability. We can’t predict God’s actions, but we can count on the consistent goodness of His heart.

*We can't predict God's actions,
but we can predict the goodness of His heart.*

Explore Your Own Beliefs and Behaviors

- Genesis 1 showcases God's mastery over His creation. Do you think God still has mastery over the world He created?
- When God speaks, surprising things came into being. How do you deal with surprise? Do sudden shifts unsettle you or delight you? Are you comfortable with change? (Some of us are ... some of us aren't.)
- If God’s unpredictable deeds unsettle you, how do calm yourself? How do you try to provide your own predictability?
- How would your life change if you were certain that God’s heart is absolutely and predictably good?

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