



GENESIS 32 TLV

25 SO JACOB REMAINED ALL BY HIMSELF. THEN A MAN WRESTLED WITH HIM UNTIL THE BREAK OF DAWN. 26 WHEN HE SAW THAT HE HAD NOT OVERCOME HIM, HE STRUCK THE SOCKET OF HIS HIP, SO HE DISLOCATED THE SOCKET OF JACOB'S HIP WHEN HE WRESTLED WITH HIM. 27 THEN HE SAID, "LET ME GO, FOR THE DAWN HAS BROKEN."

PROCESSING SCRIPTURE

- INTERPRETATION
- QUESTIONS
- CONTRADICTIONS
- DISAGREEMENT

A. Interpretation

1. PaRDeS vs. SeDRaP

B. Questions

1. Wrestling
2. Questions got us here...if we stop asking questions, we start to die

C. Contradictions

1. Avoidance vs. engagement

D. Disagreement

1. Can we be friends?
2. How can 2 walk together unless they are agreed?

“THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN FOR US BUT NOT TO US”

DR. JOHN WALTON

GREEK VS HEBREW

TWO WAYS OF THINKING, A WORLD APART

WORDS

GREEK

- EXPRESS TRUTH
USING WORDS,
IDEAS, DEFINITIONS
- PREFER PROSE,
OUTLINES, LISTS,
BULLET POINTS

HEBREW

- EXPRESS TRUTH
USING WORD
PICTURES AND
STORIES
- PREFER POETRY,
IMAGERY,
SYMBOLISM

- Hence our pursuit of the Hebrew language

NUMBERS

GREEK

- SEE NUMBERS PRIMARILY AS QUANTITY

HEBREW

- SEE NUMBERS PRIMARILY AS QUALITY OR SYMBOL

LIFE

GREEK

- FOCUSES ON INDIVIDUAL

HEBREW

- FOCUSES ON COMMUNITY

ETERNAL LIFE

GREEK

- DETACHED FROM THIS WORLD
- SOMETHING THAT STARTS WHEN THIS WORLD IS OVER

HEBREW

- IN THIS WORLD (AND EVERY)
- LIFE LIVED IN HARMONY WITH GOD

ERROR & SIN

GREEK

- WRONG BELIEF OR INCORRECT THINKING
- EMPHASIZES WHAT A PERSON KNOWS

HEBREW

- WRONG BEHAVIOR
- EMPHASIZES WHAT A PERSON DOES

DESCRIBING GOD

GREEK

- FOCUSES ON THE NATURE OF THE BEING
- WHAT/WHO IS THIS GOD?

HEBREW

- FOCUSES ON THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP
- HOW DOES THIS GOD RELATE?

“There is no concept of a ‘natural’ world in ancient Near East thinking. The dichotomy between natural and supernatural is a relatively recent one...Nothing happened independently of deity. The gods did not ‘intervene’ because that would assume that there was a world of events outside of them that they could step into and out of. There are no ‘miracles’ (in the sense of deviating from that which is ‘natural’), there were only signs of the deity’s activity (sometimes favorable, sometimes not).

- Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*

FAITH

GREEK

- FAITH IS INTELLECTUAL
- CREEDS, DOCTRINES, BELIEF STATEMENTS
- PROOF TEXT TO SUPPORT BELIEF

HEBREW

- FAITH IS RELATIONAL
- EXPERIENCES OF AND WITH GOD
- NO ATTEMPT TO RATIONALIZE

ULTIMATE TRUTH

GREEK

- TRUTH IS RATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC
- FOCUS IN SCRIPTURE IS ON HOW IT WAS DONE
- BELIEF COMES AS ONE THINKS THROUGH VALIDATION

HEBREW

- TRUTH IS RELIGIOUS/ EXPERIENTIAL
- FOCUS IN SCRIPTURE IS ON WHAT WAS DONE AND WHO
- BELIEF COMES THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE

TRUTH OVER TIME

GREEK

- TRUTH IS STATIC AND UNCHANGING

HEBREW

- TRUTH IS UNFOLDING

We must be aware of the inherent danger of imposing our own cultural ideas on the text.

“Sound interpretation proceeds from the belief that the divine and human authors were competent communicators and that we can therefore comprehend their communication. But to do so, we must respect the integrity of the author by refraining from replacing his message with our own.”

- Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*

In summary, the ancient Israelites were closer in their thinking to Egyptians or Babylonians than they would be to us.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- WHAT IS THE LEVEL AND NATURE OF GOD'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE WORLD?
- WHAT IS GOD'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE COSMOS? IS HE MANIFESTED WITHIN IT? IS HE CONTROLLING IT FROM THE OUTSIDE?
- IS THERE SUCH A THING AS THE "NATURAL" WORLD?
- IS THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION THE DESCRIPTION OF A MANUFACTURING PROCESS OR THE COMMUNICATION OF A CONCEPT?

GENESIS 1:1 TLV

1 IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. 2 NOW THE EARTH WAS CHAOS AND WASTE, DARKNESS WAS ON THE SURFACE OF THE DEEP, AND THE RUACH ELOHIM WAS HOVERING UPON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER.

- Will get to "in the beginning" in a second.
- Now the earth...surface of the deep...
- Creation ex nihilo?
- "the beginning" refers to a period of time, not a point in time

CREATED

WHAT DOES IT MEAN
TO EXIST?

- Does material, physical make-up constitute existence? e.g. company & chair
- In ANE thought, existence is functional, not merely material
- E.g. saxophone

GENESIS 1:1

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

B'REISHEET BARA ELOHIM ET HASHAMAYIM
V'HAARETZ

IN THE BEGINNING, GOD CREATED THE
HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

CREATED

בָּרָא

BARA: TO SHAPE, CREATE

TRANSLITERATION: BARA

DEFINITION: TO SHAPE, CREATE

- Occurs about 50 times in TNK
- Deity is always subject or implied subject (creation is a divine activity)
- No occurrence demands a material object, but every occurrence demands a functional object (purpose for which it is created is the focus)
- ANE concept of creation = function
- I DO BELIEVE that God created everything materially
- curriculum, company, committee

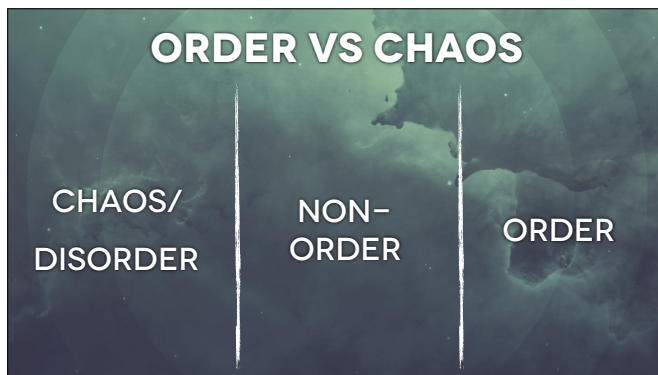
GENESIS 1:1

וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תוֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחָשֶׁךְ עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ
אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם

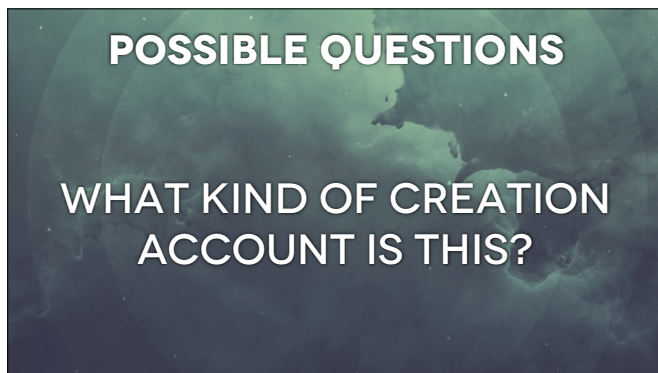
NOW THE EARTH WAS CHAOS AND WASTE,
DARKNESS WAS ON THE SURFACE OF THE
DEEP, AND THE RUACH ELOHIM WAS
HOVERING UPON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER



- Occurs 20 times
- David Tsumura translates as “unproductive”
- Functionless, without purpose, unordered



- These status' do not have a moral quality, but are status' of functionality or non-functionality



- If Genesis 1 is not telling a story of material creation, then what kind of creation is this?

GENESIS 1:5 TLV

5 AND GOD CALLED THE LIGHT DAY, AND THE
DARKNESS HE CALLED NIGHT. AND THE
EVENING AND THE MORNING WERE THE FIRST
DAY.

- Why didn't God call the light... "light"?
 - It's not about light, but a *period* of light
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