

[Slide 1] Re:Creation – God’s activity in a chaotic world

Gen.1:1-3

Rom. 8:18-23

[Slide 2] 2020 a very confusing and disorienting year... (Ps.82:5 “The foundations of the earth are shaken”) = Chaotic world!

Uncertain times:

- Covid-19
- Economic recession
- Global Warming
- Geo-political change

Is God in control? What is He doing in the midst of the uncertainty?

Gen:1:1-3 (Poetic account of creation...)

[Slide 3] v.1 In the beginning God **created** (*bara'* = to create from nothing) the heavens and the earth

[Slide 4] But: v.2:

- Earth **without form and void** (Heb. *tohu wa-bohu* = wasteland/solitude/emptiness and void/waste [Phrase has come into European languages such as French, German, Estonian, Hungarian and Armenian, as “**confusion**” or “**commotion**”])
- **Darkness upon the face of the deep** (Heb. *tehom* = primeval ocean/deep, symbolising chaos)

[Slide 5] Contrast Isa.45:18 (all words same as Gen.1): “For this is what the LORD says – he who created [*bara'*] the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; **he did not create [*bara'*] it to be empty [*tohu*], but formed it to be inhabited...**”

What has happened? Why is there darkness and chaos?

[Slide 6] “**Gap**” theory: Fall of Lucifer takes place between v.1 and v.2

[Slide 7] Fall of Lucifer results in:

Darkness (Lucifer = “light-bearer” >>> the Devil, Satan)

[Slide 8] Destruction of God’s creation

Chaotic, broken universe:

[Slide 9] Is Genesis 1 a **re-creation** of the earth?

Two words used in Gen.1 for God’s creative activity:

- *Bara'* – to create from nothing [e.g. vv.1, 21, 27]
- *Asah* – to make from pre-existing material [e.g. vv. 7, 16, 25])

[Slide 10] v.2b And the Spirit of God **was hovering** over the waters (what was involved in this “hovering” – a relaxed floating above the waters [like an albatross] or something else?)

- [Slide 11] *Rachaph* (shake) >>> Pi’el (intensive) form: *Richēph* (shake or hover tremulously / shimmer?) – only other use of this word in its intensive form = Deut.32:11 “Like an eagle that stirs up its nest and **hovers** over its young...”
- [Slide 12] **“Tremulous hovering” of Holy Spirit indicates intensity/vibrancy/ incubation/calling forth of life and activity**
 - ✓ Hovering in the **darkness** (light not yet recreated)
 - ✓ Hovering in midst of **chaos** (what previously was has gone)
 - ✓ Hovering to incubate **new life/new creation** (a new thing [life not yet created] >>> Spirit is God’s **incubating agent**, facilitating **potential** of creation)

[Slide 13] v.3 And God said “Let there be light...” >>> “And there was...” = **creative word**: “BE!”>>> “AND THERE WAS...”

[Slide 14] From darkness to light; from *tohu wa-bohu* to (re)creation

[Slide 15] Rom.8:18-23

Part of Paul’s “I have a dream” chapter: Double theme of “present sufferings” and God’s process of re-creation)

Link with Genesis 1: Theme of creation/recreation referred to 4 times in passage

v.18 Present sufferings (*tohu wa-bohu*) >>> glory that will be revealed in **us...** **Note: “in us” before “in the Creation”**

[Slide 16] Something tremendous is going on! v.19

- Creation waits in eager expectation... (*apo-kara-dokia* = lit. “to watch [persistently] with the head thrust forward” = “standing on tip-toe”
- “The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight **of the sons of God coming into their own.**” (J.B.Phillips translation) Note: **first** sons of God coming into their own; **then** liberation of creation
- **[Slide 17] Why this eager expectation?** v.20 Creation subject to frustration (*mataiotēs* = emptiness, futility) >>> equivalent of *tohu wa-bohu*
- **[Slide 18]** v.21 **Hope:** Creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay (= slavery to corruption, decay [pollution]) >>> brought into glorious liberty of children of God (again: **first** children of God; **then** the liberation of creation)

[Slide 19]: Rom.8:22-23: two themes here

- **[Slide 20]** v.22 Creation groans (together) in pains of childbirth (together)... (*su(n)-stenazō, sun-ōdinō*) – pregnant with new life (pain, but new life coming)
- **[Slide 21]** v.23 Not only so, but we ourselves... who have the firstfruits of the Spirit (work of Spirit incubating new life): firstfruits = foretaste of coming harvest

[Slide 22] Note the relationship between our redemption (firstfruits of the Spirit) and the redemption of all creation:

- Awaiting the adoption of Sons (“the sons of God coming into their own”) – our own redemption is **still in process** (now but not yet)
- **[Slide 23]** 2 Cor.5:17 – if anyone is in Christ, they are a **new creation**....
- **[Slide 24]** 2 Cor.5:18 God...**reconciled us to himself** through Christ and gave us the **ministry of reconciliation** (we have work to do...)
- **[Slide 25]** Process of recreation begins in God’s people

[Slide 26] Process of re-creation is not just future but also here and now:

- **[Slide 27]** Phil. 2:13 “For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good pleasure”; but also co-workers with God in recreation... (**we have work to do!**)
- **[Slide 28]** Rev.21:7 – “Behold, I am creating all things new” (present tense; not waiting until after the second coming!)

[Slide 29] Re:Creation – from **tohu wa-bohu** to New Heavens and New Earth