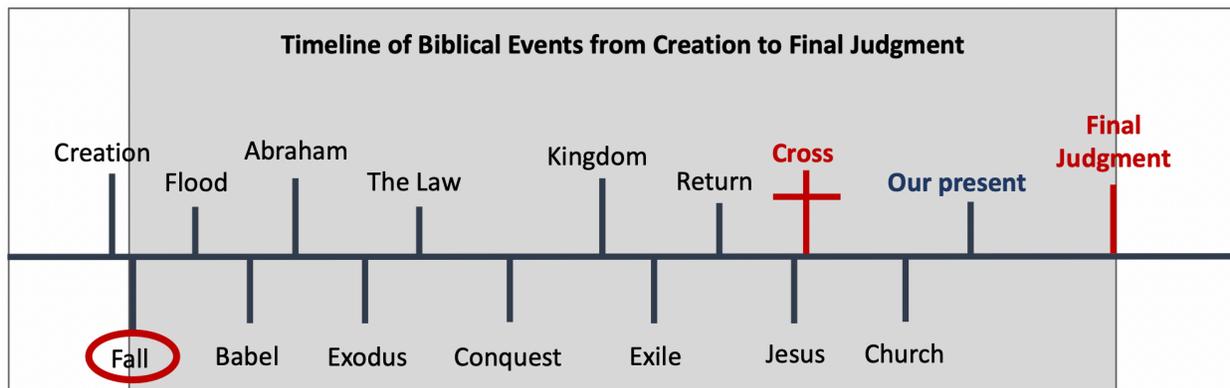


Lesson 2: Pagan View of Origins

Previously...

In the first lesson, we looked at the creation account in Genesis. We looked at the **three divine institutions** that God put in place to help man succeed at the role that God assigned him: that of an under-lord, with the authority and responsibility to take care of the earth under God's direction.

We saw there was a **Creator-creature distinction** where on the one hand, there is a personal, eternal Creator—God; and on the other hand, there is what He created: man and nature. We also saw how God put in man, some limited and finite copies of His own characteristics. That is the biblical view of creation. In today's lesson, we want to look at the non-biblical worldview, or what we call the pagan worldview, and how it contrasts sharply with God's view.



The Spirit Beings

To further our understanding of origins from God's point of view, we need to look at one other aspect of the world God created. When He created the earth, the Bible tells us that He created without any pre-existing material and He did so just by speaking. But, were the earth, man and nature the first things that God created? No.

The Bible says that when God was creating everything in Genesis 1–2, some beings were watching! These were the spirit beings who at the time of the creation of the earth, were already in existence.

This is what God said to a man named Job:

Job 38:4–7

- ⁴ "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Tell me, if you know so much.
⁵ Who determined its dimensions
and stretched out the surveying line?"

- ⁶ What supports its foundations,
and who laid its cornerstone
⁷ as the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?

This passage tells us that some time before God began creating the world, He first created the spirit beings. We don't know if they were created hours, weeks, or years before God created the world.



The morning stars and angels are examples of spirit beings. Who are they? The Bible isn't full of details about these spirit beings but it does give us some information. (Often, the Bible does not tell us everything we want to know about any particular topic but God provides us what we need to know for now.)

In Scripture, these angels are called by different names. For example: cherubim, seraphim, angels, archangels and morning stars. As a group, they are called multitudes, hosts or stars. These spirit beings can think and feel. In the Bible, we are told the names of some angels, like Gabriel and Michael.

Spirits are invisible. They have no bodies. But there are many of them and they are everywhere.

Revelation 5:11

Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders.

There are many angels in heaven, but the Bible says they can also travel anywhere. When they need to communicate with humans, they often take on a human form and speak in a language that the person can understand. One thing is clear: angels do not live in mountains, buildings, rocks, trees or rivers. Some people think that angels are like gods or goddesses. But the Bible tells us they are not. They are God's messengers or servants.

Hebrews 1:14

Therefore, angels are only servants—spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation.

When God created the angels, He created them with great intelligence and power. They were also created perfect. And just as God created mankind with freedom and choice, angels were also created with responsible choice.

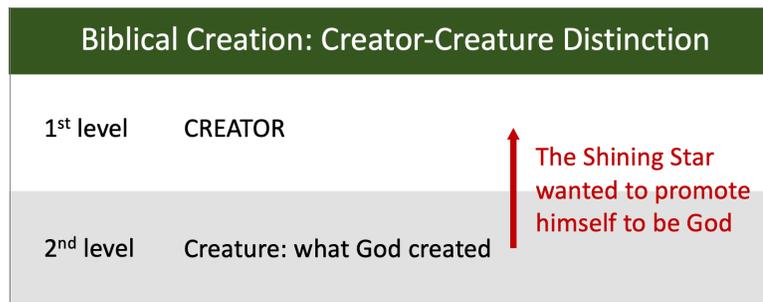
But they are different from man. Angels are more intelligent and more powerful than man. They never die. They do not marry nor give birth to angel children.

The Shining Star

The most powerful, most intelligent and most beautiful spirit being ever created was an angel named “shining star” or “morning star.” He was a type of angel called a cherub. Some Bible versions use a Latin version of his name in its text: Lucifer.

He, like the other spirit beings, was created before God created the world. He was special because God gave him a special job that kept him close to God.

But the Shining Star grew proud and in his pride, he decided he wanted to be God. He rejected the Creator-creature distinction. The “creature” (the created being) wanted to be the “creator” (the sovereign God of the universe).



In his rebellion, he made himself God’s enemy. God called his attitude of pride, sin. Because God is perfect, He could not ignore the Shining Star’s rebellion. God expelled the Shining Star from his position.

The Bible only gives us a few details about these events. They are described in two passages of Scripture.

Isaiah 14:12–14

- ¹² “How you are fallen from heaven,
O shining star, son of the morning!
 You have been thrown down to the earth,
 you who destroyed the nations of the world.
¹³ For you said to yourself,
 ‘I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God’s stars.
I will preside on the mountain of the gods
 far away in the north.
¹⁴ I will climb to the highest heavens
 and be like the Most High.’

Ezekiel 28:12–17a

¹² “Son of man, sing this funeral song for the king of Tyre. Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD:

- “You were the model of perfection,
 full of wisdom and exquisite in beauty.
¹³ You were in Eden,
 the garden of God.

Your clothing was adorned with every precious stone—
 red carnelian, pale-green peridot, white moonstone,
 blue-green beryl, onyx, green jasper,
 blue lapis lazuli, turquoise, and emerald—
 all beautifully crafted for you
 and set in the finest gold.

They were given to you
 on the day you were created.

¹⁴ I ordained and anointed you
as the mighty angelic guardian.

You had access to the holy mountain of God
 and walked among the stones of fire.

¹⁵ “You were blameless in all you did
from the day you were created
until the day evil was found in you.

¹⁶ Your rich commerce led you to violence,
 and you sinned.

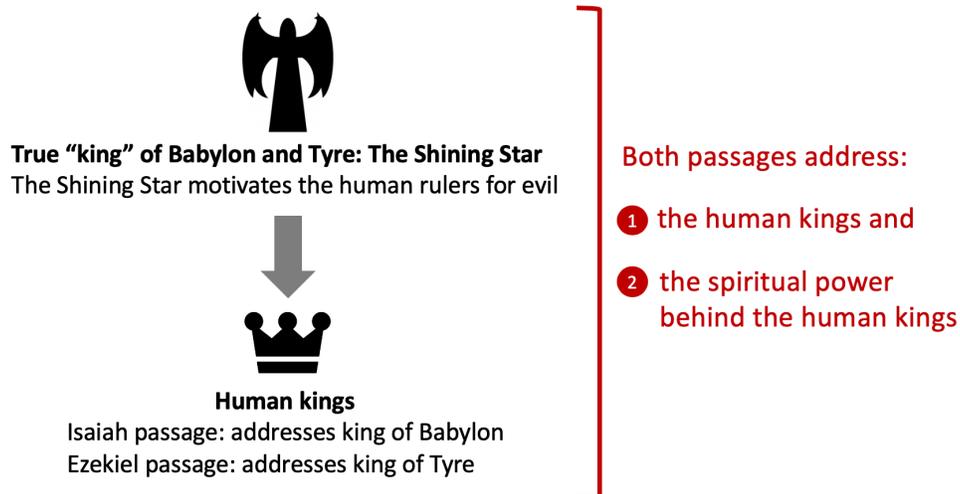
So I banished you in disgrace
 from the mountain of God.

I expelled you, O mighty guardian,
 from your place among the stones of fire.

¹⁷ Your heart was filled with pride
 because of all your beauty.

Your wisdom was corrupted
 by your love of splendor.

These two passages are referring specifically to two kings, the first from Babylon and the second from Tyre. But God is also speaking to someone else. He is addressing the spiritual power behind those kings, namely, the Shining Star.



These two passages relate how the Shining Star’s pride drove him to try and take God’s position. As a result, God will one day permanently cast him away from His presence. God has prepared a place of eternal fire where the Shining Star will be confined and punished for all eternity future.

However, he is not there yet. In the meantime, he is roaming on the earth. He is full of pride and rebellion against God and is trying to go against everything that God has done and is doing. So, he intentionally went to tempt Adam and Eve.



Since then, the Shining Star has been called *Satan* or the *Devil*. *Satan* is from the Hebrew words *Ha-Satan*, meaning “the accuser” or “the adversary”. *Devil* is from the Greek *diabolos*, meaning “slanderer”.



Original Name

- Shining Star
- Morning Star
(Translated as “Lucifer” in Latin)

He is also called “ruler” or “prince of demons” because he is the leader of the other spirit beings that followed him in his rebellion against God.

Shining Star Falls



Now known as:

- Satan or Devil (which means accuser and adversary)
- Ruler
- Prince of demons

And the rebellious angels are now known as demons or evil spirits.

Now with this background, we can move on to learn the pagan view of origins.

Pagan View of Origins

We have already learnt what the Bible says about the world’s origins. But what about other worldviews? For example, what do Greek mythology or eastern religions or other ancient or tribal beliefs teach about how the world came about? While many are very different from the Bible’s account, others bear striking similarities.

Though there are countless origin stories, those that differ from the Bible share many common elements. We can actually summarise these non-biblical beliefs with the following chart:

Summary of the Pagan (Non-Biblical) Worldview

1. Continuity of Being (A scale)
 gods ————— man ————— nature
2. Impersonal Fate and Chance
3. Ultimate Authority: Self

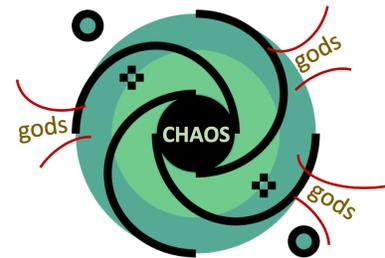
We will be looking at these beliefs in the following ways:

- A. First, we will define what they mean.
- B. Second, we will discuss where these views came from.
- C. Third, we see what these beliefs look like in our world today and how the Bible responds to these beliefs.

A. Definitions

1. Continuity of Being

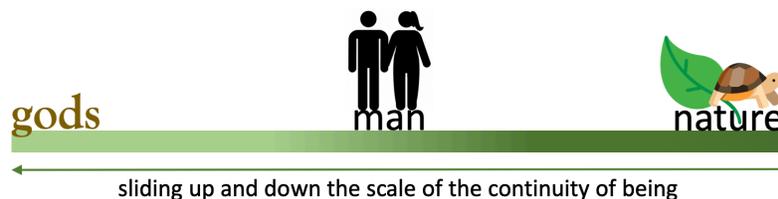
There is no clear distinction or difference between gods and goddesses and the universe that they live in. The universe is full of chaos and out of this chaos come the gods. Further gods are formed out of the initial gods.



For example, in Greek mythology, the gods marry humans and have children who are demigods. These are not as powerful as a full god but more powerful than mere mortals. Hercules is an example.

There are also stories of humans promoted to become a god. For example Psyche, was a princess who was turned into a goddess by Zeus. In other words, the universe, the gods and mortal men differ only by degrees and one can “slide up and down” the scale of continuity from God to man. There is no clear distinction between gods, the universe and mortals.

Here’s another example: In the concept of reincarnation, an ant can be reborn as a cat, which can then be reborn as a person, who if he is good, can be reborn into a higher being. Or if a man is bad, he will be reborn as a dog and if he’s a bad dog, he will be reborn as a mosquito. A person can slide up and down the scale of the continuity of being. Creatures only differ in degrees.



In fact, gods, man, animals, rocks are all made of the same stuff or basic components. Since everything in the universe is made of the same stuff, everything differs only in degree. The universe has the power to bring on life spontaneously and transformations happen all the time.

Note: When Jesus, God the Son, came to earth as a human baby, it was a miracle of the Creator putting on human flesh. The divine nature and the human nature met in a single body without ever mixing or crossing over the Creator-creature distinction. We will learn more about this later in lesson 33.

2. Impersonal Fate and Chance

In the pagan worldview, there are people who believe there are gods and people who believe there are no gods.



Those who believe in gods believe there are many of them and they are constantly quarrelling. The strongest god will rule for a while until they are overthrown by other younger and more powerful gods. There is no certainty of the future, because it depends on who will be in charge. And no one knows the future, not even the gods. Pagans in Greece and Rome named this mysterious, unknowable future, "Fate". A modern name for this is "Chance".

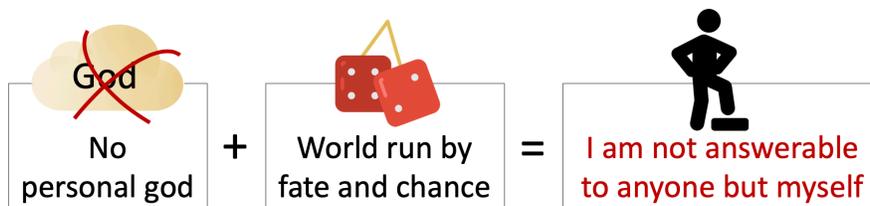
Though not all people believe in gods battling it out in the unseen world, the concept of Chance is very prevalent. Even those who don't believe in gods, believe in this idea of "chance". And Chance is impersonal. Chance is not a person; it is just there, a mysterious, unexplainable phenomenon that somehow affects our lives. When people don't understand why life turns out the way it does, they talk about Chance as the thing that is responsible.

3. Ultimate Authority: Self

In the pagan worldview, there is no personal God who owns or rules the world. This means there is no final ultimate authority.



And if the world is run by impersonal fate and chance, then in the end, a person is not answerable to anyone but himself.



Everyone is their own final authority. A person can do what is right in his own eyes and so can everyone else. What is "right" may be debatable, but ultimately, everyone can decide for themselves their definition of "right" and "wrong".

B. Where did this pagan worldview come from? When did it start?

To answer this question, we will go back to Genesis. Remember, when God finished creating, creation was perfect. This perfect creation was what was "normal". It was what God intended.

Creation



God did not create the world with evil already in it. There was a starting point to evil.

Genesis 3:1–8

¹ The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

² “Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. ³ “It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’”

⁴ “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. ⁵ “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

⁶ The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. ⁷ At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

⁸ When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees.

There are three important things we need to notice here.

I. Satan was promising Eve that she could be like God: the idea of continuity of being.

Look at verse 5 again.

Genesis 3:5

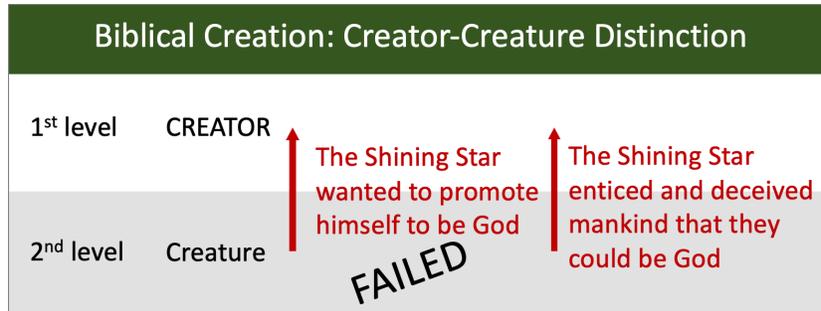
“God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

Verse 5 in the KJV says “... (you) shall be **as gods**, knowing good and evil.”

Satan was removing the Creator-creature distinction by promising Eve that she could transform or morph to be like a god. He was promising her the idea of “continuity of being”, the pagan worldview, where gods, man and nature can transform into each other. In other words, Satan was telling Eve she could level up.



He was rejecting the Creator-creature distinction where the creature will never be the creator. In fact, earlier on, Satan himself had tried to be God. He failed and was sentenced to his final doom in the lake of fire. So, he knew that was not possible. Yet, he maliciously attempted to entice and deceive Adam and Eve with the very same thing.



II. Satan diminished the LORD God by calling Him “God”: the idea of impersonal fate and chance.

In verses 1 and 8, we see that God is called by the name “LORD God”. In the original Hebrew, “LORD” is God’s personal name, Yahweh. (In the Old Testament, whenever we see the word LORD in all or small caps, know that in Hebrew, it’s the name Yahweh. This occurs over 6,500 times in the Old Testament portion of the Bible.)

Yahweh is the personal name of the Creator-God. He has a specific identity. He has specific attributes and characteristics. He is the sovereign Creator of the whole universe.

Once man was created, the name of God that is used in the Bible is “LORD God”. This acknowledges God as sovereign and powerful over man and all that He created. However, when Satan approaches Eve, look at what he calls God (see verses 1 and 4). Just “God”. This is a very generic name for “master” or “mighty one”. He did not use God’s name. Satan deliberately did that.

Genesis 3:1, 4–5, 8

¹ The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the **LORD God** had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

⁴ “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. ⁵ “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

⁸ When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the **LORD God** walking about in the garden. So they hid from the **LORD God** among the trees.

Why? What difference did that make?

- Satan was trying to diminish the sovereign nature of Yahweh, to imply that He’s nothing special, nothing great, nothing different from just a generic or common lord or master.
- By not using His name, Satan was also removing the personal, relational aspect of God. He was ignoring the fact that Yahweh was a person and He was Adam and Eve’s friend. For example, it is very different to say, “Did Yahweh tell you...” compared with saying, “Did that person tell you...” Using the name of Yahweh is more personal and relational. Just calling someone “that person” downplays the person and his relevance.

By attempting to diminish the LORD God, Satan really wanted to push the idea that Yahweh was not in charge, that He was not sovereign nor all-powerful. The implication is that some other “thing” was in charge, but it was not Yahweh.

III. Satan tricked Eve into thinking she had ultimate authority over her own life, not God: the idea of self being the ultimate authority.

This is what Satan said:

Genesis 3:1, 4–5

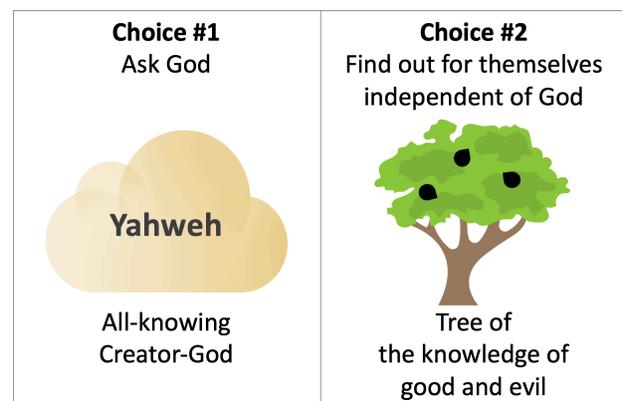
¹ The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

⁴ “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. ⁵ “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

1. Verse 1. By his questioning, Satan suggested that God was unreasonable. “Did God really say you must not eat...” This is basically saying, “I can’t believe He said that! How unreasonable!” Satan was putting an idea into Eve: “Eve, you can decide what is reasonable or unreasonable. You get to judge if God is being nice to you or not.”
2. Verse 4. By his remarks, Satan also put the thought in Eve’s mind that God was a liar. “You won’t die!” God must be lying to you. Again, Satan put the idea into Eve: “Eve you can determine what is the truth and what is a lie.” God is the all-holy Creator-God. He is the ultimate author of righteousness. He determines what is right and wrong, good and bad. But Satan reversed this and told Eve she could decide that. In fact, Satan was telling her that she could judge God.

Eve fell for it. Both Adam and Eve were deceived by Satan’s smooth words. Neither of them thought to ask God, to double check with Yahweh about Satan’s words. They decided they knew better than God. They decided they were the final authority, not God.

Mankind was to rely on Yahweh for knowledge. If they wanted to know what was right or wrong, they simply had to ask God. That was the kind of relationship that they were to have with Yahweh: personal, intimate, loving and trusting.



But God gave them a choice so they could exercise their free will. They could seek the knowledge of good and evil from God, or they could seek this knowledge independent of Him. They could rely on Yahweh or ignore Him and His role in their lives and determine for themselves what was good for them. This was how Satan got Adam and Eve to start thinking they could be the ultimate authority over their own lives.

So, where did the pagan worldview come from? We see its beginnings right here in Genesis, at the Fall. Satan is the source of the pagan worldview! You can see how he worked to plant these ideas into Adam's and Eve's minds while they were in the garden of Eden. They could have rejected Satan's way of thinking but did not. Instead of checking with God or trusting in what He had told them, they opened themselves to these false ideas. What they believed affected how they behaved. They ended up rebelling against God.

The biblical worldview is in direct conflict with Satan-suggested pagan worldview.

Biblical Worldview	Pagan Worldview
1. Creator-Creature Distinction One God Man Nature	1. Continuity of Being (A scale) gods — man — nature
2. Personal Sovereign God	2. Impersonal Fate and Chance
3. Ultimate Authority: God	3. Ultimate Authority: Self

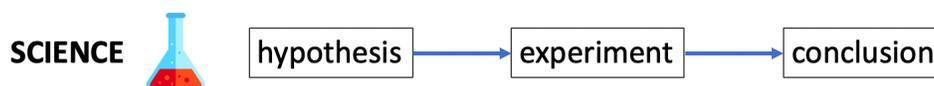
However, the garden of Eden was just the beginning. Satan was not done with this deception. Today, his agenda of deception, which is his hallmark or signature, is recognisable in many areas. Here are some examples.

C. What this pagan worldview looks like today

Continuity of Being and Evolution

The idea of sea creatures becoming land creatures and land creatures levelling up to eventually becoming human is called the cosmic evolution of all things. It has its roots in the "continuity of being" idea. But Satan smartly couched and hid this concept within something that made it appear more believable and more "objective". He labelled it "science".

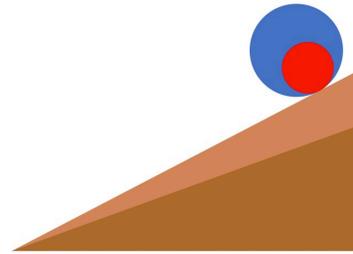
By definition, "science" is supposed to be the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of phenomena.



In scientific study, a hypothesis about a phenomenon is tested through an experiment and the data collected and analysed. Conclusions are drawn that will confirm or refute the initial hypothesis. The experiment can be repeated by other scientists to get the same results.

For example, in the 1600s, Galileo proposed that all objects fall to the ground at the same rate, regardless of its mass.

He set up an experiment to show that different balls (blue and red in the diagram) rolling down an inclined plane had constant acceleration. The acceleration was dependent only on the angle of the plane (the lighter and darker slopes in the diagram) and not the mass of the ball. Today, we can conduct the same experiment to prove his hypothesis right. This is how science works.



In contrast, evolution is just a theory. It is not observable by eyewitnesses. Evolution cannot be tested nor repeated in a lab. Technically, it cannot be considered “science”. However, this idea has been given scientific names and proponents talk about it as if it were fact. They behave as if evolution holds to the same rigorous standards as other scientific experiments. Early science textbooks did accurately call evolution a “theory”. But over time, textbooks dropped the word “theory” and started treating it as fact. Today, many students are taught that evolution is indisputable.

Evolution teaches that fundamentally life differs only in degrees. Cats, dogs, rocks all have protons and electrons. They are just arranged differently but ultimately, they are all made of the same thing.

However, evolution is not the only place we see this idea of continuity of being. Many eastern religions and other schools of thought teach this idea in their stories. One species can merge into another. Even popular literature reflects this. For example, the Little Mermaid was half fish and half human and with the help of a little magic, she became completely human!



What is the impact of this continuity of being concept?

Some people wonder why it matters about what people believe about evolution. It matters because what we believe affects how we behave and live. Ideas all have consequences, and bad ideas have bad consequences. If man differs only in degree and not in kind to the rest of nature, then man is essentially no different from the next rock, ant or cow. In fact, man has no more value than the dirt or ground they walk on.

When people started to teach, accept and believe the idea of evolution, it resulted in serious consequences. In fact, in the century after evolution was promoted as truth, mankind witnessed the destruction of life on a level never before experienced. This included:

- two world wars
- the legalisation of abortion
- the legalisation of euthanasia (assisted suicide)
- genocides (mass killings) in Armenia, Africa, Cambodia and other places.

In fact, man also decided they had every right to practise eugenics. (Eugenics is the practice of trying to improve the “human species” by selectively mating people with so-called desirable traits to produce “better humans” while at the same time, preventing people with undesirable traits from reproducing.) Often the way they did this involved the destruction of life.

It is naive to think that ideas have no consequences. What people believe directly impacts how they choose to live their lives.

Today, we also see others play this “continuity of being” idea out in their sexuality. They see no problem in transforming from one to another or even hold onto several identities. Their sexual identity can morph over time.

While Satan may have been very successful in “modernising” this ancient continuity of being idea and applying it in different ages and generations, the Bible’s truth has not changed.

Biblical Creation: Creator-Creature Distinction	
1 st level	CREATOR
2 nd level	Creature: what God created

1. God is **wholly separate** from the universe He made.
2. God is the **Creator** of all things.
3. All things came into existence not because God transformed part of Himself into things but He **created something out of nothing** by the power of His spoken word.
4. The Bible teaches that there is a **clear boundary** between man, animals and plants, and they procreate according to their own kinds. One will not become another. A rock will never be an animal and an animal will never be a man. A man will never become a god.

Genesis 1:11 (Plants)

Then God said, “Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came.” And that is what happened.

Genesis 1:21 (Sea creatures, birds)

So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:24 (Animals)

Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened.

Genesis 1:27 (Man)

So God created human beings in his own image.

In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Man is special. God made man in His very own image. Male and female. Two genders. Man is a reflection of God Himself and God created mankind with a purpose. Man and woman were to have a meaningful existence relating to God, joyfully exercising responsible dominion over the world and having the joy of family relations as they multiplied.

5. God’s creative work was **sudden, completed in six days**. It was not long drawn out. Importantly, after all this creative work, God said that, “it is finished”. A finished piece of work means it no longer changes. All creative work had ceased.

Genesis 1:31–2:1

³¹ Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day. ¹ So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed.

Impersonal Fate and Chance

In the garden of Eden, Satan attempted to diminish the LORD God. He really wanted to push the idea that Yahweh was not in charge, that God was not sovereign nor all-powerful.

Satan still does this today. Things that are unexplainable are written off as impersonal fate and chance. He distracts people away from the fact that God is in charge of the whole universe and God’s plans are never thwarted.

People who believe that impersonal chance and fate dictates their lives can never have hope. This is because they believe they are just pawns in an impersonal, chaotic, random existence.

Today, not everyone uses the words “fate and chance”. Here are some of the more common words people use that share the same basic idea:

- **Luck:** Sometimes you’re lucky and sometimes you’re unlucky, there really isn’t a real explanation of why things happen the way they do.

- **Karma:** If you do good, then good things will happen to you. If you are evil, then evil things will befall you.
- **The Universe:** The universe conspires to do me good.
- **Positive Energy:** If you are surrounded by positive energy, good things happen to you; if you are surrounded by negative energy, bad things happen to you.
- **Horoscope:** Today, I might fail my exam because my horoscope said bad things will happen to me.
- **The Force:** In the *Star Wars* franchise of movies, “The Force” is in control of the universe. It is not a person but a mysterious nebulous something.

We may hear other words being used that refer to some impersonal force that is in charge of the universe, rather than our sovereign God. Those are all shades of the same impersonal “fate and chance”. With fate and chance, all humans are just passive victims because no one is in control. Everything is random and meaningless.

However, the Bible says that:

1. God is a **Person**.
2. God is **in control** of everything.

1 Chronicles 29:11

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O LORD, and this is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things.

3. God determines history, the present and the future and it will turn out exactly as God says because He is in control of the whole universe.

Isaiah 46:8–10

⁸ “Do not forget this! Keep it in mind!

Remember this, you guilty ones.

⁹ Remember the things I have done in the past.

For I alone am God!

I am God, and there is none like me.

¹⁰ Only I can tell you the future

before it even happens.

Everything I plan will come to pass,

for I do whatever I wish.

Ultimate Authority—Self

Satan led Eve to believe she had ultimate authority over her own life, not God. One way this idea has been modernised is in the many self-help books that are available today. People are taught that they have everything within them to affect how their life turns out. People are taught that they are in control and if they can just get their act together, believe in themselves, take charge of their dreams, they can make anything happen.

However, the Bible says that God is the One who is the ultimate authority, not man.

Proverbs 19:21

You can make many plans, but the LORD's purpose will prevail.

People are also taught that they can decide for themselves what is right and wrong. Whatever right feels like to them, that must be correct. However, God warns that people should not rely on themselves as the final determiner of right and wrong.

Proverbs 14:12

There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.

A person's worldview affects what they believe about important questions in life and how they choose to live.

In the table are the differences between the biblical and pagan worldviews.

Biblical Worldview 1. Creator-Creature Distinction One God Man Nature 2. Personal Sovereign God 3. Ultimate Authority: God	Pagan Worldview 1. Continuity of Being (A scale) gods — man — nature 2. Impersonal Fate and Chance 3. Ultimate Authority: Self
<p style="text-align: center;">WHO AM I?</p> <p>I am a creature who is responsible to my Creator.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WHO AM I?</p> <p>I am my own person, not accountable to anyone. I am alone in this sea of chaos.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">WHAT IS TRUTH? HOW DO I KNOW?</p> <p>I look to my Creator, a person, for the truth. He is the source of all truth.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WHAT IS TRUTH? HOW DO I KNOW?</p> <p>Truth is whatever I make it. I generate my own law.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LIFE?</p> <p>God defines what I do. God gives the rules. He gives my life meaning.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LIFE?</p> <p>I generate my own ethics. I do what is right in my own eyes.</p>

As we think about the pagan worldview that surrounds us, it's easy to see how lost a person can feel. Life can seem to be drifting towards no particular destination. And though on the surface, it seems exciting to think of ourselves as our own ultimate authority, what this often means is that no one has answers and there is no source to rely on when we are confused or troubled. Life is full of uncertainty and we are at the mercy of the strongest group with the loudest voices and they set society's agenda, whether we agree or not. This is life with the pagan worldview.

But if we acknowledge our Creator-God, we have an anchor in this sea of chaos. The LORD God, or Yahweh, has a purpose, a plan not only for our lives, but for the world. He is directing history. And He has a standard of right and wrong that is unchanging. Such a God can provide us stability, and give us confidence even when life gets confusing.

Will Satan try to deceive me like he did with Adam and Eve?

At this point in history, Satan is not yet confined in eternal punishment. So what is he doing? He still has access to heaven and he is still fiercely opposed to God and everything God does. He is still aggressively trying to deceive and destroy mankind. The Bible gives us some information about his activities.

Job 1:6–7

⁶ One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the LORD, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. ⁷ "Where have you come from?" the LORD asked Satan.

Satan answered the LORD, "I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on."

However, Satan is not just patrolling the earth as an innocent observer. He is actively looking to destroy man.

1 Peter 5:8

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

Not only that, he is not called the accuser for nothing. Because he still has access to heaven at this point in time, he is making sure to accuse mankind. The prophet Zechariah was given a vision of heaven and this is what he saw.

Zechariah 3:1

Then the angel showed me Jeshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD. The Accuser, Satan, was there at the angel's right hand, making accusations against Jeshua.

What Satan did with Adam and Eve was only the beginning. He is as active today in the world as he was back then. Is he out to deceive and lead us into active rebellion against God? Yes.

It would be wise for us stay alert, grow in understanding of God, His character and His Word and build our trust in the Creator-God of the universe.

Discussion Questions

Discuss the following questions as a group or use them for personal reflection.

1. Examining your own way of thinking, do you notice any elements of the pagan worldview embedded in your own? (The elements are: continuity of being, impersonal fate and chance, self as the ultimate authority.)
2. Who or what is the ultimate authority in your life? When faced with a tough situation, how do you decide what is right or wrong? In different situations, do you have different ultimate authorities?
3. What do you think is the purpose of your life? Are you living in such a way that is helping you achieve that purpose?
4. How do you relate to God? Do you relate to Him as a personal, sovereign God? Or do you relate to Him more like He is an impersonal force that influences your life?



Pre-reading for next lesson: Romans 1, Revelation 21