

Lesson Eight on Creation Handout

- I. Whether the consideration of creatures is useful for building up our faith (St. Thomas *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book II, chapter 2)

“This meditation on the divine works is indeed necessary in order to build up one’s faith in God.”
Aquinas lists four reasons:

1. We are able to somewhat admire and consider the divine wisdom
2. Leads to the sublime power of God
3. Inflames souls of men to the love of Divine Goodness
4. Bestows on man a certain likeness to Divine Perfection

II. Introduction to the Bible and Genesis

Bible: Comes from the Greek word *Biblia*, which is a plural neuter for books. In Hebrew, it goes by a different name, *Tanakh(h)* which also is used for *Torah*

- *Torah*: First 5 books of the Old Testament. Also known as the *Pentateuch* (meaning 5 containers)

Genesis

- From the Greek word, *geneseos* (Birth, lineage, generation)
 - Gen-: associated with beginning or origination (generate)
 - *Toledoth*: Hebrew for ‘generations’
 - In Hebrew, the name of the book derives from its first word, *bereshit* (bereshit), literally ‘in the beginning.’
 - Presents the fundamental account of the origin of creation, mankind, and the People of God
 - Gives accounts of the covenants found in Adam, Noah, and Abraham
 - The narrative covers a larger time frame than any other biblical book.
 - It moves from creation to the sojourn of the 12 tribes of Israel in the 2nd millennium B.C.
 - Covers 3 patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- Opening words of the first verse—Debate? Problem?

III. The Book of Genesis: Two Creation Accounts

First Account: Temple-Building Pointing to Liturgical Orientation

- Six Day account, called the *Hexaemeron*
- The word “create” here is *bara’* and is only used in reference to God’s act of creation
- “Without form and void”—*tohu* and *wabohu* (formlessness and empty)

The Creation Sequence:

- Day and Night (Time)

- Sky and seas (spaces)
- Dry land and vegetation (habitat).
 - He then assigns regions to each
 - The sun and moon (day and night—time)
 - The birds and fish (traverse the great spaces)
 - Animals (who dominate the land)
 - Man (who rules over all of creation)

I. Chaos' Layers	Day	II. Regions	Day	III. Occupants
Darkness	1	Day Night	4	Sun Moon with stars
Water	2	Sea Sky	5	Fishes Birds
Earth	3	Land under water Land over water	6	No occupants Animals and Man

Adam, created in the image and likeness of God

- Hierarchy of creation
- All creation points to the divine “rest”

The Second Creation Account

Offers a close-up view of Creation as opposed to the panorama view offered by the First Creation Account.

- First account emphasizes God’s transcendence while the Second emphasizes God’s immanence or closeness to humanity.