

The expression "God saw...it was good" in Genesis 1

The expression "God saw...that it was good" is found six times in Genesis one. First, re the first day of formation, at Genesis 1:4 -- but not at all re the second day at Genesis 1:6-8. Second and third, re the third day of formation, at Genesis 1:10 and 1:12. Fourth, re the fourth day of formation, at Genesis 1:18. Fifth, re the fifth day of formation, at Genesis 1:21. Sixth, re the sixth day of formation, at Genesis 1:25. And finally, at the very end of the sixth day, we read that "God saw everything that He had made; and behold, it was very good." Genesis 1:31.

Commenting on the word "good" in the work of the first formation day, Calvin says God surveyed His work "so that He might take pleasure in it.... The meaning...is that the work...was approved by God."

The expression "God saw...that it was good" is **not** found in the inspired and original Hebrew text of the second day's work at Genesis 1:6-8. The B.C. 270 uninspired Greek Septuagint 'translation' inserted it at Genesis 1:8, but as it is found neither in the original Hebrew nor any other ancient version -- it must be abandoned.

The ancient Rabbis said the clause was omitted in the Hebrew because some of the angels fell on that second day. So too did the *Clementine Recognitions*, and that great master of Hebrew the Bible translator Jerome of Bethlehem. So too Theodore of Mopsuestia, Bede, Augustine of Ireland, Peter Comestor, Hugo of St. Victor, Honorius Augustodensis, Cuvier, Buckland, Kurtz, Bettex, Scofield, and even Schilder.

Luther's comments on Genesis 1:6-8 are interesting. He says re "the creation and the fall of the angels..., Bernard (of Clairveux) thinks Lucifer had seen God's plan for mankind to be raised higher than the nature of the angels and that this proud spirit envied mankind...and fell.... This much is certain: the angels fell and the devil was transformed...into an angel of darkness.... I commend Jerome.... Although in connection with the works of all the other days there is added: 'And God saw that it was very good' -- why is it not added also in this passage?"

Calvin commented "Moses has **not** affixed to the work of this [second] day, the note that 'God saw that it was good.'" Why not? "Perhaps," he explained, "because there was no advantage from it till the terrestrial waters were gathered into their proper place, which was done on the next day."

Calvin said that on the third day, the statement that the work was indeed good, "is there twice repeated (Genesis 1:10 & 1:12)." He added at Genesis 1:31 **not** that God had formerly on each of the days declared 'God saw...that it was good' -- but simply that "God six times inculcates the same thing." Namely, at the first day (Genesis 1:4); twice at the third day (Genesis 1:10 and 1:12); at the fourth day (Genesis 1:18); at the fifth day (Genesis 1:21); and at the sixth day (Genesis 1:25). Then, at Genesis 1:31, Calvin said "Moses expresses more than before; for he adds *meod*, that is 'very' -- in the statement "God saw everything that He had made; and behold, it was very good."

Calvin then adds: "On each of the days, simple approbation was given. But now...He pronounced it perfectly good." The first sentence in this paragraph does not say: "On each of the six days, simple approbation was given." No! For also according to Calvin at Genesis 1:8, "Moses has **not** affixed to the work of this [second] day, the note that 'God saw that it was good.'" So Calvin here at Genesis 1:31 simply means that on each of the days one and three and four and five and six, simple approbation was given. But not on day two -- as also Calvin himself had previously stated.