

Text: Genesis 1:20-2:3

Section 1

20Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens." 21God 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; and God saw that it was good. 22God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day. 24Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so. 25God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:20-25)

God made all the animals, and instructed them to reproduce "after their kind." The presence of this command from the very beginning should be sufficient to dismiss attempts to harmonize Genesis and Darwinian evolution. Moreover, the Levitical Law clearly forbids the crossbreeding of both plants and animals.

19'You are to keep My statutes. You shall not breed together two kinds of your cattle; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together. (Leviticus 19:19)

In short, God made specific species (or at least genera) of plants and animals from the very beginning. While a greater or lesser degree of variation has occurred among plant and animal life since creation, no new "kinds" have appeared, and we are not to tamper with the created order in an attempt to "improve" upon what God has made. In light of this, the current proliferation of "genetically modified" plants and animals, and most especially the creation of "chimeras" (for example, pigs with human blood, or the latest: cow/human hybrid embryos), must be seen as an abomination before God.

Section 2

26Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; 30and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so. 31God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (Genesis 1:1-31)

God said, "Let Us make man..." God's reference to Himself in the plural has almost universally been interpreted by Christians as an indication of the plurality of Persons in the Godhead. God is One, but exists in Three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit. The New Testament plainly identifies all Three as God.

30"I and the Father are one." (John 10:30)

26"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, (John 15:26)

Man is made in God's image. This refers not so much to our bodily form as to our possession of an eternal soul, having the capacity for fellowship and communion with God, and responsibility before God to obey Him and to give an account for our obedience. Paul speaks of the regeneration that occurs when one becomes a Christian as the restoration of the image of God in him.

9Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him-- 11a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:9-11)

17So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the

practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. 20But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (Ephesians 4:17-24)

While God evidently filled the earth with plants, animals, fish, birds, and insects, He made one man and one woman. Thus, all of mankind is descended from this first pair. This fact should serve as a rebuttal to all that claim the superiority of one "race" over the others. All are descended from Adam.

26and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, 27that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.' (Acts 17:26-28)

Unfortunately, when Adam sinned, He passed on the sinful nature to each of his descendants. We are, by birth and nature, sinners, abominable before God, and in desperate need of a Savior to prevent our justly being cast into Hell forever.

21For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

12Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—(Romans 5:12)

Man is to rule over creation, exercising dominion, not domination. The first term refers to faithful rule and government under God, the second refers to man trying to usurp God's place as Lord and King of all creation, and unlawfully trying to subject all of creation and other people's to his will. God warned the Israelites to, when they demanded a king, ensure that he read, studied, believed, and followed God's Law. When they had kings that did this, Israel enjoyed peace and prosperity. When they had kings that were rebellious, they suffered war, want, and death.

14"When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' 15you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16"Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17"He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. 18"Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19"It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, 20that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel. (Deuteronomy 17:14-20)

The establishment of earthly governments among men is part of God's intent for our dominion, and we are to obey those in authority as an act of obedience to God.

1Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. 2Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 3For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; 4for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. 5Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. 6For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. 7Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. 8Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. (Romans 13:1-8)

However, when those authorities overstep their bounds and force us to choose between obedience to God and obedience to man, we are to obey God at all costs.

29But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)

Notice that God gave Man fruits and vegetables for food, but not animals. God did not specifically give man animals for food until after the Flood, although it is possible and even likely that men began to eat meat soon after the Fall.

1And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. **2**"The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. **3**"Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant. **4**"Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. **5**"Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man.

6"Whoever sheds man's blood,
By man his blood shall be shed,
For in the image of God
He made man.

7"As for you, be fruitful and multiply;
Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it." (Genesis 9:1-7)

Why was there not carnivorous behavior before the Fall, because death did not enter the world until man sinned. It was sin that introduced both physical and spiritual death into the world, and that resulted in our need for a Savior.

23For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

Section 3

Have any of you actually read Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*? I have. You would think that, for all the veneration that this man has received, his book would be a model of scientific method and scholarly acumen. You would, however, be mistaken. Instead, it's just a book full of suppositions based on assumptions of atheism and uniformitarianism—I'm not sure it even rises to the level of what scientists would now term a "theory." To me, such thinking is the result of the rejection of God and His Word, even the first chapters of Genesis. Paul tells us in Romans 1 that the rejection of God leads to foolishness, which is what much of the academic establishment now spews forth.

18For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **19**because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. **20**For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. **21**For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. **22**Professing to be wise, they became fools, **23**and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. **24**Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. **25**For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. **26**For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, **27**and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. **28**And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, **29**being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, **30**slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, **31**without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; **32**and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. (Romans 1:18-32)

Man is sinful, and has rejected God and His Law from the very beginning. Our sin makes us despicable in God's eyes, and He will reject us unless we repent—turn away from sin—and believe on Him. He promises to accept—to save—all that call on Him in faith!

37Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" **38**Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39**"For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." (Acts 2:37-39)

9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; **10**for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. **11**For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." **12**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; **13**for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:9-13)

Section 4

1Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. 2By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. (Genesis 2:1-3)

Returning now to the book of Genesis, we see that God completed the work of Creation, and rested on the seventh day. Again, God did not need six days to do the work of Creation, nor did He need a day of rest. He worked for six days and rested on the seventh to demonstrate for us a pattern of life that He intended for our physical and spiritual health and happiness. Conversely, when He commanded the Israelites to work for six days and rest the seventh, He intended the seven-day week to have as one purpose the commemoration of His act of Creation. We are never to forget that everything that exists does so because He created it.

8"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9"Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.11"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:8-11)

But, what are Christians to make of the Sabbath law? Has it not been abrogated in the New Testament era? The following passages certainly seem to indicate this:

8See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. 9For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; 11and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.16Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--17things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. (Colossians 2:8-17)

1Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. 2One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. 3The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. 4Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. 5One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. 6He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. 7For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; 8for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. (Romans 14:1-7)

Beyond this, the author of Hebrews tells us that for the Christian, observance of the "Sabbath" is a continual observance in that we have rested from our own works, trusting wholly in Him instead for our salvation.

1Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. 2For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said,

"AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH,

THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,"

although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS";

5and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST."

6Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, 7He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before,

"TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE,

DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS."

8For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9So there remains a Sabbath rest for

the people of God. 10For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. 11Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. 12For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. 14Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:1-16)

So, perhaps a one day in seven rest is not required of us in the same way that it was of the Israelites. However, assembling of ourselves together as a Church is still commanded.

23Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:23-25)

Assembling on the first day of the week has been the practice of the Christian Church since the very earliest days of the faith. Remember, though, that Sunday was a work day in the Roman era, so the churches usually met at night, after work. It is therefore not surprising that Eutychus, perhaps tired from the day's work, fell asleep during Paul's sermon and fell from the window!

6We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days. 7On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. 8There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. 9And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. 10But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." 11When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. 12They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted. (Acts 20:6-12)

So, what are we to make of the Sabbath? Shall we observe it, or shall we not? I'll begin by repeating that God instituted the six-day work week not only to commemorate His work of Creation, but also for our benefit.

27Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. (Luke 2:27)

It therefore seems wise for us to, insofar as it is possible in a time in which the world does not regard God or His Law as holy, set aside one day (preferably Sunday) for worship, service to God, and rest. When our earthly responsibilities dictate that we work on Sunday I do not think we sin by doing so (as long as we do not forsake regular assembling with the church), but this is not the ideal. When society was more pervasively Christian only works of necessity and mercy were performed on Sunday, and the restoration of this should be a goal as we evangelize and seek to win the world for Jesus Christ.

This is one of several instances in which the requirements for observance of Old Testament Law in the New Testament era are a bit unclear, at least to our sinful minds. Whether and how to observe something like the Sabbath law, then, becomes a question of conscience and motivation. I want to recall a portion of Romans 14 that we read a moment ago.

5One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. 6He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. 7For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; 8for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. (Romans 14:5-7)

"**We are the Lord's.**" Let us never forget that we are God's slaves, purchased for Him with the great price of Christ's blood. Whenever you encounter a "questionable" matter like this in Scripture I would caution you to consider your own motivation. Do you think "how can I best serve God, my Lord, Master, and King, in this area?" Or, do you think "What does the Bible say I have to do?," How much 'leeway' do I have?," or "How far can I go and still get away with it?" The former is the proper Christian approach. The latter demonstrates a desire to "have it both ways," enjoying earthly and even sinful pleasures as far as possible while still retaining "fire insurance." Folks, "fire insurance" Christianity does not exist. God is not our Insurer, and He certainly doesn't owe us anything. He is Holy. He is Lord. He is Master. He is King. Those that are truly saved, that truly love Him, are those that seek not "insurance," and not autonomy, but obedience.

21"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." (John 14:21)

Let me close by reminding you of the Great Commandments in the Law, as identified by the Lord Jesus.

37And He said to him, **"YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'** **38**"This is the great and foremost commandment. **39**"The second is like it, **'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'** **40**"On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:38-40)

Ask yourself this: "Do my actions arise out of conscious obedience to one or both of these commandments, or out of a self-serving spirit? The Christian must seek obedience to Him in all things. God first, others second, self last.