

1-1-2010

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Recommended Citation

Magness, Lee (2010) "In the Beginning," *Leaven*: Vol. 18: Iss. 3, Article 10.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/leaven/vol18/iss3/10>

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In the Beginning:
from Genesis to Jesus, from Creation to Christ
LEE MAGNESS

This reading traces some compelling trajectories from the beginning of God's revelation in Creation through the culmination of that revelation in Christ by comparing quotations in Genesis 1 with quotations in the Gospels and Revelation. As configured here, one reader narrates the Genesis material (N), another reader narrates the Gospel (1), and a third speaks the words of Jesus (2).

N In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1.1)

1 *In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things were made through him,
and without him was not any thing made that was made.* (John 1.1–3)

DAY ONE

N The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. (Gen 1.2–5)

2 *I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.*

1 *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.*
(John 8.12; 1.4–5, 9)

DAY TWO

N And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. (Gen 1.6–8)

2 *Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,
but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him
will never be thirsty again.
The water that I will give him will become in him
a spring of water welling up to eternal life.* (John 4.13–14)

DAY THREE

N And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. (Gen 1.9–13)

2 *I am the bread of life;*

*whoever comes to me shall not hunger,
and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.*

I am the bread of life.

*This is the bread that comes down from heaven,
so that one may eat of it and not die.*

I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

Anyone who eats of this bread will live forever.

And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.

(John 6.35, 48, 50–51)

1 *And he took bread, and when he had given thanks,
he broke it and gave it to them, saying,*

2 *“This is my body, which is given for you.”*

1 *And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying,*

2 *“This cup poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”* (Luke 22.19–20)

2 *I am the true vine.*

I am the vine; you are the branches.

*Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit,
for apart from me you can do nothing.* (John 15.1, 5)

DAY FOUR

N And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. (Gen 1.14–19)

1 *And after six days Jesus led them up a high mountain by themselves.*

*And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun,
and his clothes became white as light.* (Matt 17.1–2)

And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it,

for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. (Rev 21.23)

2 *I, Jesus, am the bright morning star.* (Rev 22.16)

DAY FIVE

N And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. (Gen 1.20–25)

1 ***Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!***
I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.
Behold, the Lamb of God! (John 1.29, 32, 36)

Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered.
And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders
I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain,
And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures
and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb,
saying with a loud voice,
“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom
and might and honor and glory and blessing!” (Rev 5.5–12)

DAY SIX

N Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. (Gen 1.26–28)

1 ***And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,***
and we have seen his glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1.14)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (Col 1.15)

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. (Heb 1.3)

N And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. (Gen 1.28–30)

2 *I am the good shepherd.*

*The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
I am the good shepherd.* (John 10.11, 14)

1 *For you were straying like sheep,*

*but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
And when the chief Shepherd appears,
you will receive the unfading crown of glory.* (1 Peter 2.25, 5.4)

*Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,
equip you with everything good that you may do his will,
working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ,
to whom be glory forever and ever.* (Heb 13.20–21)

N And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (Gen 1.31)

1 *And behold, a voice from heaven said,*

2 *“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”* (Matt 3.17)

1 *Behold, my servant whom I have chosen,*

my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. (Matt 12.18)

Behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said,

2 *“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”* (Matt. 17.5)

1 *For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.* (Col 1.19)

DAY SEVEN

N Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work he had done in creation. (Gen 2.1–3)

2 *Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

(Matt 11.28–30)

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