

God's Grace in Creation

In Genesis chapter 1, we read that God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless, void, chaotic, and darkness covered it until God said, *"Let there be light"*. The process of creation of the world as we know it began. Everything was transformed, order introduced, optimum conditions for plant and animal life were established. At the end of each stage we read that *"God saw that it was good"*. When all was completed, He saw everything that He had made and it was very good.

God, our Creator, has given us powers of observation and senses by which we can appreciate all that He has made so that we too can find pleasure in it. We might consider God modest in His appraisal of His work; perhaps we would have chosen words such as 'excellent' or 'wonderful'.

In our everyday lives, we experience and depend on the precise conditions He has provided – air to breathe, water to drink, light and darkness to give us work and rest, the crucial gravity between earth and other objects in space that keeps everything in balance, and many other things. Every day we can observe something of His love in creation and at special times have the opportunity and privilege of seeing more of His created works – mountains, lakes and seas, forests, the great plains, the beauties of wildlife both plant and animal, so that our senses are overwhelmed.

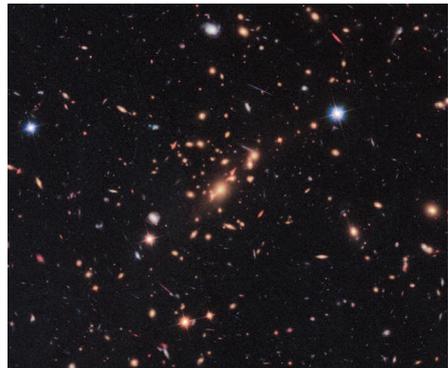
Beauty Reflected in the Bible

We may sing of God's love in creation and it is part of His grace that He

created such a wonderful environment for us. It could have been very different, just functional, adequate but nothing else. Instead we see that it fulfils our needs and much more: we can share the pleasure of the Creator in what He has made. We can let the Psalms express this for us:

When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? (Psalm 8:3–4).

Don't we look in wonder at the sky on a clear night and see the moon, planets and stars shining in all their magnificence? With the naked eye we can see only a few thousand stars but we are told there are millions in just



our galaxy and trillions beyond. Yet how modestly we are told about their creation!

He made the stars also... (Genesis 1:16).

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat (Psalm 19:1-6).

All creation is a silent witness to the Creator, although so many refuse to acknowledge Him. As we read in Paul's letter:

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they [mankind] are without excuse (Romans 1:20).

God's Care

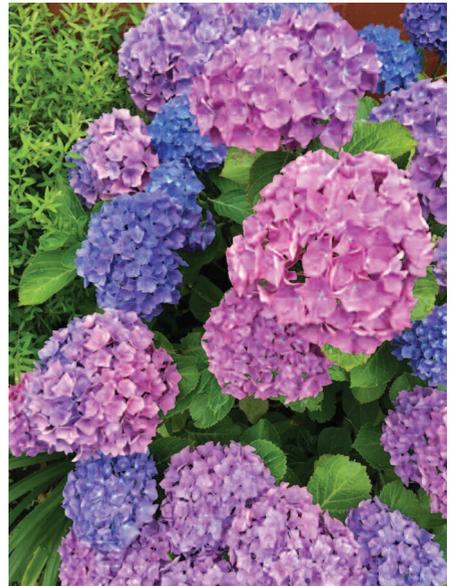
We also see the care of a loving Creator, who created a beautiful world and everything that we need to live:

He sends the springs into the valleys; they flow among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. By them the birds of the heavens have their home; they sing among the branches. He waters the hills from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works. He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the service of man, that He may bring forth food from the

earth, and wine that makes glad the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread which strengthens man's heart (Psalm 104:10-15).

The Lord Jesus spoke of the perfection of creation when he compared the ordinary flowers of the field with the best clothes that man could design:

So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? (Matthew 6:28-30).



The flowers give glory to God just by being as He created them. The birds neither sow nor reap and yet God's grace is shown in the fact that He provides for all of His creation. Plants

grow by scientific processes He devised, providing food for those that feed on them.

Designed with Purpose

Any appreciation of creation would be incomplete without realising its ultimate destiny. God created the heavens and earth with a specific purpose, one which He has shared with us in His Word:

For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the LORD, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:18).

He created the world to be filled with people who will praise and worship Him for the wonderful love and power He has shown.

Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself; the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath (v22-23).

This will be fulfilled in His kingdom, ruled over by the Lord Jesus Christ. Reading Psalm 72 is a wonderful experience, seeing how the wonders of creation will be turned into a perfect world of justice, peace and contentment – all to the glory of God. As an example:

His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed.

Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things! And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory (Psalm 72:17-19).

With our finite minds we cannot take in the vastness of space and of the universe, of which our solar system is a tiny part. What we can and do know is that God was there from eternity, bringing it about, and we can marvel at its beauty, its order and the joy it gives to us.

Only people by their actions spoil it, and as we are aware could bring about its destruction. Thankfully that was never the intention of God Who created all things. Through the grace of God in Christ we have the opportunity of sharing in the great future of this world.

God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. Then He Who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful" (Revelation 21:4-5).

John Boulton



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