

Beginnings - Day 2

Grok revision of my sermon: *Beginnings-Day 2*

Revised Sermon

Introduction

Good morning! Today, we continue our journey through Genesis 1, exploring the historical account of God's creation. We're diving into Day Two, found in Genesis 1:6-8, titled "The Waters Above." This passage is brief but profound, revealing God's creative power in ways that spark our imagination and deepen our awe. Proverbs 25:2 reminds us, *"It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out"* (ESV). So, let's search together, not to unravel every mystery, but to glimpse the majesty of our Creator. My goal is to present this clearly, blending the text with some speculative insights, so we can marvel at what God accomplished "under the hood" on Day Two.

Review of Day One

Last time, we explored Day One, where God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1). Let's recap briefly:

1. The "heavens" likely include the spiritual realm (the *"third heaven,"* as Paul calls it in 2 Corinthians 12:2) and outer space (the "second heaven").
2. The earth was formed, covered entirely by water, with a foundation implied by Job 38:4-7, where God speaks of laying its cornerstone.
3. Darkness covered the deep, and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters (Genesis 1:2).
4. God created light, marking the first evening and morning, suggesting the earth was already rotating.

By the end of Day One, picture a water-covered planet in darkness, possibly with a frozen surface due to the extreme cold of space—around -458°F, near absolute zero. This sets the stage for Day Two, where God does something extraordinary.

Day Two - The Expanse

Let's read Genesis 1:6-8 (NASB):

Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

This is the shortest account of a creation day in Genesis 1, yet it's packed with significance. God creates one thing: an expanse (Hebrew: *raqia*), which He calls "heaven." This expanse separates the waters below from the waters above. But what does this mean? The Hebrew word *raqia* suggests a spread-out surface, like a vault or arch. Many scholars believe this refers to the first heaven—the

atmosphere we breathe. Others think it's outer space, since Genesis 1:14-17 places the sun, moon, and stars in an expanse. But since Genesis 1:1 already mentions the "heavens" (plural), including outer space, I believe Day Two focuses on the atmosphere, the sky above us.

The text tells us three key things:

1. The expanse is created in the midst of the waters.
2. It separates the waters vertically—waters below from waters above.
3. God calls it "heaven," marking its role in His creation.

This raises questions: What are the "waters above"? How does an expanse fit in the middle of water? Let's explore a possible scenario, staying rooted in the text while using our God-given imagination.

Speculative Insights: The Waters Above

Imagine the earth at the end of Day One: a water planet, possibly with a frozen surface due to the cold of space. There's no atmosphere—no air, no insulation. The Spirit of God hovers over this icy deep, ready to act. On Day Two, God says, *"Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters."*

Here's a way to picture it:

1. **The Frozen Shell:** The extreme cold (-458°F or lower) could have frozen the ocean's surface, forming a global ice shell. A sphere, like this ice shell, is incredibly strong, like an arch supporting weight. This shell spins with the earth, as Day One's evening and morning suggest rotation.
2. **Creating the Expanse:** God places the expanse—likely the atmosphere—in the midst of the waters. But how? Air is lighter than water and would rise, like bubbles in a fish tank escaping to the surface. The ice shell solves this: if God injects air beneath the ice, it's trapped, unable to escape into space. This air spreads out under the ice, forming the atmosphere.
3. **Separating the Waters:** As the atmosphere expands, it pushes against the ice shell above and the liquid water below. The "waters below" become the oceans, while the "waters above" remain the frozen shell. The expanse—our atmosphere—sits between them, a breathable sky.
4. **Forming the Atmosphere:** Where does the air come from? The oceans themselves could be the source. Water (H₂O) contains hydrogen and oxygen, and other dissolved gases in the sea could contribute nitrogen and more. Through divine processes—perhaps chemical or electrical, guided by the Spirit's hovering—God transforms liquid water into gases, lowering the ocean level and creating space for the atmosphere. As 2 Peter 3:5 says, *"The earth was formed out of water and by water"* (NASB), hinting at water's role in God's creative work.
5. **Stabilizing the Ice Shell:** Gravity and the earth's rotation keep the ice shell suspended. A sphere's symmetry means gravity pulls equally on all sides, holding it in place like a satellite orbiting the earth. The atmosphere's pressure adds support, and the earth's spin stabilizes it further.

Now, I'll be honest—this is speculation, but it's grounded in the text. The "waters above" aren't clouds, as there's no atmosphere yet to hold water vapor. The expanse isn't land, which appears on Day Three. By picturing an ice shell and an atmosphere forming beneath it, we make sense of the

expanse separating waters vertically. Why don't we see this ice shell today? Some suggest it collapsed during the flood, a topic we'll explore later in Genesis.

Theological Reflection

What does Day Two teach us about God? First, it reveals His power. Creating an atmosphere is no small feat—it's a delicate balance of gases, pressure, and temperature, perfectly suited for life. Yet God speaks, and it's done. Second, it shows His wisdom. The expanse prepares the earth for life, setting the stage for plants, animals, and humans. Third, it reflects His purpose. By separating the waters, God orders creation, turning chaos into a habitable world.

The brevity of this account reminds us of God's humility. He doesn't boast about His work, yet the angels likely sang for joy, as Job 38:7 suggests, witnessing His handiwork. Day Two is like the unseen foundation of a house—essential but often unnoticed. Every breath you take is a gift from this day.

Application

So, what does this mean for us? Here are three takeaways:

1. **Trust God's Process:** Day Two feels mysterious, even incomplete, yet it's vital for life. Sometimes, God works "under the hood" in your life—trust that He's preparing something good, even when you can't see it.
2. **Marvel at Creation:** The air you breathe, the sky above—these are God's handiwork from Day Two. Take a moment this week to look up and thank Him for His gifts.
3. **Search with Humility:** Like kings searching out God's concealed things (Proverbs 25:2), we explore creation with wonder, not pride. Our speculations point us to worship, not certainty.

Conclusion

Genesis 1:6-8 may be short, but it's a window into God's immense power and creativity. Whether or not the "waters above" were an ice shell, the expanse reminds us that our God is awesome—ordering the chaos, breathing life into the world, and sustaining us every day.

Let's close with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, we stand in awe of Your creation. Thank You for the air we breathe, the sky above, and Your wisdom in ordering the world. Help us trust Your work in our lives and worship You with all we are. In Jesus' name, Amen.