Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,

We saw last time that each day of creation has the same seven elements – announcement (And God said…), command (let there be…), activity (God creates or fashions), result (and it was so), declaration (God calls what He has made a name), approval (He describes it as good), and the numbering formula (evening and morning \_\_\_th day). And with Day One, the focus of these seven elements was the creation of light and darkness, which God called day and night.

Well, today we come to the Second Day of creation week. And I mentioned last week that the Second Day is the only day where we do not see the words of approval: “*And God saw that [what He had just made] was good*.” And I explained that this is probably because the work that God began on the Second Day was not fully finished until the Third Day. And this is made even more probable in that the words of approval are given twice on the Third Day – the first time in verse 10, after the separation of the waters was finished, and again in verse 12 after the plants and trees were created. But the focus of the Second Day is the creation of an expanse.

And we will consider this as we begin with a **creation** **explanation**, looking at the elements of the Second Day, then we will consider some **creation** **implications** from the Second Day, and we will conclude with a **gospel** **implication**. And our chief aim is to see more reasons why we should praise Almighty God, but also that we might better understand and appreciate the beautiful universe that He made, and see more of the story of salvation in Jesus Christ that began in creation week.

1. So, as we consider the Second Day of creation week, let’s begin with a **Creation Explanation**.
	1. And we start with **a quick walk through of the elements** of the Second Day:
		1. The account begins with the **announcement** phrase, “*and God said*.” And this reminds us again, that God spoke all things into being, including the expanse that we are going to consider today. He truly is beyond our comprehension and all powerful and glorious!
		2. Next we see the content of the announcement, which is the **command**, “*Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters*.”
		3. And we will come back to what this expanse is shortly, but the command was followed by the **activity** of God, as we see in **verse 7**, which is where He made or fashioned what He had just commanded.
		4. And when that was done, we get that small phrase at **the end of verse 7**, which is the **result** element of Day Two, “*and it was so*.” So, what the Lord commanded at the beginning of the Second Day was finished during that day.
		5. Then follows the **declaration** element, as God called what He had just made “*Heaven*.”
		6. And finally, the day ended with the **numbering formula**, “*and there was evening and there was morning, the second day*.”
		7. So, those are the elements in the Second Day. And again, the only element ‘missing’ is the **approval** element, which we have already explained.
	2. But now we must ask: **What is this expanse that God had just made**?
		1. Well, there have been many commentators who have interpreted the expanse as **the sky**. And as I was preparing this sermon, that was the explanation that I remembered hearing. Anyone else? And according to this view, because there are waters “*above the expanse*,” that means that there used to be a canopy of water above the sky; kind of up where the clouds are. And perhaps you heard that this canopy of water is what God used for the flood of Noah’s day. For we read in **Genesis 7** that “*the fountains of the great deep burst forth*,” which, they say, was the waters under the expanse, and “*the windows of heaven were opened*,” which, they say, was the canopy, or the waters above the expanse. And this view seemed to make sense, because there was a need for a lot of water in that flood if the water was eventually to cover the whole earth, including the tallest mountains by almost 7 meters!
		2. The problem with that interpretation, however, is that it does not take the plain reading of our text into account. If you look at **verse 8**, you will see that God calls the expanse “*heaven*.” Now, the NIV has “sky,” but all other English versions have it as “heaven,” and rightly so. And we see why in **verse 14**. In verse 14 we see more references to the expanse of the heavens that God created on the Second Day. And there, God created the Sun and moon, and placed them “*in the expanse of the heavens*.” So, that would mean that the waters above the expanse must be, at the very least, beyond the Sun. But notice in **verse 16** that the fourth day also included the creation of the stars. So, the expanse or “heaven” includes where the stars are, in other words, the universe. And that means that the expanse is everything from the surface of the earth all the way up to the very edge of the universe. It is the air, the sky, the atmosphere, and what we call space.
		3. And because we are told in verse 7 that there are waters “*above the expanse*,” then there must be water at the very edge of the universe.
			1. And this is exactly what we see elsewhere in Scripture. Listen again to what we read earlier in **Psalm 148:1-4**. And pay careful attention to the order of these words: “*Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights! Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts! Praise Him, sun and moon, praise Him, all you shining stars! Praise Him, you highest heavens*,” and now these next words: “*and you waters above the heavens!*”
			2. So, there it is again – the expanse/heavens includes the heights, or the sky, the invisible realm of the angels, and then the highest heavens, or space, where the sun and moon and stars are. And then, beyond or above or on the edge of space is water.
		4. And so, putting this all together, originally there was this watery blob, and then God took some of the water and stretched it away to create the air and sky and atmosphere and space of the universe in between. In other words, God **stretched out** the whole universe from earth on Day Two.
			1. And there are many references to this stretching in Scripture also: In **Job 9:8**, Job praises God “*who alone stretched out the heavens*.” And God is praised in **Psalm 104:2** for “*stretching out the heavens like a tent*.” And in **Isaiah 40:22**, God is the one “*who stretches out the heavens like a curtain*.” And in **Isaiah 42:5** it says, “*Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out*.”
		5. Have you ever heard one of those news reports where a MARS rover or a satellite that is passing another planet is sending photos back to earth and scientists are pouring over the photos looking for evidence of water? Well, I look forward to the day when we hear ‘Breaking News’ from NASA – We have found evidence of water way out at the edge of the universe! For then, we can say, Old news! It’s in the Bible! :-)
	3. Now, this is not the place for a detailed science lesson about the speed of light and quantum physics, etc. But I am sure you have heard before that what you see when you look up into the night sky are things that happened minutes or hours or years or centuries ago, because of how long it talks for light to travel to earth. You have heard that? And so, Christians who claim that creation is around 6000 years old are ridiculed, because what we see through telescopes happened thousands or millions or billions of years ago!! You dummies!
		1. Well, let me point out first of all that **this is as much a problem for evolutionists** as it is for creationists, because even a 14-billion-year-old universe is not old enough to answer this speed of light ‘problem.’ And so, evolutionists have various theories that try and answer this ‘problem.’
		2. But the answer of the Bible to this ‘problem’ is ***Almighty* God**! For if He stretched out the entire universe on Day Two, then He did it faster than the speed of light! And that changes *everything* in terms of how we interpret what we can see up there. And we have no business telling God that we know better than He does! He was there! And He has told us how He did it and how long it took!
		3. And even if we do not *yet* have a scientific theory that has an exact and comprehensive answer for this matter, that is OK if we believe in *Almighty* God!
		4. But for those of you who are interested, you can find articles on websites like **creation.com** or in Genesis commentaries, like this one by Dr. Jonathan Sarfati, which include scientific explanations about the inflation of the universe and super-luminal creation and the so-called ‘horizon problem.’
2. But there we have the **creation explanation** of the Second Day. Let’s turn our attention secondly to one or two **creation implications**.
	1. I mentioned a moment ago that scientists love to scour the universe for evidence of water. And a key-driver for this search for water is the belief that there must be other life in the universe. And that would make logical sense if naturalistic evolution were true – if we are here on earth for no other reason than random molecule collisions, then there may well have been other random molecule collisions elsewhere in the universe. But that is not the message of our text or the rest of the Bible. In **Psalm 8**, the Psalmist is in awe of creation. And listen to how he expresses this: “*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour*.” The Psalmist is awestruck by how mankind is the pinnacle or crown or centre of all creation! You see, this earth is where God is unfolding His plan of salvation, to redeem a people that He will present to Christ at the end of time. And so, the whole universe is about the earth. The whole universe exists in order to support life on this planet. And the size of the universe is what is precisely necessary so that the air that we breathe is made up of the exact amounts of oxygen and nitrogen, etc, that we need, and so that we have the right amounts of ultraviolet light and vitamin D and gravity and sunshine and rain and wind to sustain life.
		1. I am sure you boys and girls know what happens if you untie the knot in a balloon – all the air escapes out. So, have you ever wondered: Why doesn’t the air in our sky just escape out into space? How come the air stays down here? Well, the answer is **gravity**. Gravity keeps the air in our atmosphere. It doesn’t on the moon! And that is why astronauts must have special suits that provide oxygen. But we don’t need those suits here. We can just open our mouths and breath. And that is because of what God created on the Second Day – the expanse. And He fashioned it to ready this planet for the plants and animals and humans that would live on it.
		2. When was the last time you thanked God for the air that you breath? Or for gravity? He deserves our thanks for those things. And you can take Psalms like Psalms 148 and 147 and 104, which praise God for His magnificent creation and providence, and make them your prayers of praise and thanksgiving!
	2. But I hope you can see also why this is reason for us to **value and appreciate clean air**. I am sure you have seen pictures of cities like Beijing and Mexico City and New Delhi where the air is polluted and dirty. And perhaps one of the few good things to come out of the lockdowns around the world was to see how shutting down air-polluting industries and congested motorways led to a drastic improvement in air quality in cities like these.
		1. Now, unlike those who say that the world is doomed because of pollution and/or climate change, we have God’s promise that the end of the world will come with the return of Jesus, not rising seas or toxic air. He said, “*While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease*.” And this is a very important promise today. There is a rise of chronic depression in young people, because all they hear is the planet will burn up in 5 or 10 years. So, why get up and go to school? And who would want to bring children into a world like this? Well, we know better. We have the promise of God and the real hope that it conveys to share with people.
		2. Nevertheless, because we know the lengths that God went to to provide us with clean air, we should be supportive of efforts to preserve clean air and to clean up pollution.
3. Well, that brings us, thirdly and lastly, to a **Gospel Implication** of the Second Day.
	1. In the commentary on Genesis by Ken Ham that many of you have bought, he comments on a very important future event that involves the expanse that God created on the Second Day.
		1. The ascension of Jesus is described in **Acts 1:9-11** like this: “*As [the disciples] were looking on, [Jesus] was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven."*” So, to where did Jesus ascend? It was up into the expanse or the heavens.
		2. And listen now to this description of how Jesus will come back at the end of time. We find it in **1 Thessalonians 4**: “*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first*. *Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord*.” So, the raised dead and those who are still alive when Jesus returns will rise up from the surface of the earth, to meet the Lord in the ‘expanse.’

And God knew this on the Second Day of creation. As He created this expanse, it was His plan that one day the Lord Jesus would ascend up into the sky, and that the sky would be where the Lord Jesus would finally be united with His bride.

And that is something to think about, isn’t it, each time you look up at the sky. That is where you will meet Jesus! And I know that some of you are already wondering how that works for Christians on the other side of the planet. I don’t know, exactly! But it will happen because God has said it will!

And then will come Judgment Day and the new heavens and new earth, and eternal hell for all who have not believed in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. So, I hope you have believed in Jesus as the Christ; that you have repented of your sins and received Him as your only hope of salvation. And for those who have, I hope and pray that our consideration of the creation of the expanse on the Second Day has filled you with awe and praise and thanksgiving! Amen. Let us pray: