RETHINKING THE GOSPEL · TEACHER'S GUIDE

Genesis 1:1–2:3

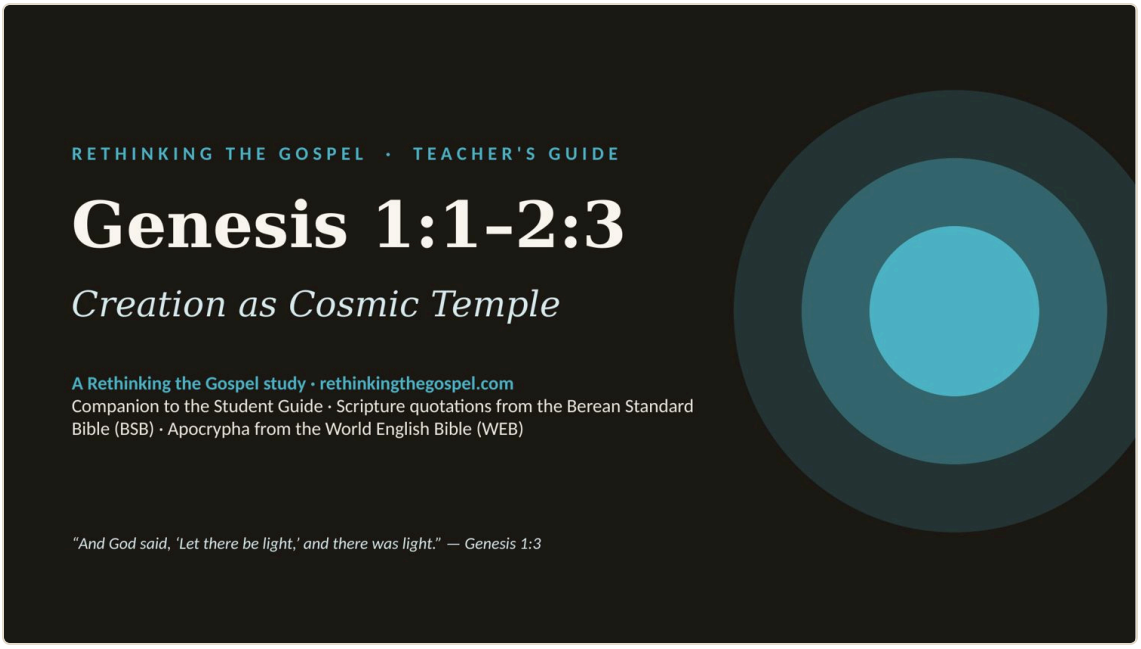
Creation as Cosmic Temple

Every slide from the teaching deck, with its teaching notes. Use it alongside the Student Guide to prepare, or to teach without a projector. The PowerPoint version, which builds each slide click by click, is also available at rethinkingthegospel.com.

Scripture quotations are from the Berean Standard Bible (BSB); Apocrypha from the World English Bible (WEB).

Rob Massie · rethinkingthegospel.com

SLIDE 1



TEACHING NOTES

Welcome. This deck follows the student guide section by section; each slide builds on click. Encourage students to copy key points into their guide's note spaces as each item appears.

SLIDE 2



TEACHING NOTES

Roadmap. Three clicks reveal the session in thirds: background (1–3), the heart of the chapter (4–6), and its world and echoes (7–9).

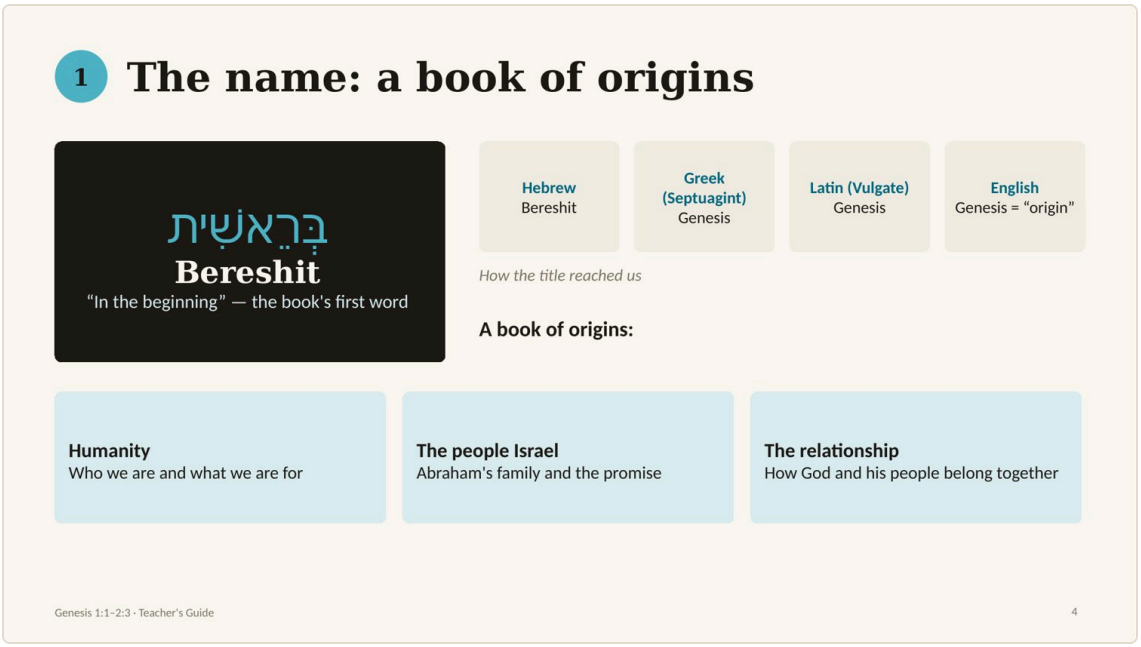
SLIDE 3



TEACHING NOTES

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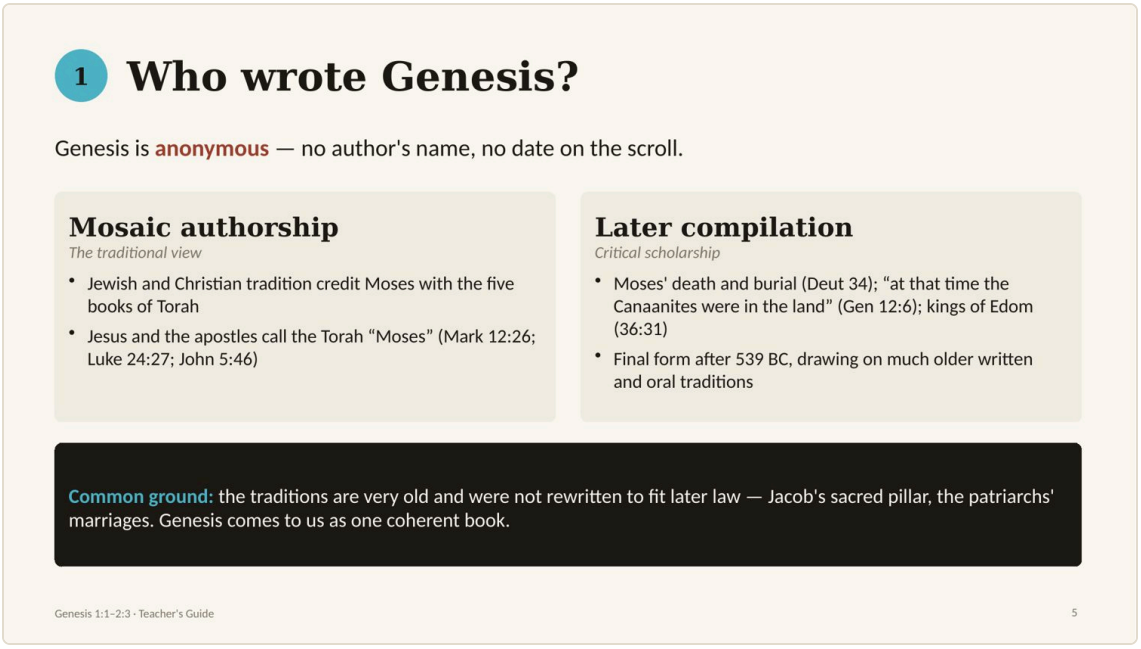
SLIDE 4



TEACHING NOTES

Hebrew title Bereshit, after its first word; the English title came from the Septuagint through the Old Latin and Vulgate (Sarna, 1989, p. xi). Genesis tells of origins: of humankind, of the people Israel, and of the relationship between God and that people (Sarna, 1989, p. xii).

SLIDE 5



TEACHING NOTES

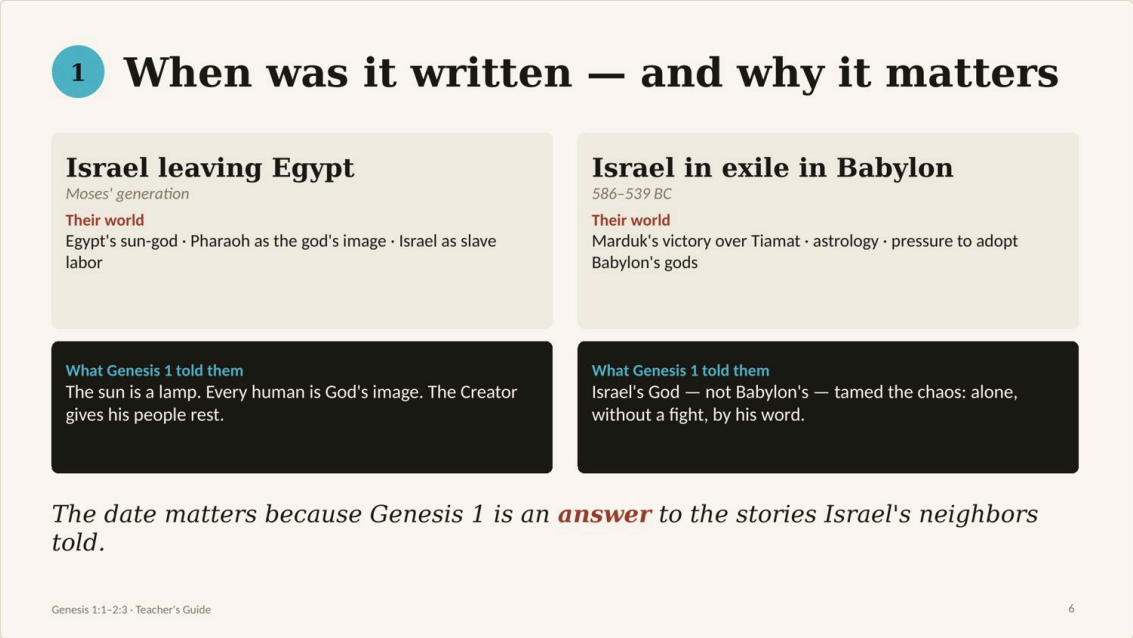
Genesis is anonymous: no author or date (Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 6).

Mosaic view: Jesus and the apostles speak of the Torah as 'Moses' (Mark 12:26; Luke 24:27; John 5:46).

Later-compilation view: Deut 34; Gen 12:6; 13:7; 36:31; many date the final form after 539 BC from much older traditions (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 6–8).

Common ground: very old traditions not rewritten to fit later law — Jacob's pillar, patriarchal marriages (Sarna, 1989, pp. xiii–xv); one coherent book (Sarna, 1989, p. xvi; Provan, 2015, p. 60).

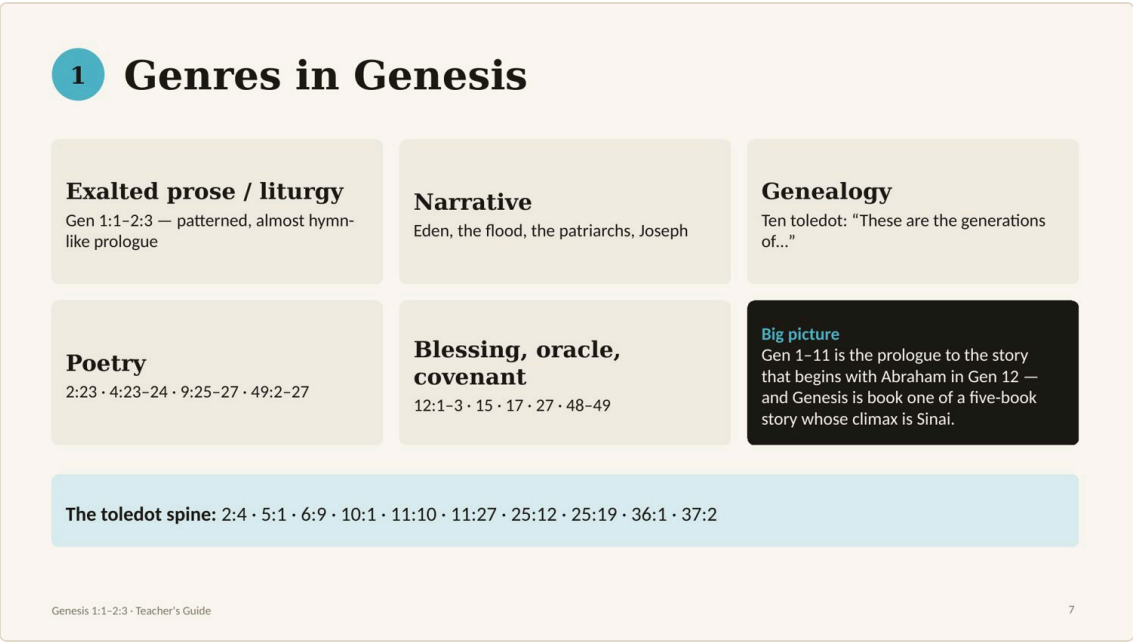
SLIDE 6



TEACHING NOTES

Knowing when and to whom a story was told makes us better readers (Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 5). Babylon: pressure to assimilate; anti-Babylonian notes (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 10, 23–26). The writers were unlikely to be unaware of Babylonian myth given the patriarchs' Mesopotamian roots and the spread of cuneiform literature in the Amarna period (Wenham, 1987).

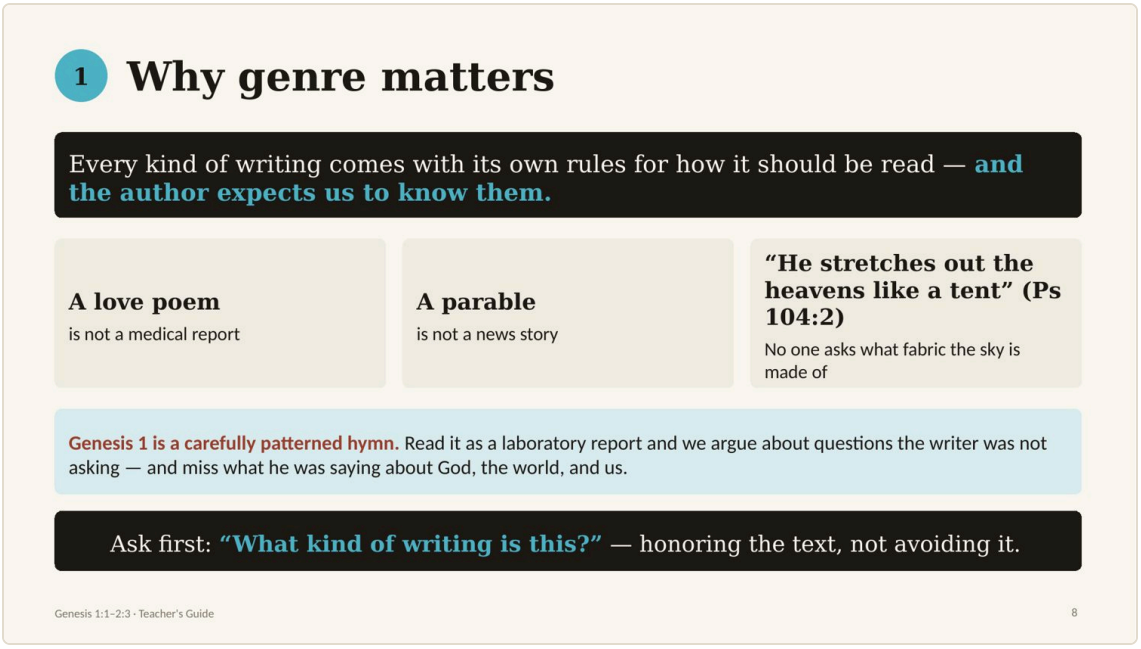
SLIDE 7



TEACHING NOTES

Exalted prose/liturgy in 1:1–2:3 (Provan, 2015, p. 60; Wenham, 1987). Ten toledot headings: 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 37:2 (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 13–14). Gen 1–11 is the prologue to the story that begins with Abraham (Sarna, 1989, p. xii); Genesis is book one of five, climaxing at Sinai (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 2–3).

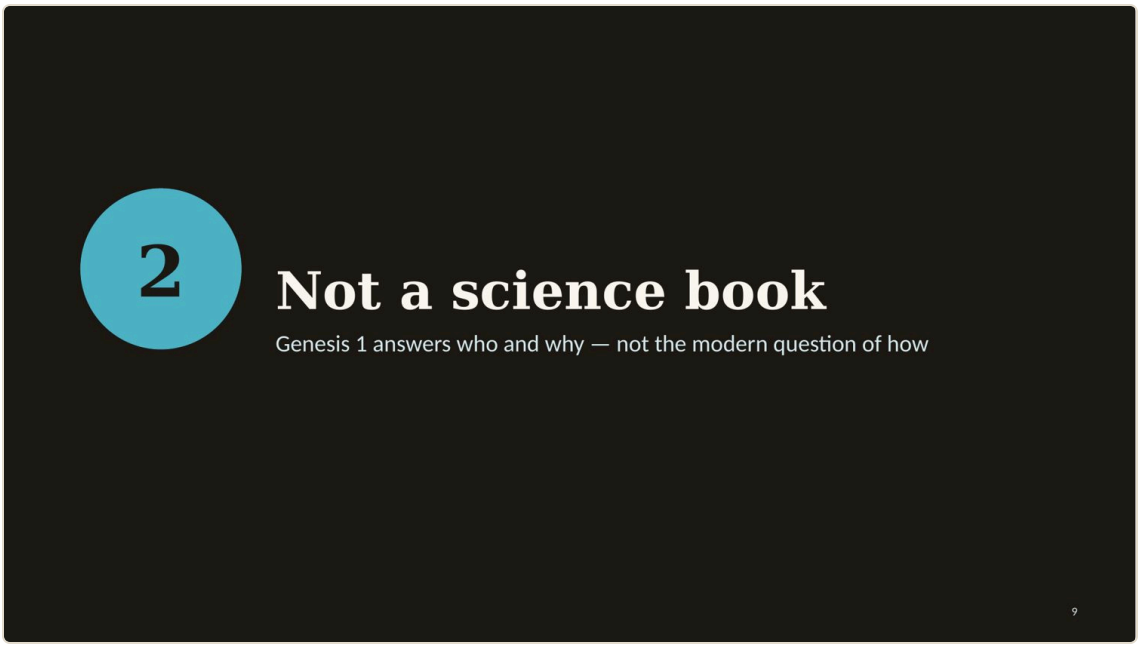
SLIDE 8



TEACHING NOTES

Every kind of writing has its own rules for how to read it, and the author expects us to know them. Ps 104:2 example: no one asks what fabric the sky is made of. Reading a patterned hymn like Genesis 1 as a laboratory report means arguing about questions the writer was not asking. Ask: 'What kind of writing is this?' — honoring the text, not avoiding it.

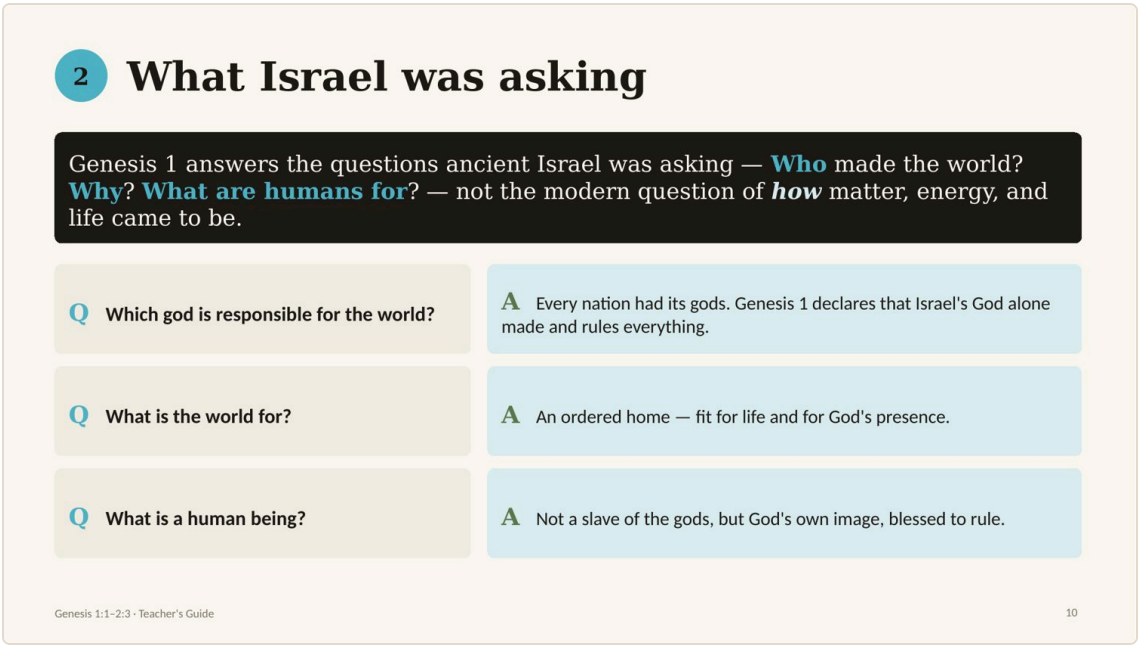
SLIDE 9



TEACHING NOTES

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SLIDE 10

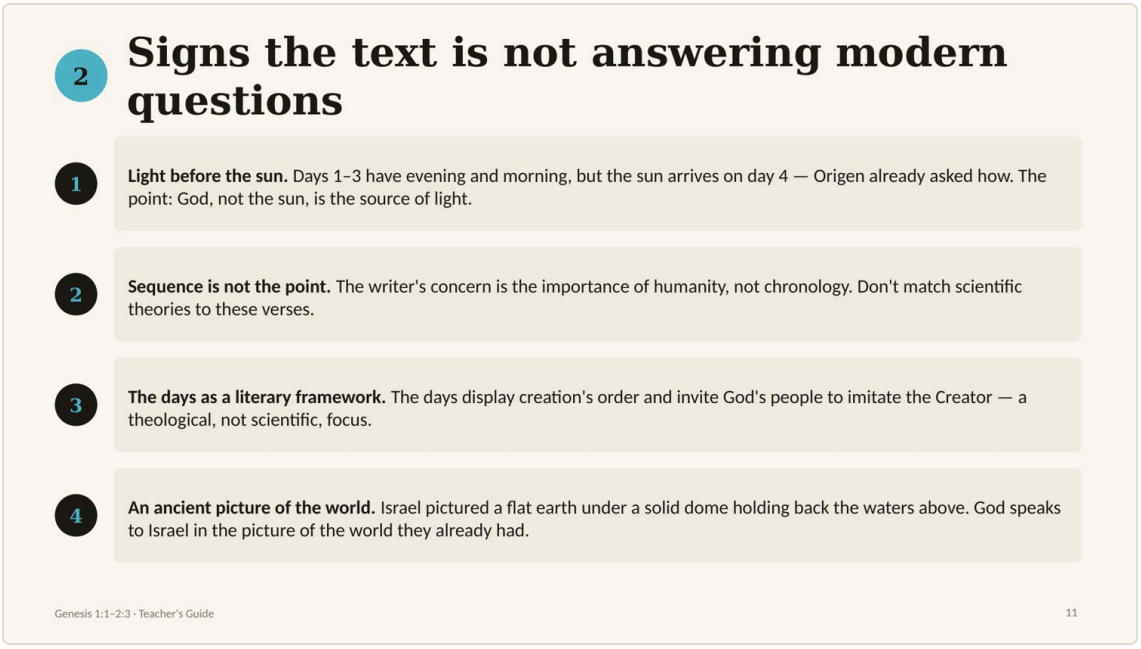


TEACHING NOTES

Genesis 1:1–2:3 speaks to the nature of God, the world and the human person, not to physics, chemistry and biology (Provan, 2015, p. 67). Q1: Yahweh alone (Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 26). Q3: humanity the high point of creation (Sarna, 1989, p. xii).

Teaching tip: pause after each question and let the class answer before you click.

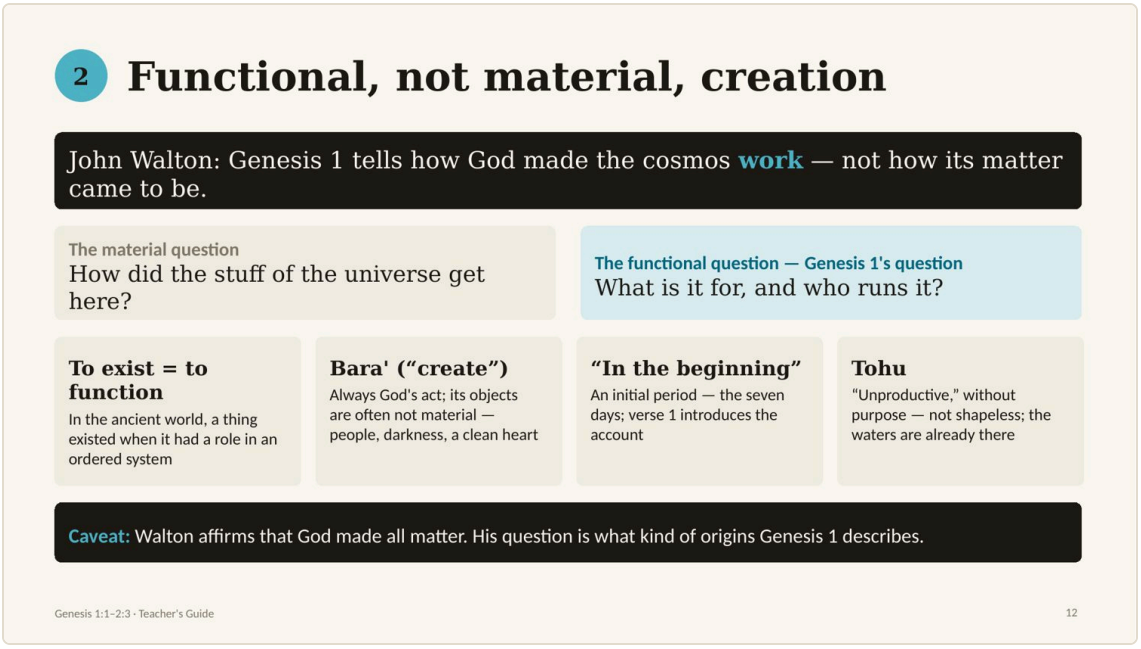
SLIDE 11



TEACHING NOTES

Origen already asked how days 1–3 could have mornings and evenings without sun or moon (Provan, 2015, p. 61). God, not the sun, is the source of light — likely aimed at worship of creatures (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 61). Sequence not the author's concern (Provan, 2015, p. 61); warning against matching science to the text (Wenham, 1987). Framework view (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 61). Ancient cosmology (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 23, 28–29).

SLIDE 12



TEACHING NOTES

John Walton's 'cosmic temple inauguration' view (Walton, 2009, pp. 162–163). Existence = having a function in an ordered system (p. 38); ANE creation texts make almost nothing material (p. 35). Bara' ~50x, always God as subject (p. 40); objects often non-material — people, groups, phenomena like darkness, a clean heart (pp. 41–43). 'Beginning' introduces a period, the seven days; v. 1 introduces, 2:1 concludes (p. 45). Tohu = 'unproductive' (Tsumura, as cited in Walton, 2009, p. 48; p. 49). Caveat (p. 44): Walton affirms God made all matter, ex nihilo at some point; his claim concerns what kind of origins Genesis 1 describes. Contrast Sarna (1989, p. 5).

SLIDE 13

2 Walton's reading at a glance

Genesis 1	Walton's functional reading
Bara' ("create")	Assigning functions
Starting point (1:2)	No functions yet — not no material
Days 1-3	The three great functions of life: time, weather, food
Days 4-6	Functionaries receive their roles and spheres
"It is good"	Functioning well for people (cf. 2:18)
Day 7	God rests in his cosmic temple — he moves in and rules

Walton's name for it: **a seven-day inauguration of the cosmic temple.**

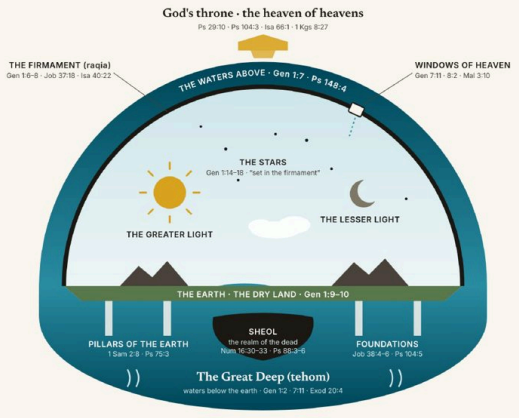
Genesis 1:1–2:3 · Teacher's Guide 13

TEACHING NOTES

From Walton's summary of the cosmic temple inauguration view (Walton, 2009, p. 163). 'Good' = functional, cf. Gen 2:18 'It is not good for the man to be alone' (p. 51). Because Genesis 1 gives no mechanism for material origins, Walton leaves room for science to explore them (p. 163). Discussion: what changes in the 'science vs. Genesis' debate if Genesis 1 is about function?

SLIDE 14

2 The ancient picture of the world



How ancient Israel pictured the world God made: a dome over a flat earth, holding back the waters above and below.

The earth
Dry land set on pillars and foundations (1 Sam 2:8)

The great deep (tehom)
Waters below and around the earth (Gen 1:2; 7:11)

Sheol
The realm of the dead beneath the earth

The expanse (raqia)
"Firmament" in older translations: a dome over the earth (Gen 1:6–8)

The lights
Sun, moon, and stars set in the expanse (1:14–18)

The waters above
An ocean held back by the dome (Gen 1:7; 7:11)

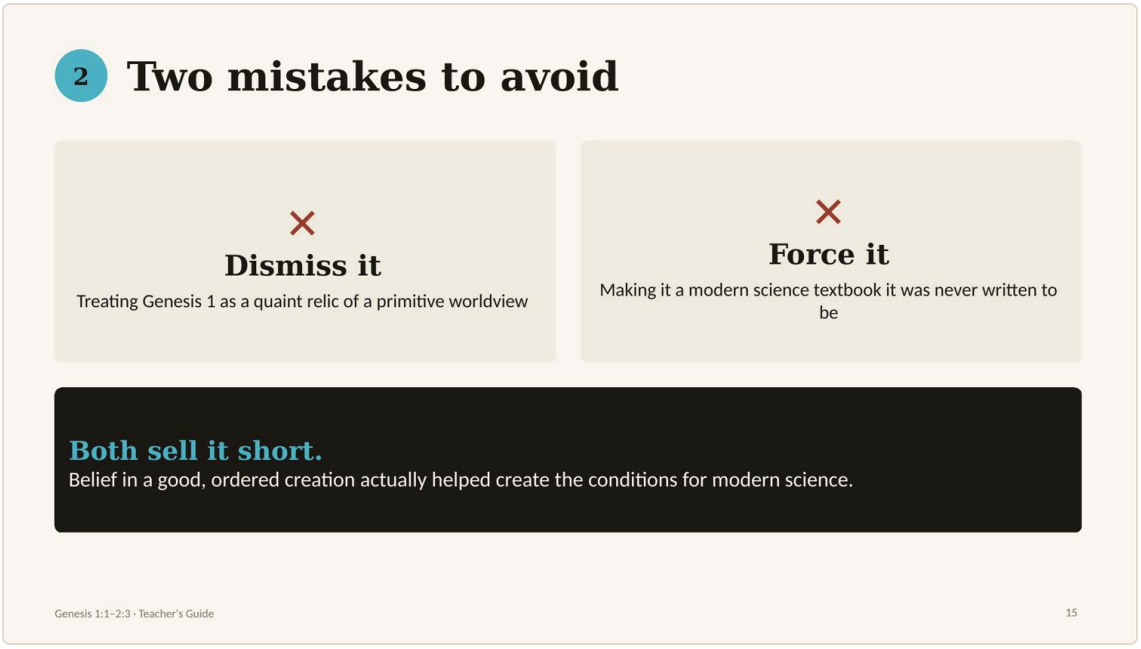
God's throne
Above it all: "Heaven is My throne" (Isa 66:1)

Genesis 1:1–2:3 · Teacher's Guide 14

TEACHING NOTES

Original diagram (same one as the student guide), after the 'Ancient Cosmology' diagram in Enns & Byas (2019, p. 23). Labels build from the ground up: earth, the deep, Sheol, firmament, lights, waters above, God's throne. Ask: where do the 'windows of heaven' in Gen 7:11 fit? Note the firmament 'hammered out' (Exod 39:3; Job 37:18) though poetic texts may be figurative (Wenham, 1987).

SLIDE 15



TEACHING NOTES

Both sell the Bible short; Gen 1 describes the cosmos in ancient terms because it was written by and for ancient Israelites (Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 28). Belief in a divinely ordained, good creation (Ps 8, 104) helped create conditions for modern science — Kepler (Provan, 2015, p. 67).

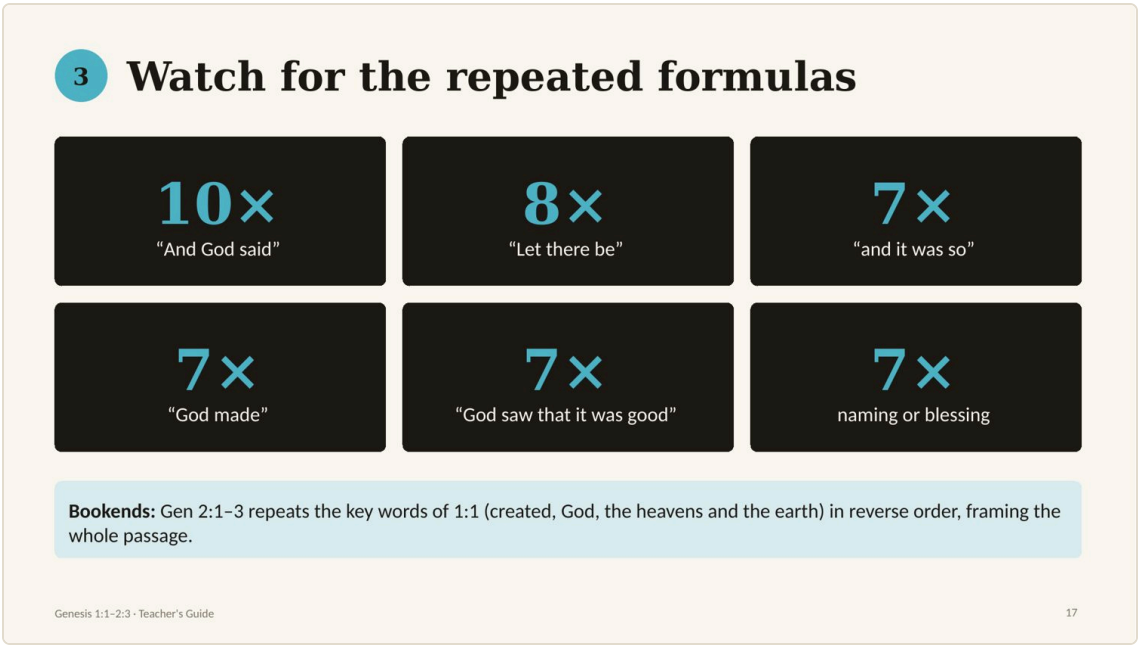
SLIDE 16



TEACHING NOTES

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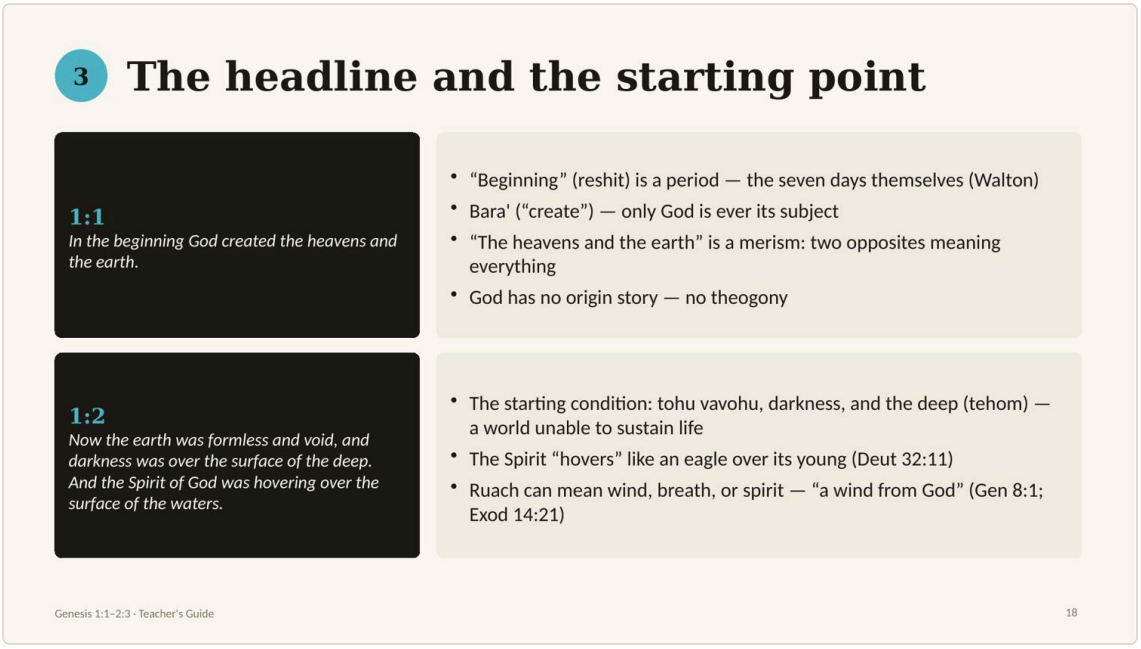
SLIDE 17



TEACHING NOTES

Formula counts from Wenham (1987). Gen 2:1–3 repeats the key words of 1:1 in reverse order — created, God, heavens and earth — so 'God created' brackets the whole section (inclusio). Ask students: what does this repetition sound like? (Liturgy, a hymn.)

SLIDE 18

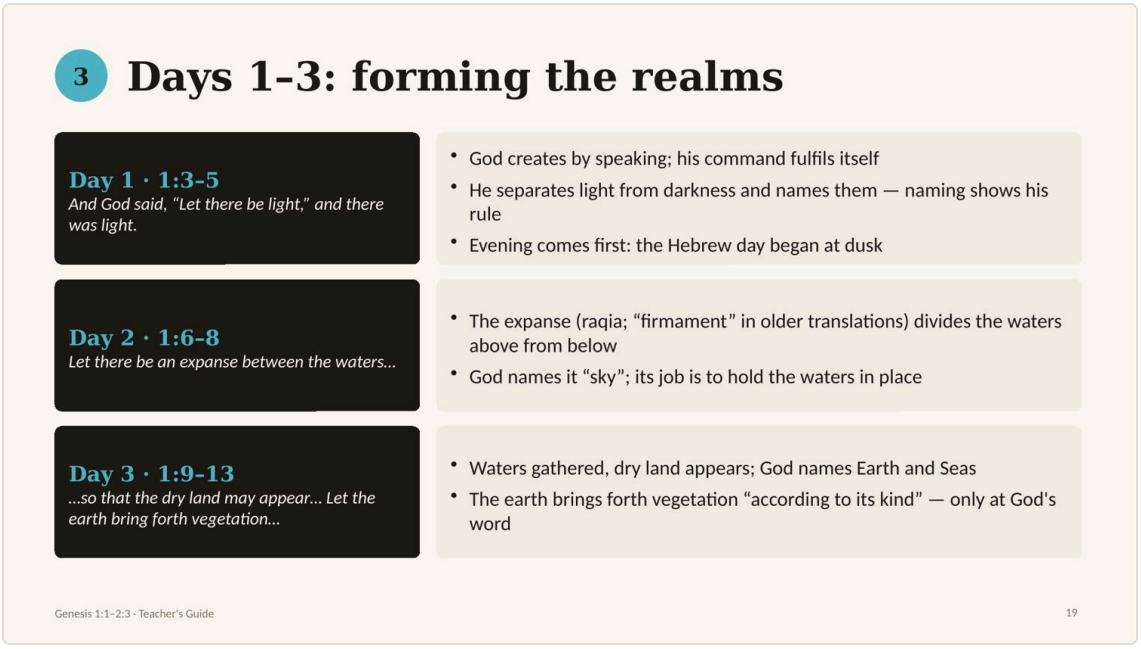


TEACHING NOTES

1:1 — 'beginning' (reshit) names the initial period, the seven days themselves; v. 1 introduces the account and 2:1 closes it (Walton, 2009, pp. 45–46). A different view: Wenham reads reshit as the start of time itself, v. 1 describing God's first creative act (Wenham, 1987); bara' only with God as subject (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 59); merism and no theogony (Sarna, 1989, p. 5).

1:2 — desolate land and dark ocean unable to sustain life (Provan, 2015, p. 63); 'hovering' like the eagle of Deut 32:11 (Sarna, 1989, p. 6). Ruach: wind, breath, or spirit; Jewish versions often 'a wind from God,' Wenham 'the Wind of God' — the same wind that pushes back the flood (Gen 8:1) and parts the sea (Exod 14:21) (Sarna, 1989, p. 6; Wenham, 1987).

SLIDE 19



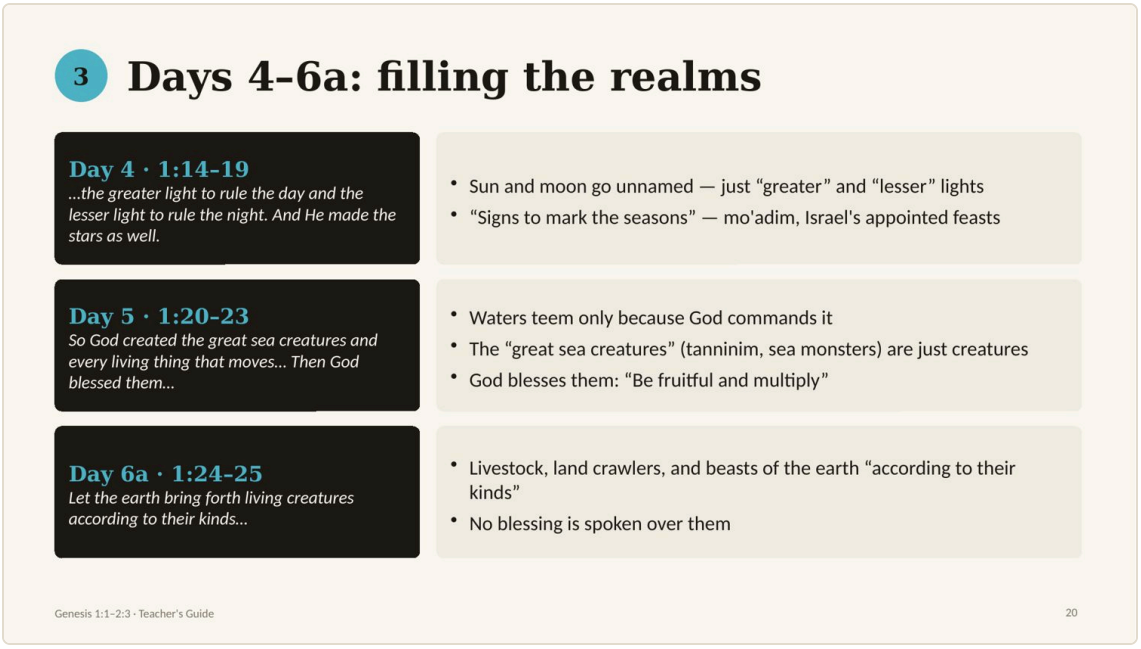
TEACHING NOTES

Day 1: command fulfils itself (Sarna, 1989, p. 7); naming as dominion (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 56); day begins at dusk (Wenham, 1987).

Day 2: firmament divides the waters (Wenham, 1987).

Day 3: the earth as means of God's life-giving power (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 62). Day 3 has two acts.

SLIDE 20



TEACHING NOTES

Day 4: unnamed lights and mo'adim (Wenham, 1987; Sarna, 1989, p. 9).

Day 5: water produces life only at God's command (Sarna, 1989, p. 10).

Day 6a: land animals receive no blessing — humans are blessed to rule them (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 64).

SLIDE 21

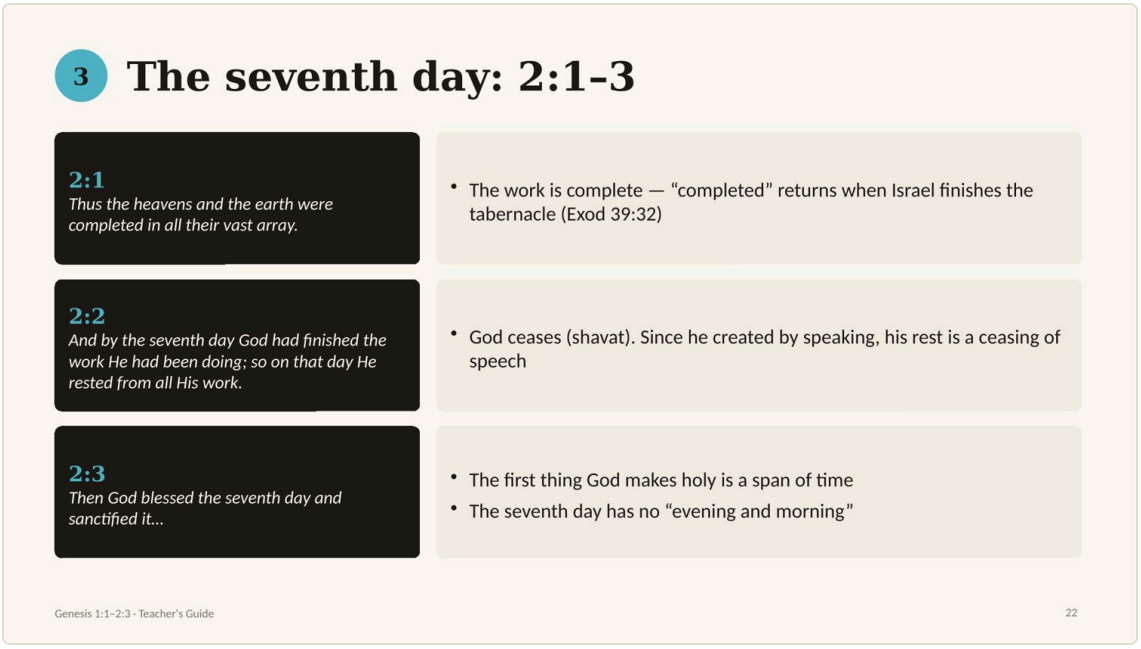


TEACHING NOTES

1:26 — 'let us' as the only advance announcement (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 64). Options for 'us': Spirit of 1:2, heavenly court, plural of majesty, Trinitarian canonical reading (Provan, 2015, pp. 64–65).

Image and rule (Provan, 2015, p. 65). 'Very good' implies work and progress still to come (Provan, 2015, pp. 63–64). Point to make: God's 'very good' does not cancel the command to 'fill the earth and subdue it; rule over...' (1:28). Humans are commissioned to rule and subdue, which implies forces in the good world that still need ordering — goodness is a starting point for human work, not a finished state.

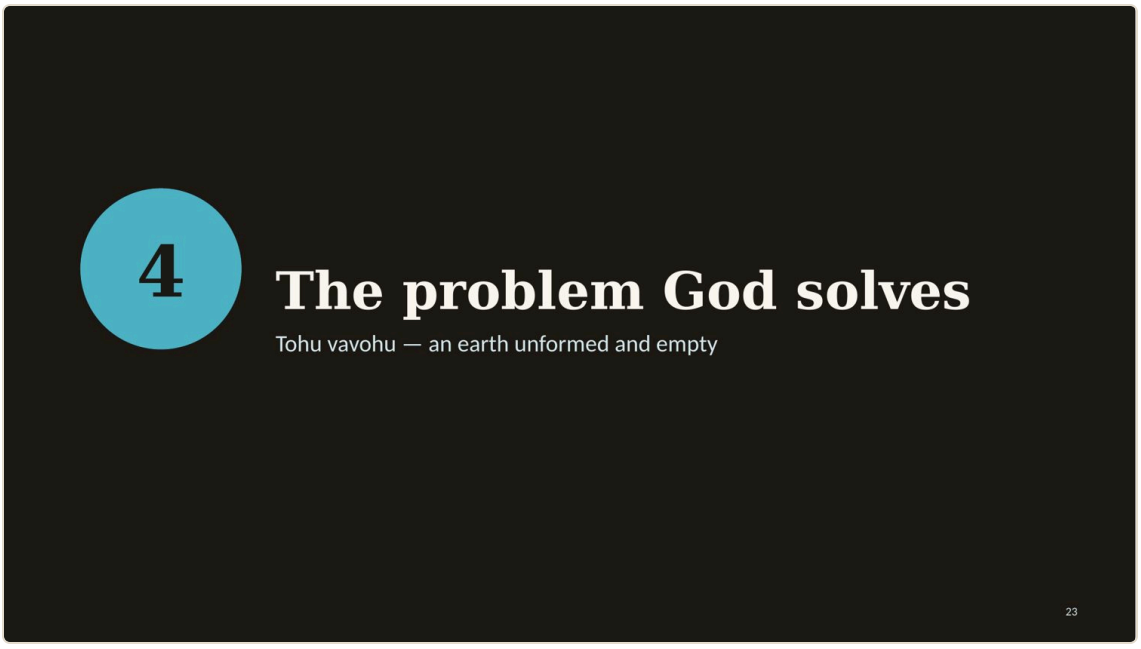
SLIDE 22



TEACHING NOTES

2:2 — rest as ceasing of speech (Provan, 2015, p. 62). 2:1 finished → Exod 39:32. Preview: section 6 develops all three verses.

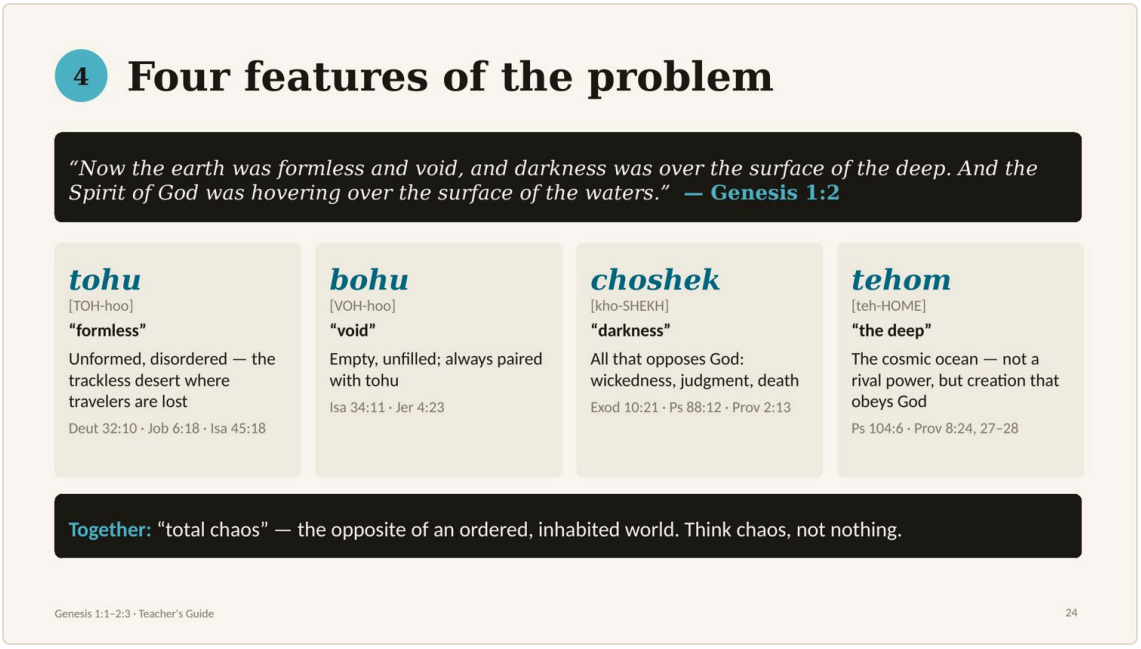
SLIDE 23



TEACHING NOTES

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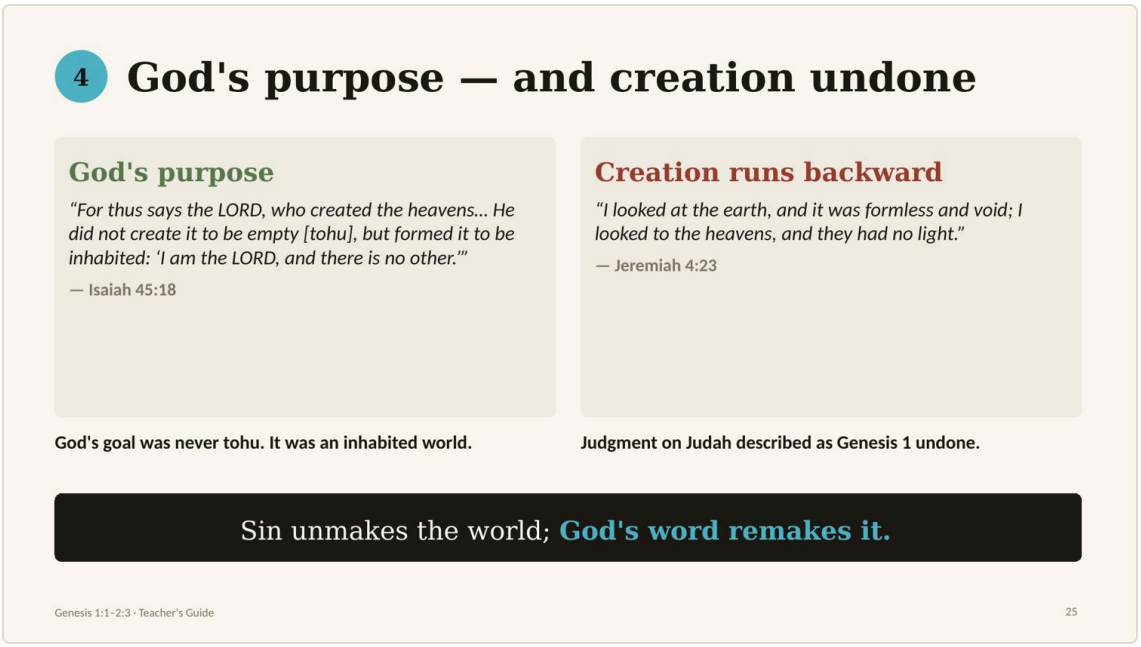
SLIDE 24



TEACHING NOTES

Dark abyss hostile to life (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 60). Tohu as trackless desert; Walton: 'unproductive,' nonfunctional (Walton, 2009, pp. 48–49); darkness as all opposed to God; the deep as part of creation obeying God (Wenham, 1987; Sarna, 1989, p. 6). Tohu vavohu as 'total chaos' (Wenham, 1987) — think chaos, not nothing (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 20–21).

SLIDE 25



TEACHING NOTES

Isa 45:18: God did not create the earth tohu but to be inhabited. Jer 4:23: judgment on Judah as a return to primal chaos (Sarna, 1989, p. 6). Connect to the exiles: Jeremiah's vision came true in 586 BC; Genesis 1 told them God's word can remake what sin unmade.

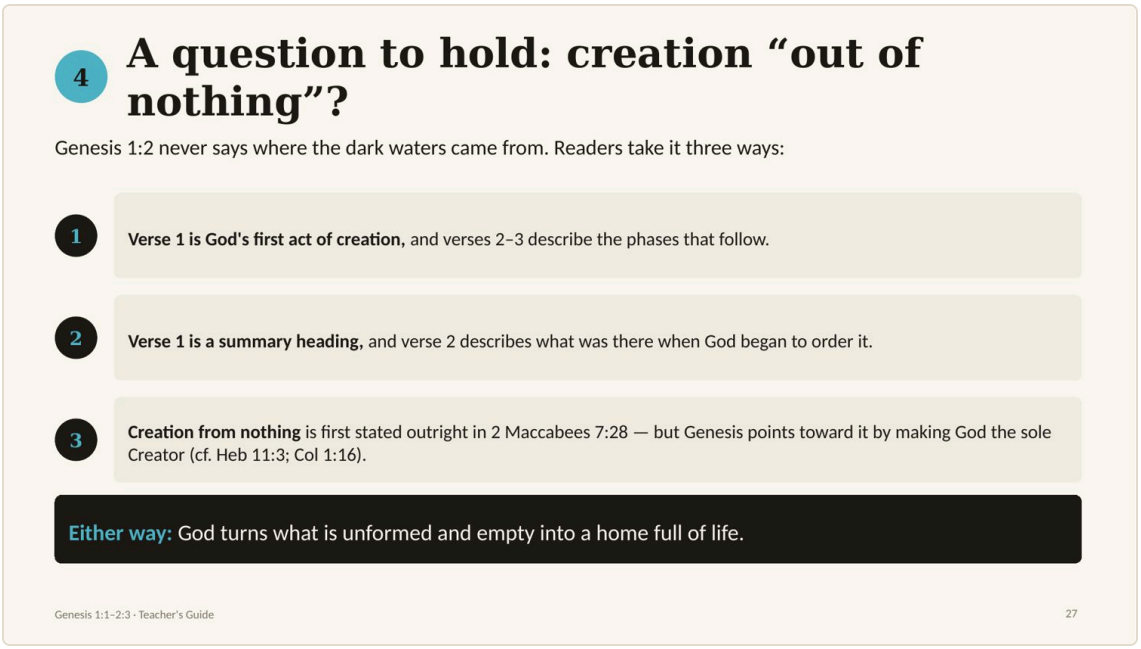
SLIDE 26



TEACHING NOTES

Matt 24:29 (BSB) draws on the prophets' de-creation language for judgment: Isa 13:10 (Babylon), Isa 34:4 (Edom), Joel 2:10, Ezek 32:7–8 (Egypt). The lights of day 4 going dark = the world pictured sliding back toward Gen 1:2.

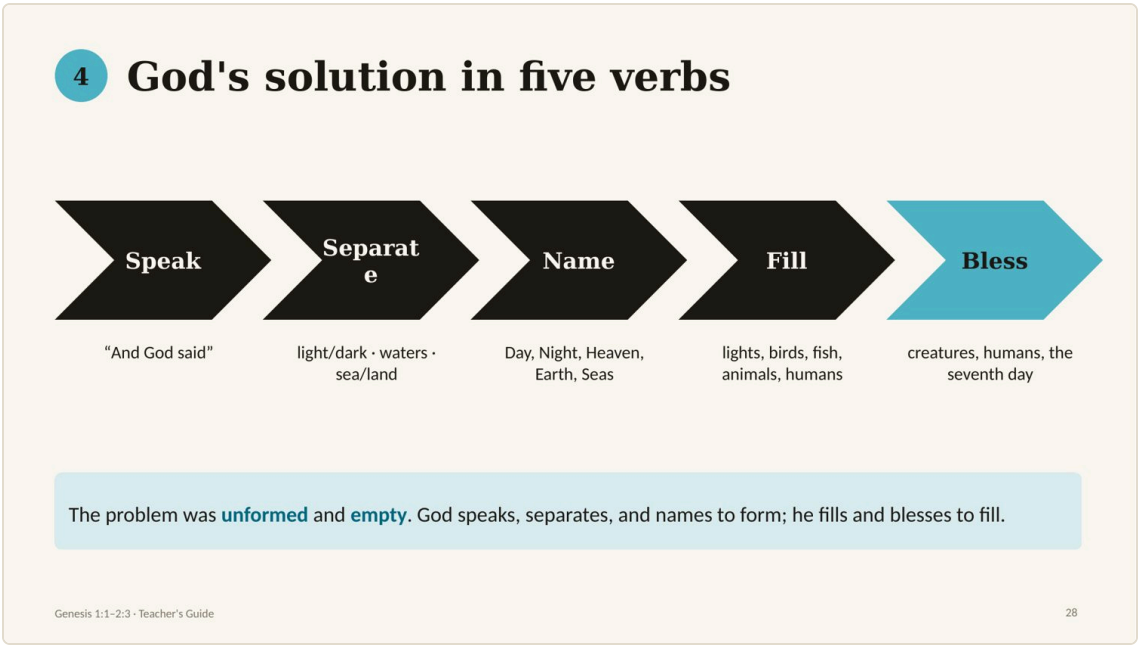
SLIDE 27



TEACHING NOTES

Genesis 1:2 never says where the dark waters came from (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 59; Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 20). Reading 1: v. 1 a main clause, God's first act (Wenham, 1987). Reading 2: v. 1 a heading; v. 2 describes what was there (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 60; Provan, 2015, p. 63). Reading 3: ex nihilo first stated in 2 Macc 7:28, but Genesis points toward it (Sarna, 1989, p. 5; cf. Heb 11:3; Col 1:16). Walton: Genesis 1 describes functional origins, though he affirms God made all matter (Walton, 2009, pp. 44–45). Let the class hold the tension.

SLIDE 28



TEACHING NOTES

These five verbs organize the whole chapter. Waltke: the repeated verbs stress God's all-powerful, all-knowing presence (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 56).

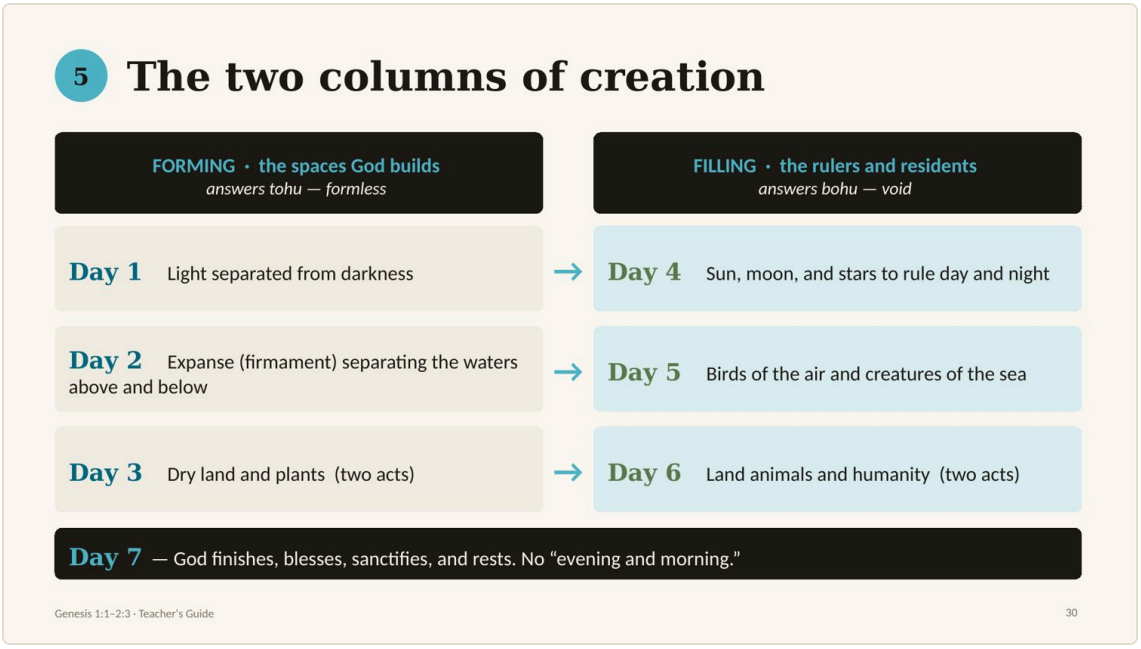
SLIDE 29



TEACHING NOTES

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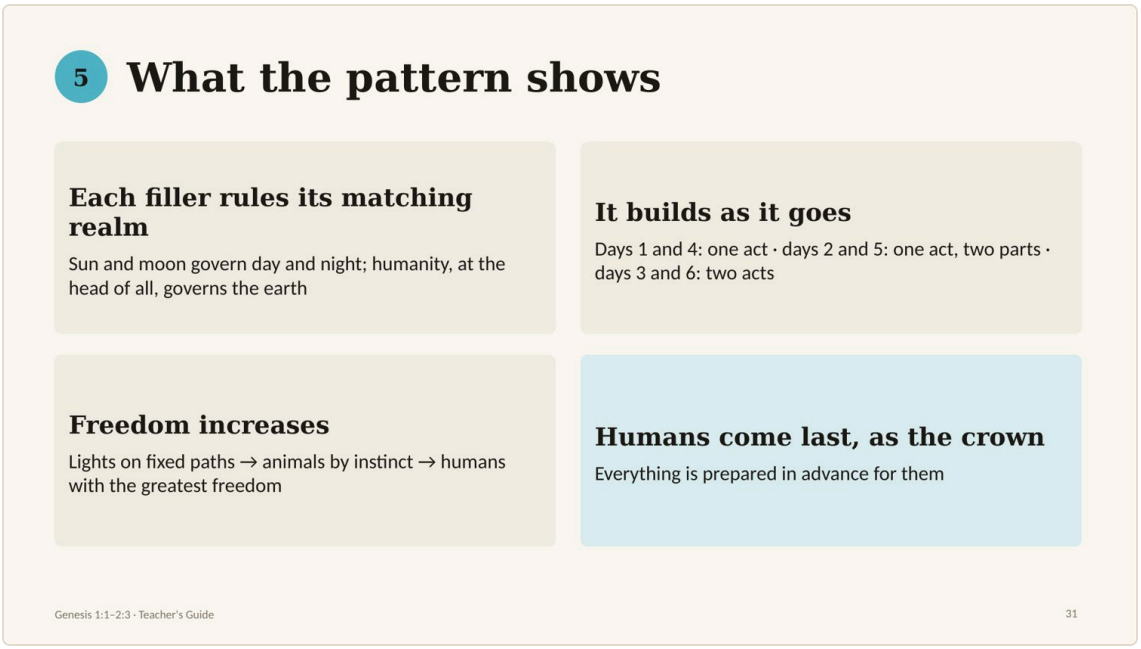
SLIDE 30



TEACHING NOTES

Days 1–3 form, days 4–6 fill (Provan, 2015, p. 62; Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 57; Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 21). Pattern from Sarna (1989, p. 4) and Waltke & Fredricks (2001, p. 57), who call the columns 'the Resource' and 'the Utilizer.' Build order pairs each day with its match: 1→4, 2→5, 3→6.

SLIDE 31



TEACHING NOTES

All four from Waltke & Fredricks (2001, pp. 57–58), plus Provan (2015, pp. 60–61) and Sarna (1989, p. 11) on humanity as the crown.

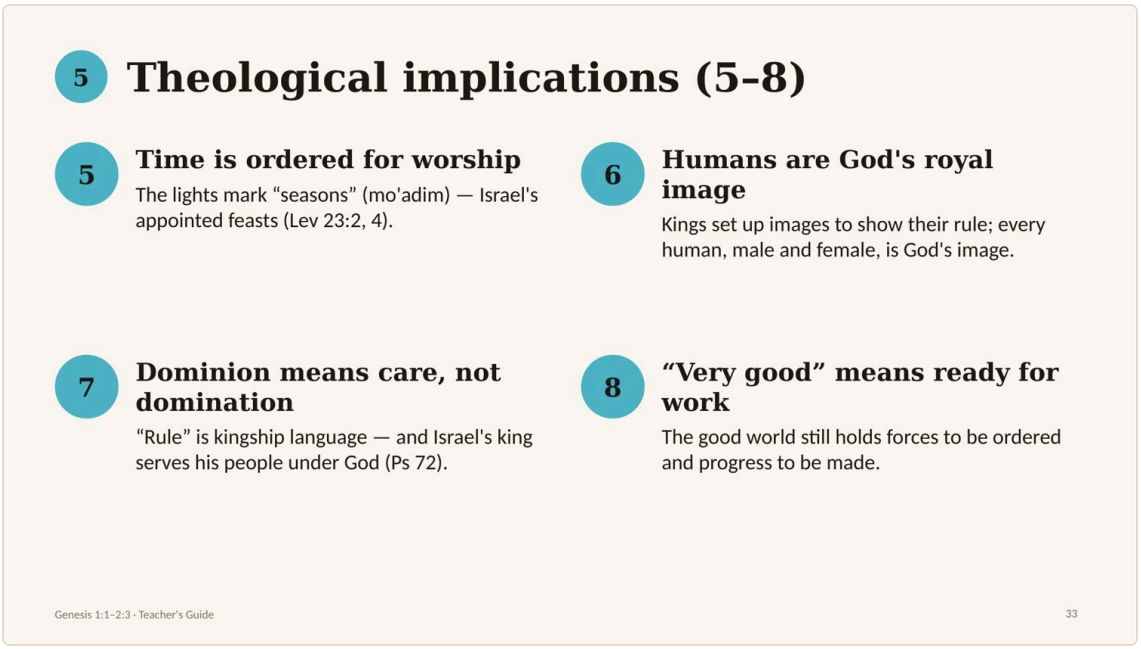
SLIDE 32



TEACHING NOTES

1: Waltke & Fredricks (2001, p. 56). 2: boundaries (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 56); separation near to election (Wenham, 1987). 3: naming (Wenham, 1987). 4: nature has no power of its own (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, pp. 62–63; Sarna, 1989, p. 9).

SLIDE 33



TEACHING NOTES

5: Wenham (1987); Enns & Byas (2019, p. 24). 6: Enns & Byas (2019, p. 25); Provan (2015, pp. 65, 76). 7: Provan (2015, p. 66). 8: Provan (2015, pp. 63–64). Walton: 'good' is functional — cf. 2:18 'It is not good for the man to be alone' (Walton, 2009, p. 51).

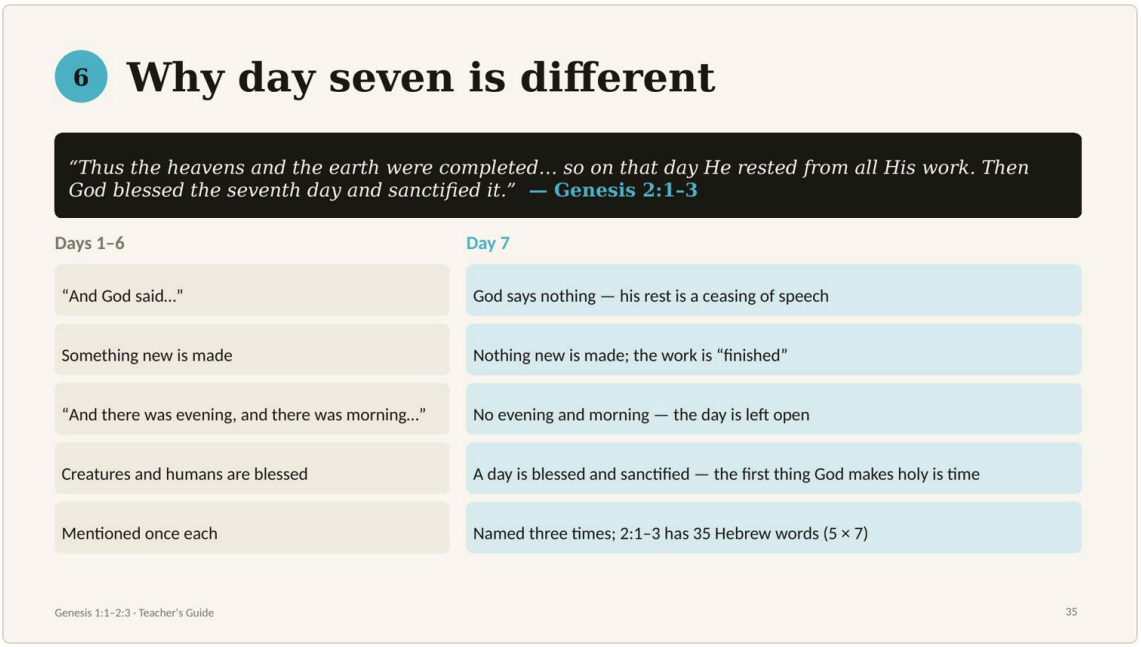
SLIDE 34



TEACHING NOTES

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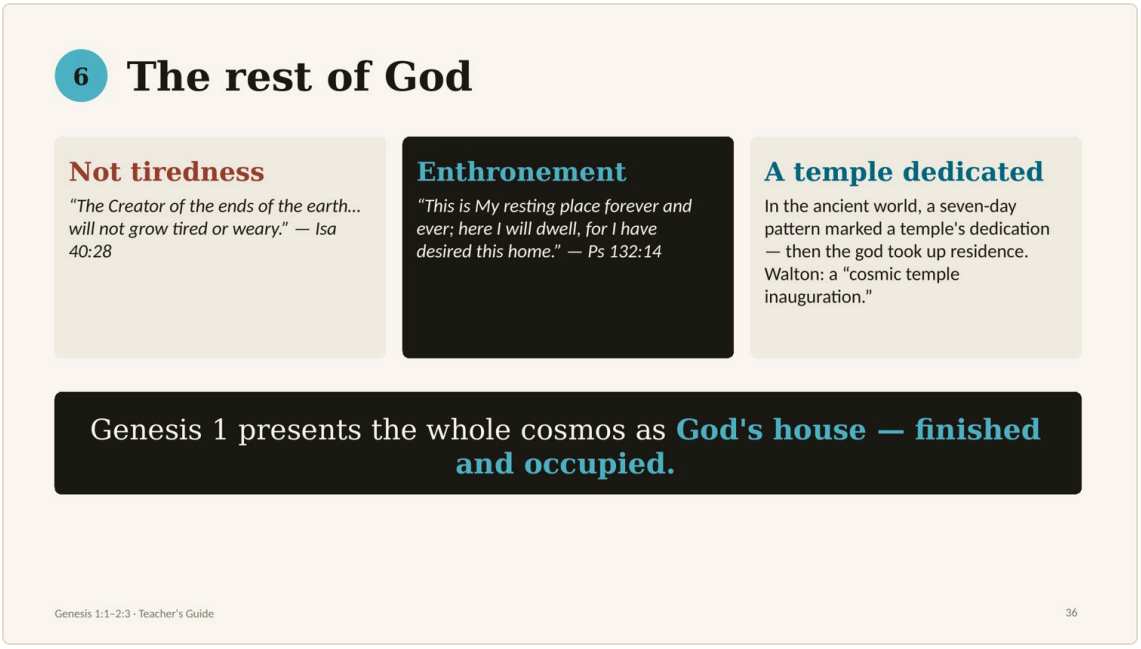
SLIDE 35



TEACHING NOTES

Rest as ceasing of speech (Provan, 2015, p. 62). Gen 2:1–3 has 35 Hebrew words, 5 × 7 (Wenham, 1987). 'The seventh day' occurs three times.

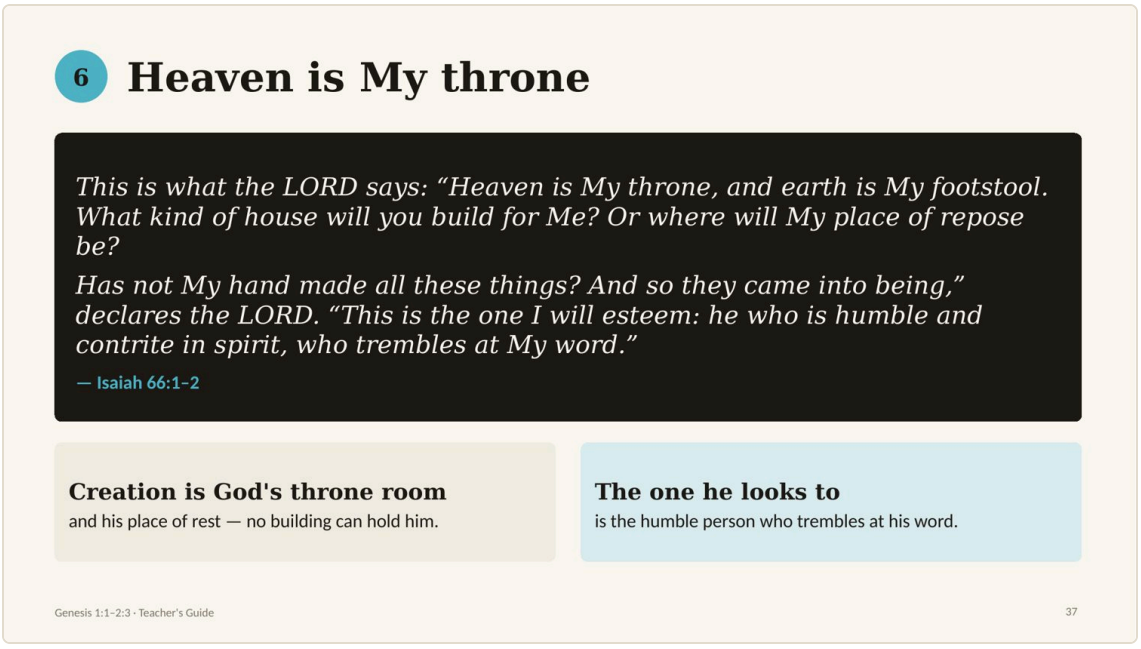
SLIDE 36



TEACHING NOTES

God does not rest from weariness (Isa 40:28). Rest = enthronement in his dwelling (Ps 132:14; Isa 66:1–2 on the next slide). Seven-day temple dedications: Gudea of Lagash; Mesopotamian and Ugaritic six-plus-one patterns (Sarna, 1989, p. 4). Walton: the seven days inaugurate the cosmos as God's temple, the place from which he lives and rules (Walton, 2009, pp. 162–163).

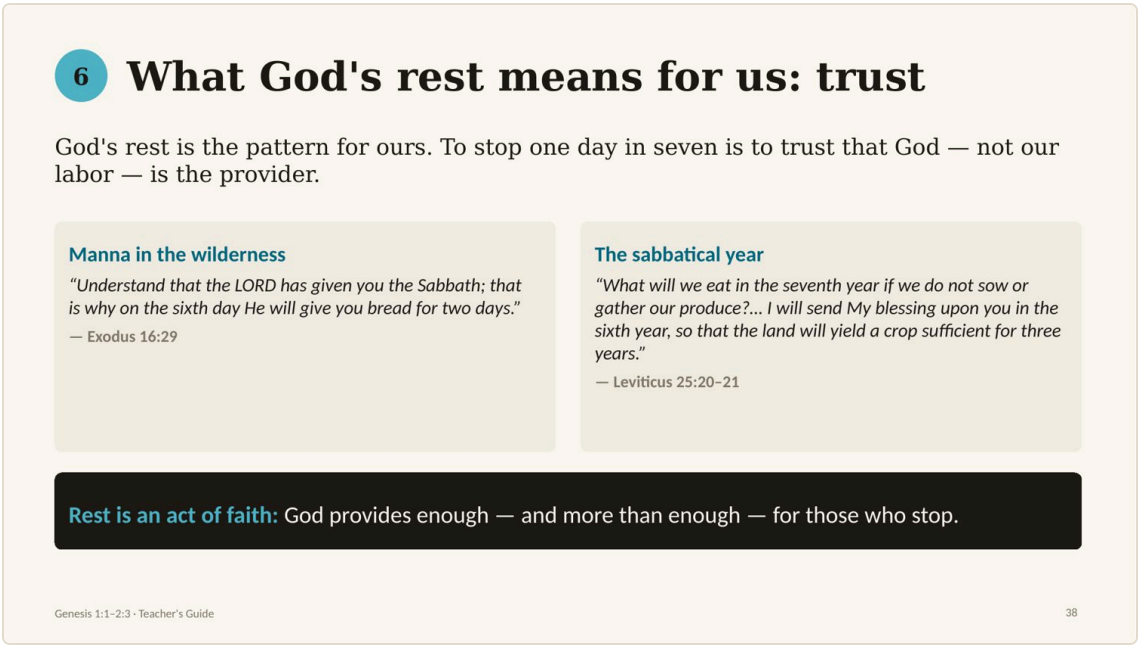
SLIDE 37



TEACHING NOTES

Isa 66:1–2 (BSB) ties creation, God's rest, and the humble worshiper together: all creation is God's throne room and place of rest, so no building can hold him (cf. 1 Kgs 8:27; Acts 7:48–50). The one he looks to is the humble person who trembles at his word.

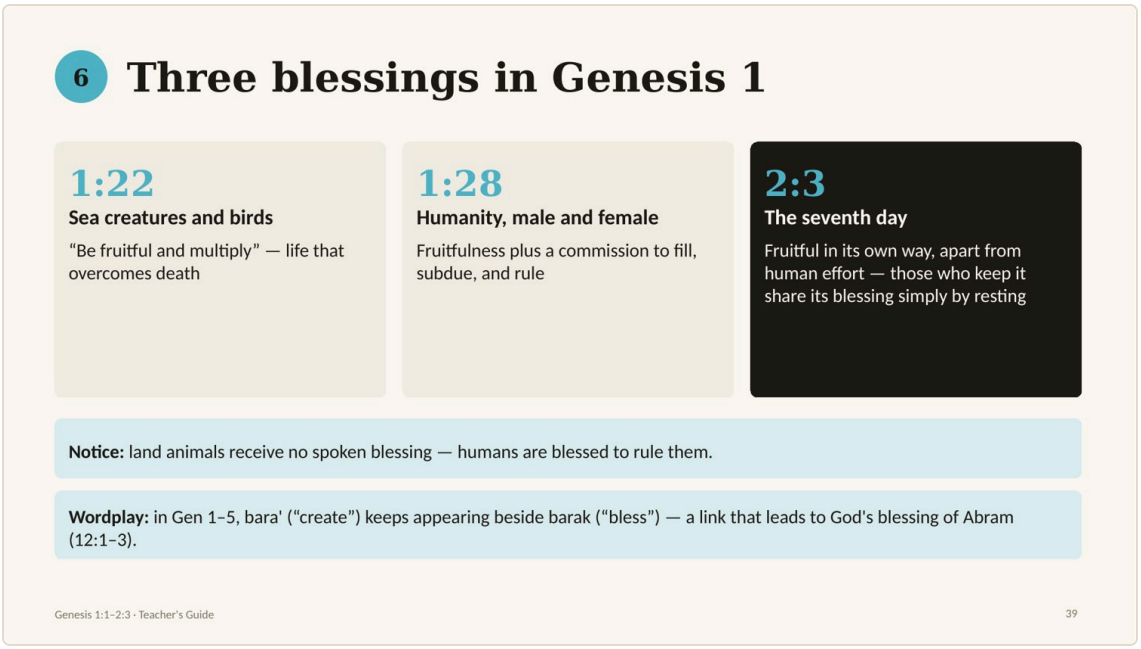
SLIDE 38



TEACHING NOTES

Rest as an act of faith that God provides. Manna (Exod 16) and the sabbatical year (Lev 25) both test whether Israel trusts God's provision. Application question: what would it look like to stop, trusting God with unfinished work?

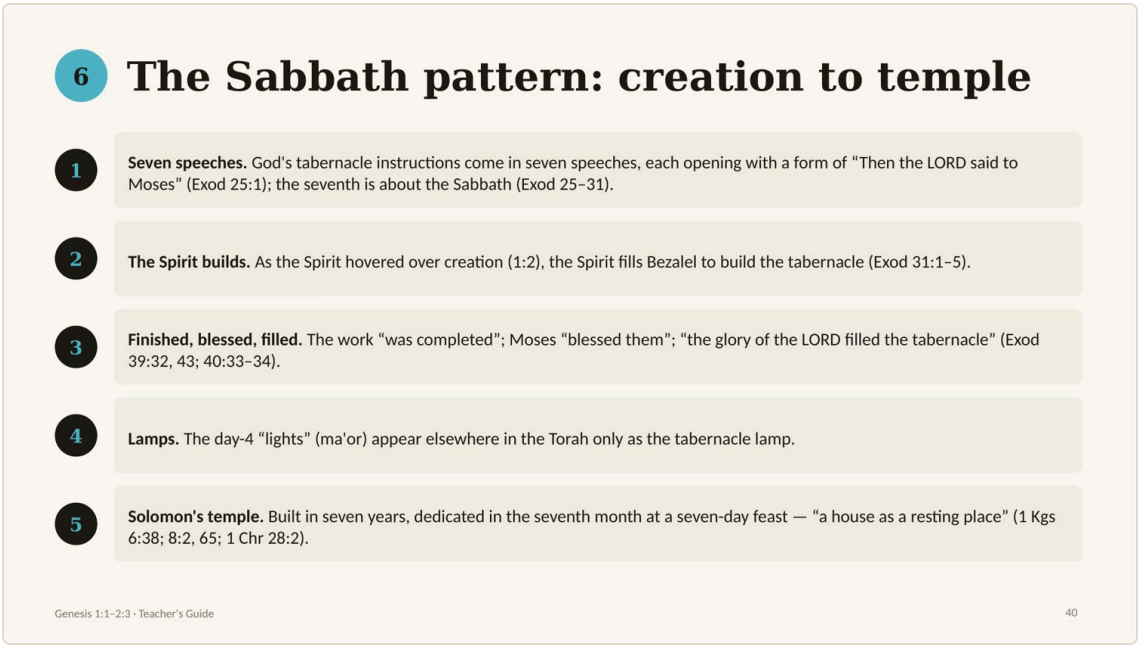
SLIDE 39



TEACHING NOTES

Blessing = life's potency overcoming death (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 63). Sabbath fruitful apart from human effort (Provan, 2015, p. 67). Land animals unblessed (Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 64). bara'/barak wordplay leading to Abram (Pennant, as cited in Wenham, 1987).

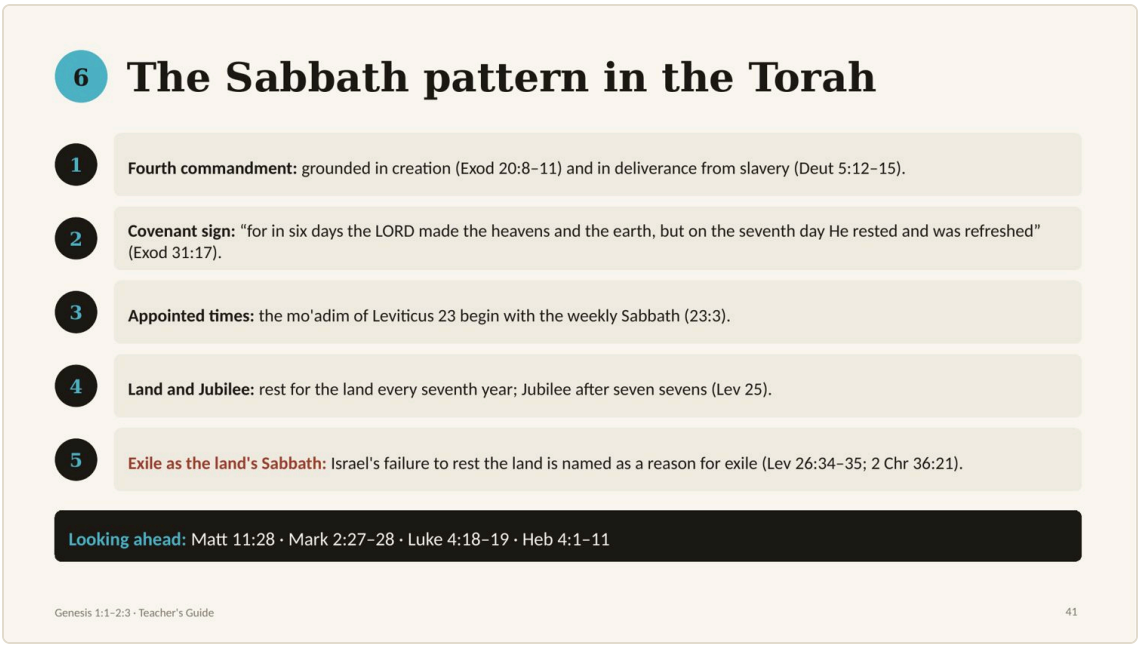
SLIDE 40



TEACHING NOTES

Seven speeches, seventh on Sabbath (Exod 25–31; 31:12–17). The seven openings: Exod 25:1; 30:11; 30:17; 30:22; 30:34; 31:1; 31:12 — compare the ten 'And God said' of Gen 1. Spirit/Bezalel (Sailhamer, as cited in Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, p. 60). Ma'or used elsewhere in the Torah only of the tabernacle lamp (Wenham, 1987). Solomon: 1 Kgs 6:38; 8:2, 65; 1 Chr 28:2; Ps 132:8, 14.

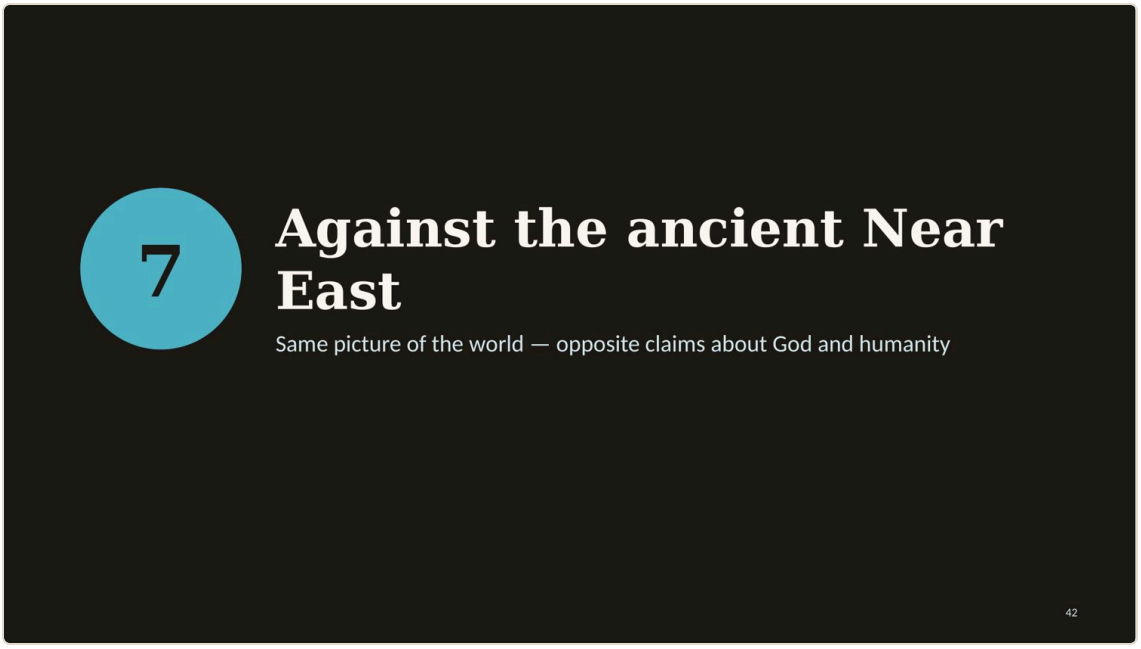
SLIDE 41



TEACHING NOTES

Exod 20:8–11; Deut 5:12–15; Exod 31:13–17; Lev 23:3; Lev 25:1–17; Lev 26:34–35; 2 Chr 36:21. For the exiles, the seventh day carried a sharp reminder. NT preview: Matt 11:28; Mark 2:27–28; Luke 4:18–19; Heb 4:1–11.

SLIDE 42



TEACHING NOTES

No notes for this slide.

SLIDE 43



TEACHING NOTES

Heidel's 'conscious and deliberate anti-mythical polemic' (Heidel, as cited in Wenham, 1987). Enuma Elish: naming at the opening (Sarna, 1989, p. 7); Marduk splits Tiamat (Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 25). Atrahasis (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 26–27). Egypt (Notter, as cited in Wenham, 1987). Ugarit (Sarna, 1989, p. 10). Temple texts (Sarna, 1989, p. 4).

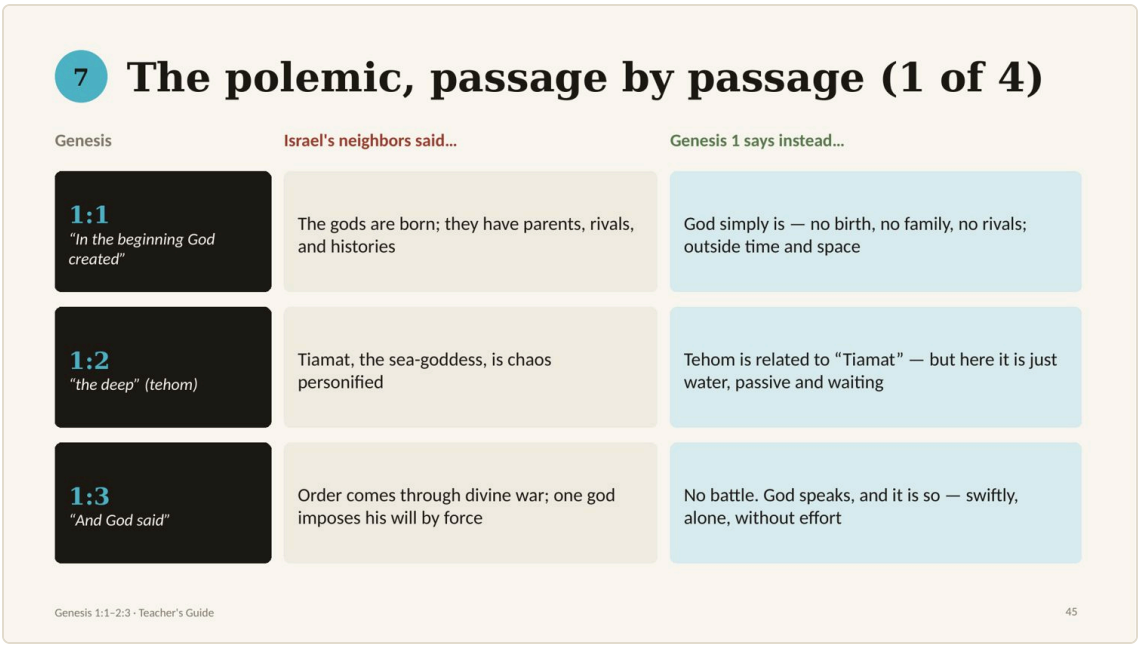
SLIDE 44



TEACHING NOTES

Shared features per Table 3.2 in Enns & Byas (2019, p. 24), adapted from Enns, The Evolution of Adam. Be honest with the class: the overlap is real; the difference is theological.

SLIDE 45

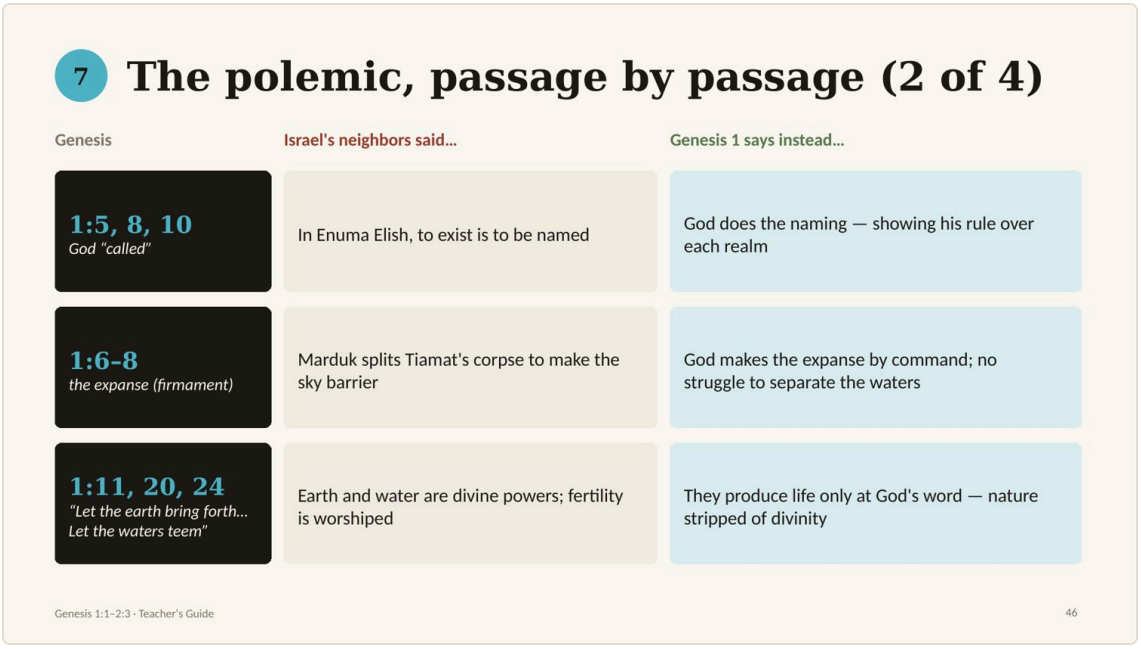


TEACHING NOTES

1:1 — no theogony; God outside time and space (Sarna, 1989, p. 5). 1:2 — tehom demythologized (Sarna, 1989, p. 6; Provan, 2015, p. 63). 1:3 — ANE order through divine war (Sarna, 1989, p. 3); God works alone, without effort (Enns & Byas, 2019, p. 21).

Each row: first click shows the verse and the neighbors' claim; second click shows Genesis' answer.

SLIDE 46

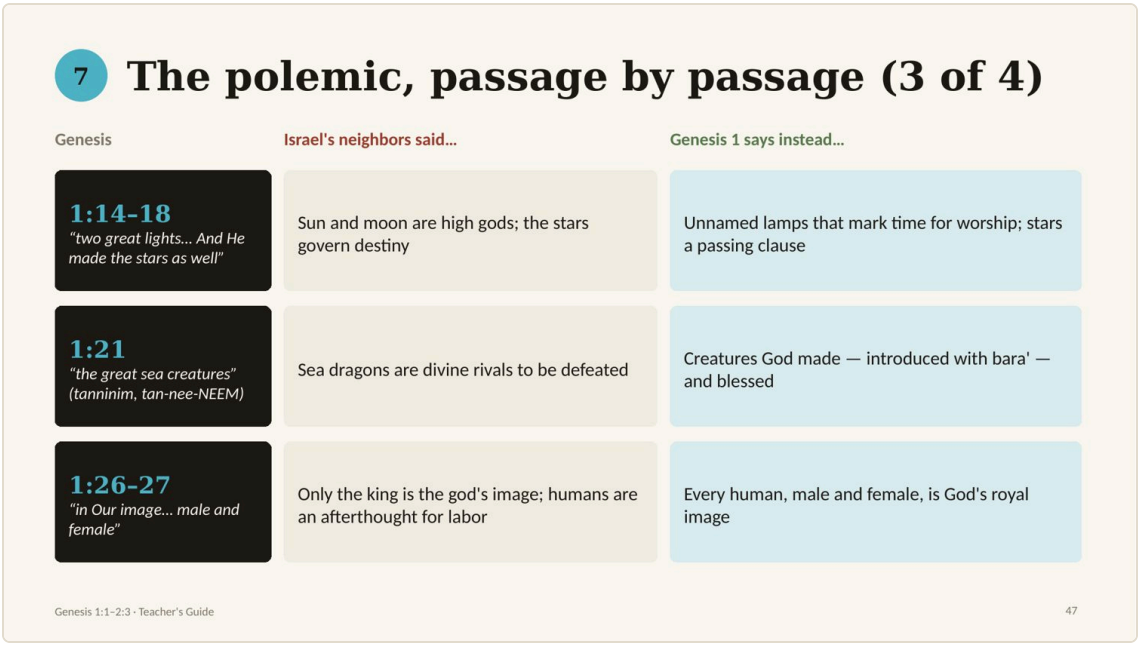


TEACHING NOTES

Naming (Sarna, 1989, p. 7; Wenham, 1987). Firmament by command vs. struggle (Wenham, 1987). Nature desacralized (Sarna, 1989, pp. 9–10; Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, pp. 62–63).

Each row: first click shows the verse and the neighbors' claim; second click shows Genesis' answer.

SLIDE 47

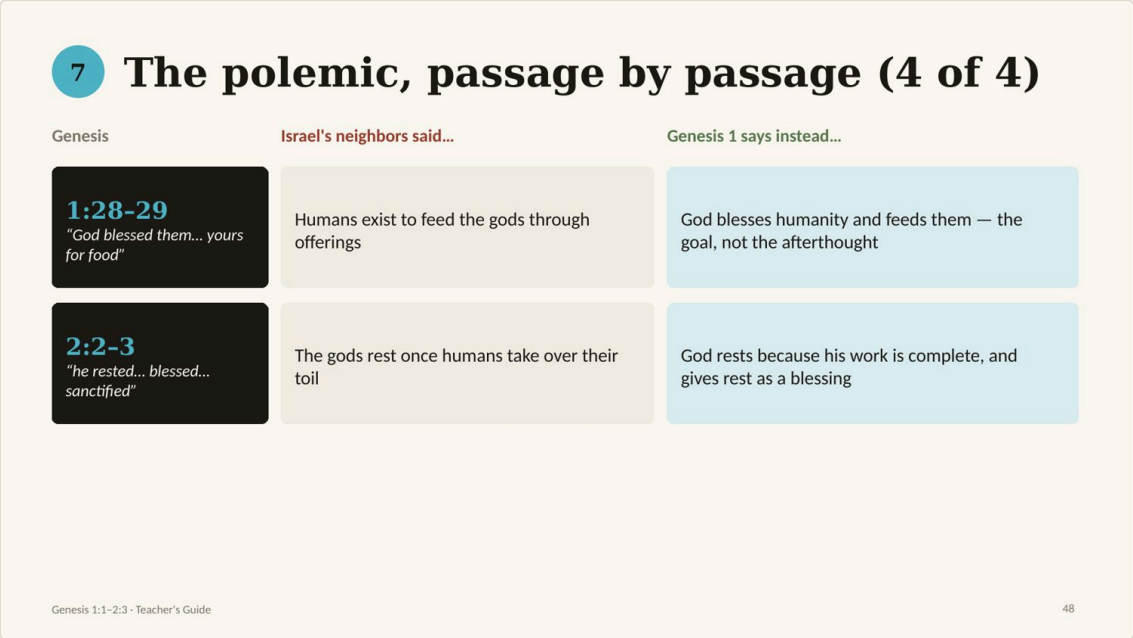


TEACHING NOTES

Lights demoted; Shamash and Yarih avoided (Wenham, 1987; Waltke & Fredricks, 2001, pp. 62–63; Sarna, 1989, p. 10; cf. Jer 10:2). Tanninim (Wenham, 1987; Sarna, 1989, p. 10). Image and equality; Atrahasis (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 25–26).

Each row: first click shows the verse and the neighbors' claim; second click shows Genesis' answer.

SLIDE 48

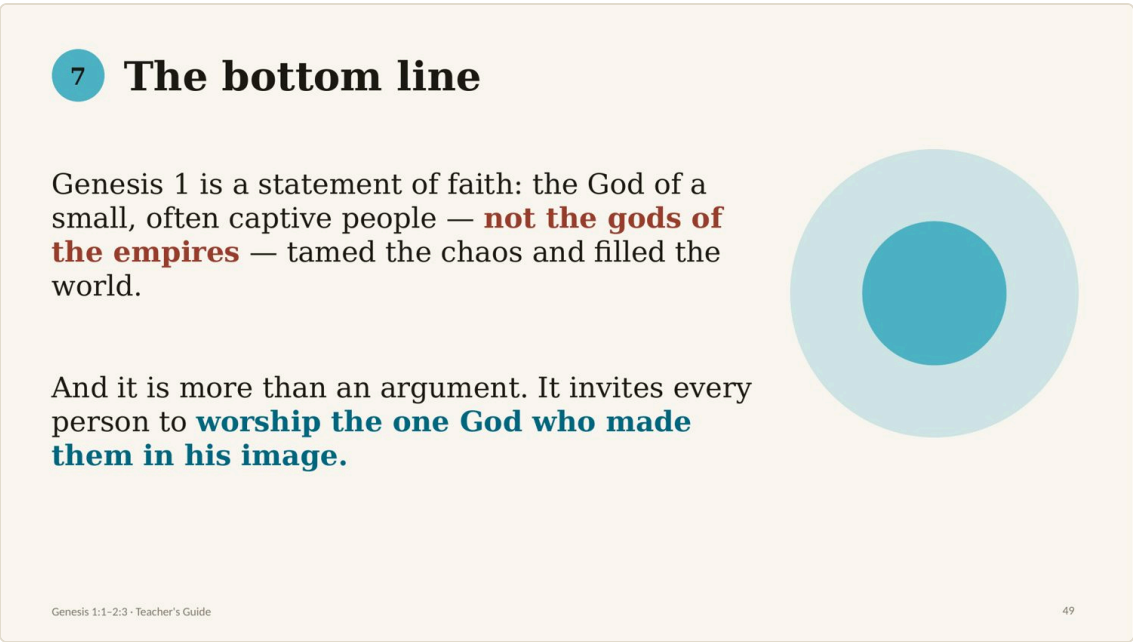


TEACHING NOTES

God feeds humanity; humanity the goal of creation (Wenham, 1987). Rest given even to servants and animals (Exod 20:10–11; Deut 5:14–15).

Each row: first click shows the verse and the neighbors' claim; second click shows Genesis' answer.

SLIDE 49



TEACHING NOTES

Genesis 1 as a statement of faith for a captive people (Enns & Byas, 2019, pp. 26, 28). More than an argument: an invitation for all humanity to worship the one who made them in his image (Wenham, 1987).

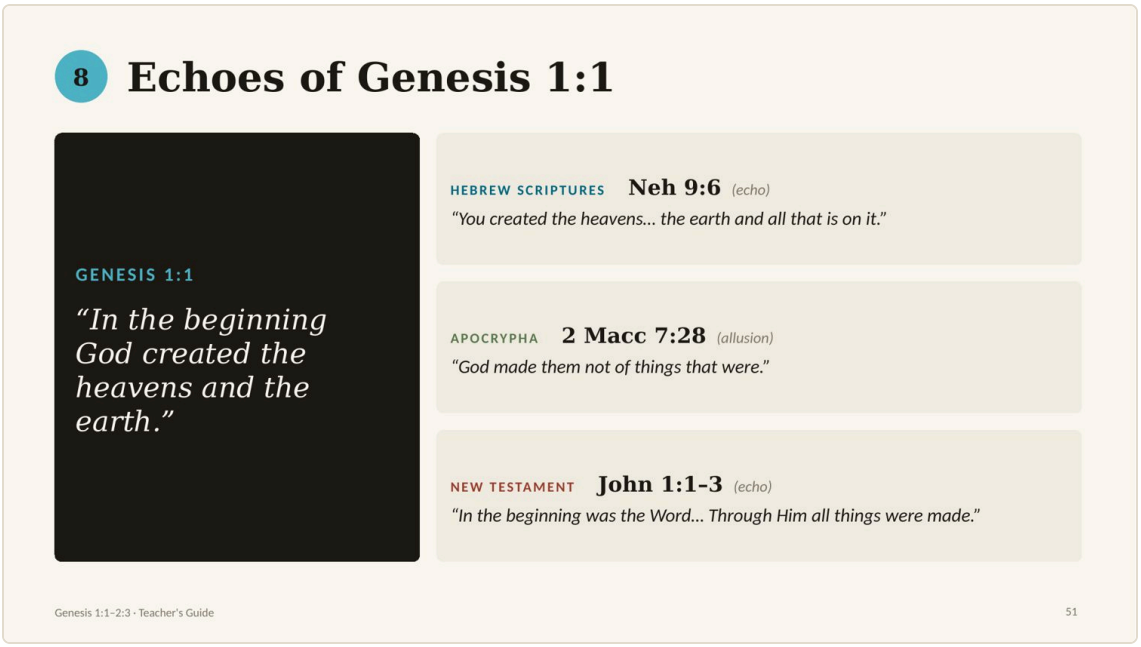
SLIDE 50



TEACHING NOTES

No notes for this slide.

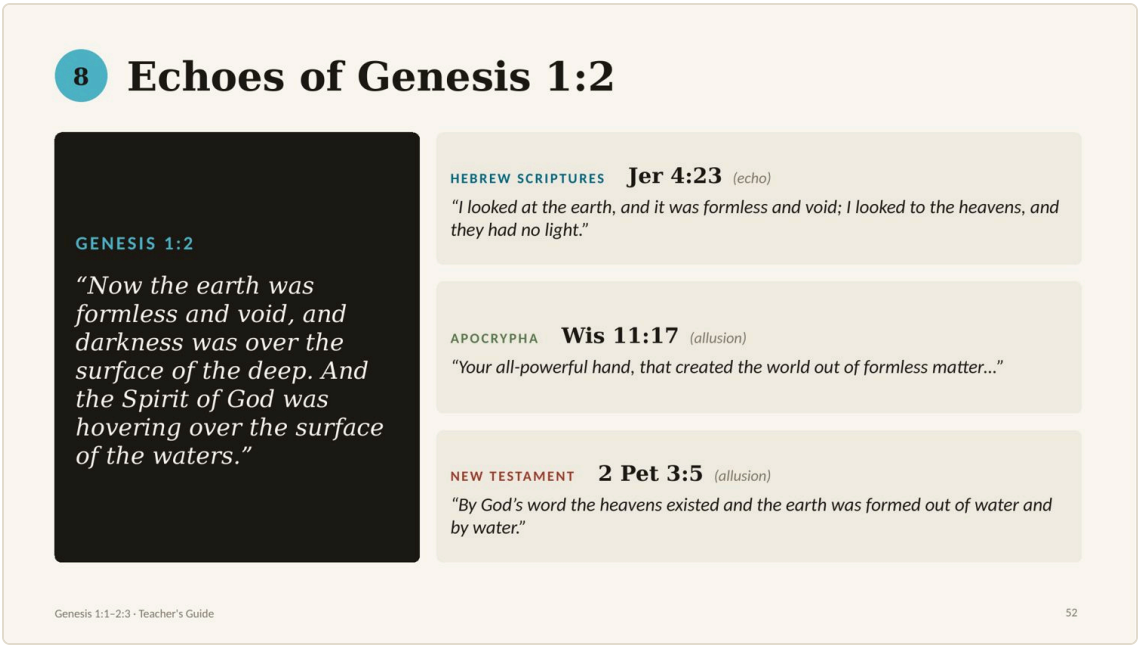
SLIDE 51



TEACHING NOTES

Click 1: the Genesis verse. Clicks 2–4: one echo each from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. Students have the full 'More to read' list in their guide (section 8). Canonical quotations are BSB; Apocrypha quotations are WEB (the BSB has no Apocrypha). 2 Esdras = 4 Ezra.

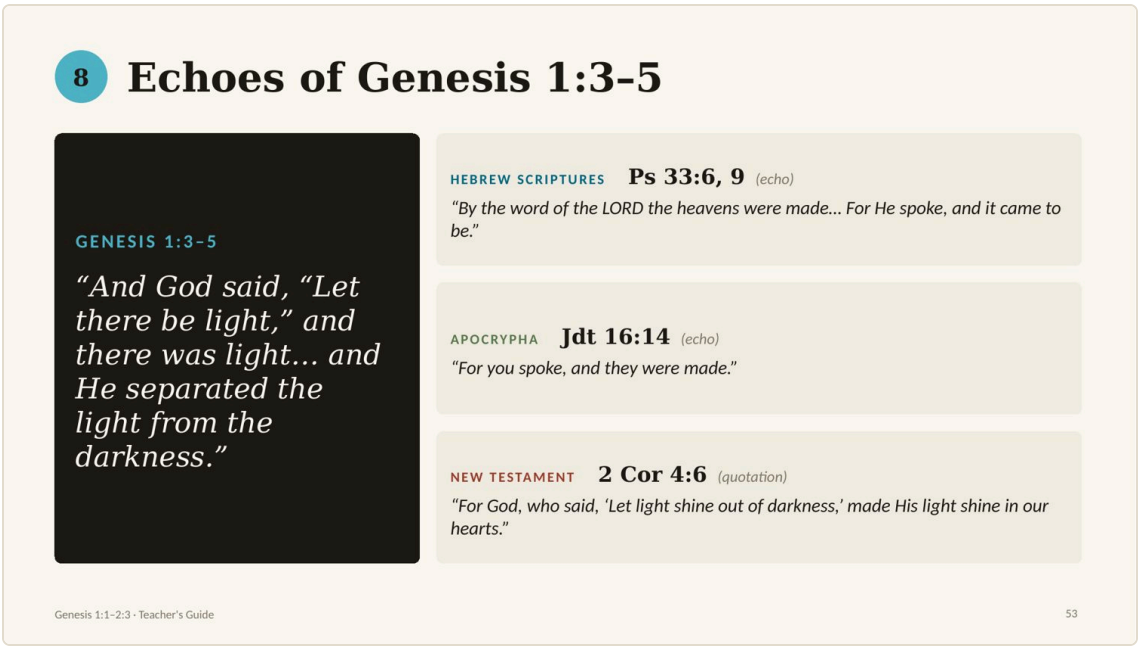
SLIDE 52



TEACHING NOTES

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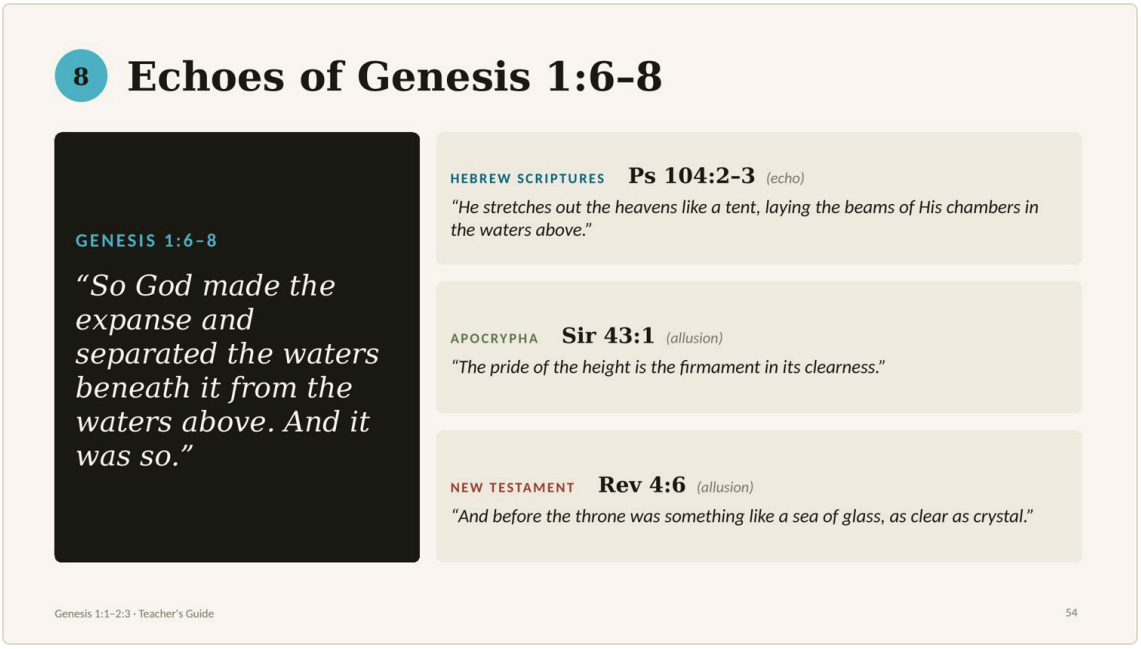
SLIDE 53



TEACHING NOTES

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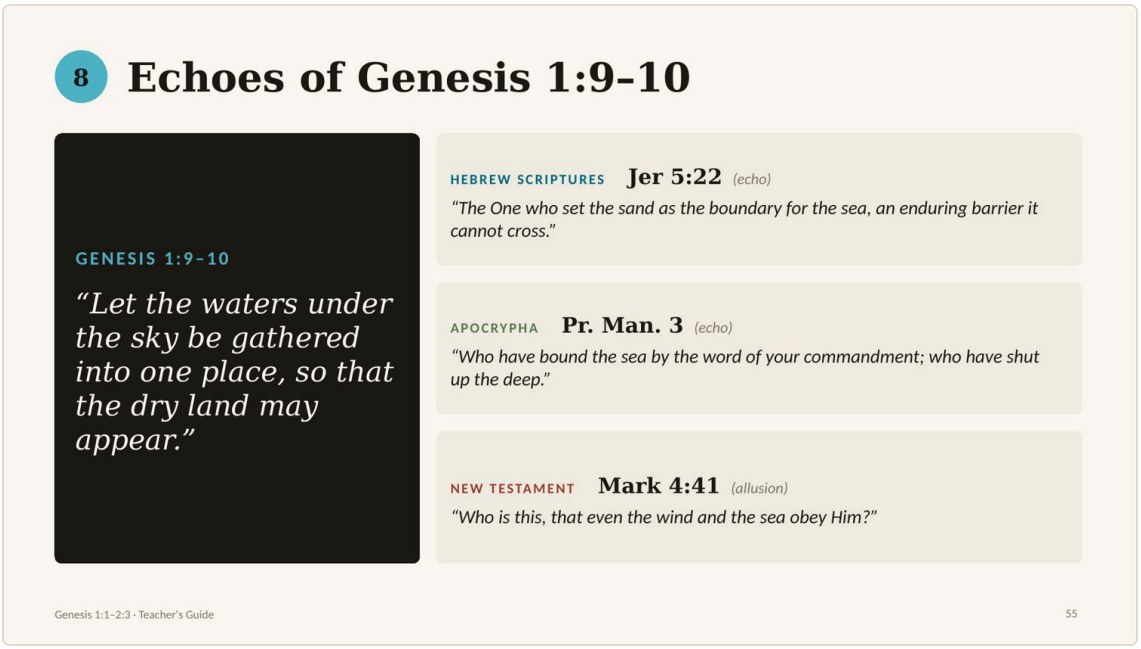
SLIDE 54



TEACHING NOTES

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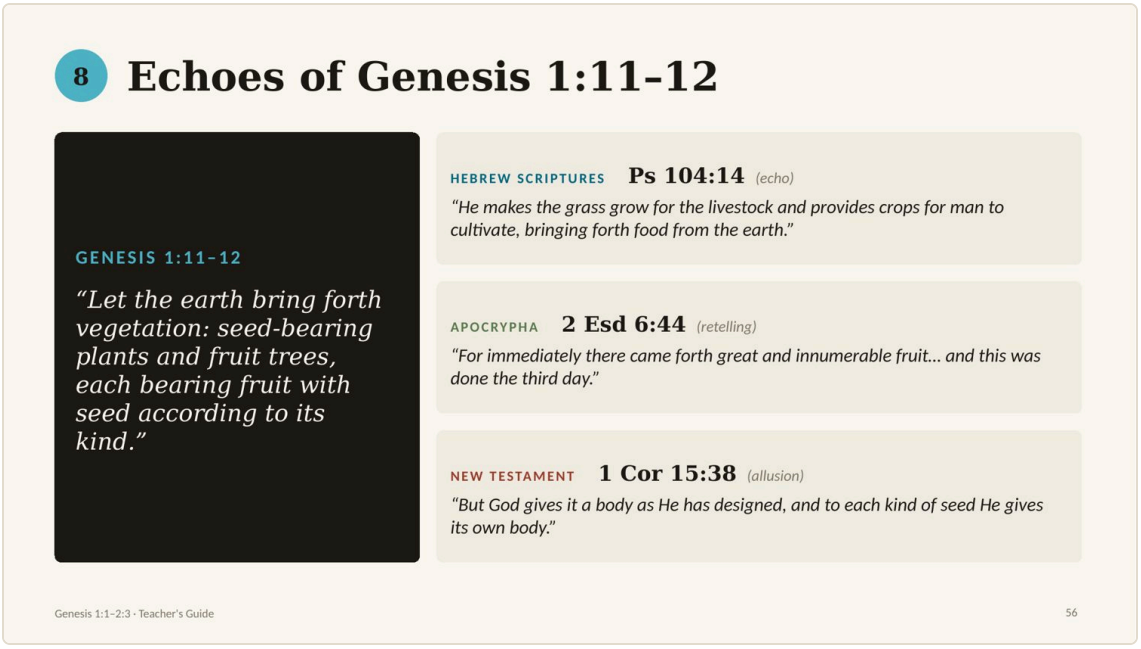
SLIDE 55



TEACHING NOTES

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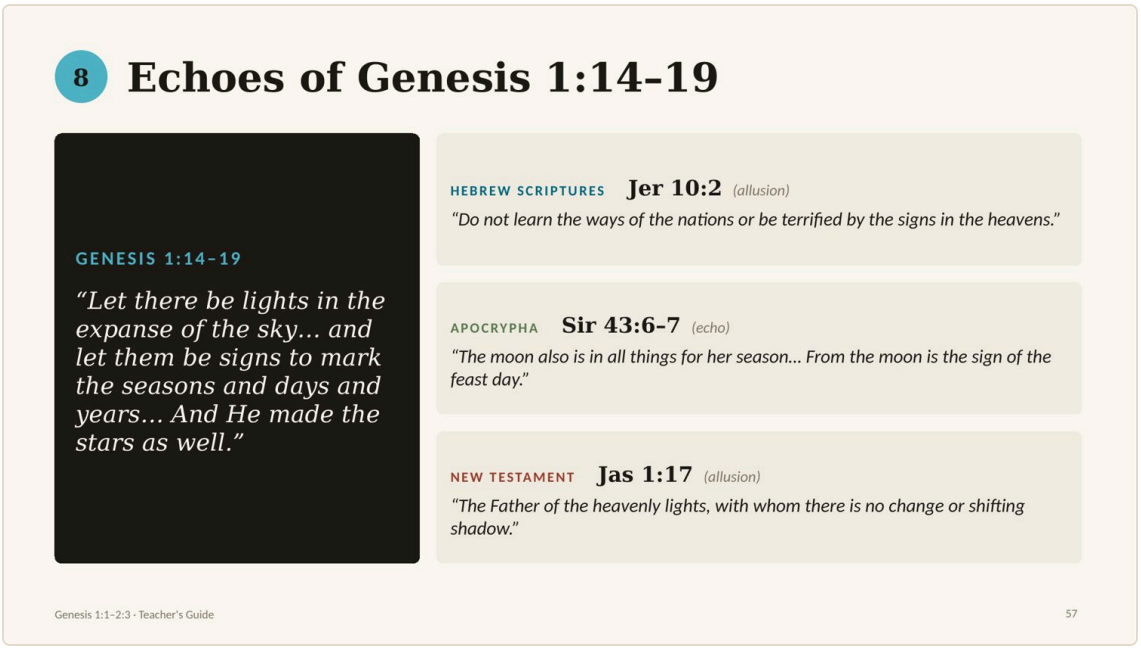
SLIDE 56



TEACHING NOTES

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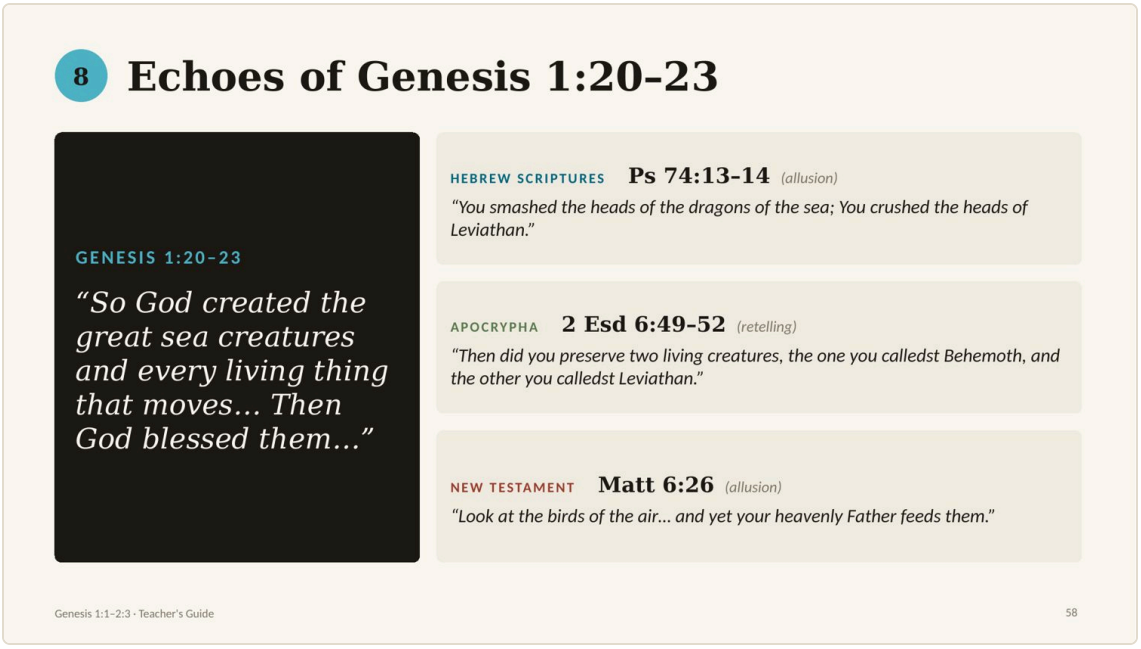
SLIDE 57



TEACHING NOTES

Click 1: the Genesis verse. Clicks 2–4: one echo each from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. Students have the full 'More to read' list in their guide (section 8). Canonical quotations are BSB; Apocrypha quotations are WEB (the BSB has no Apocrypha). 2 Esdras = 4 Ezra.

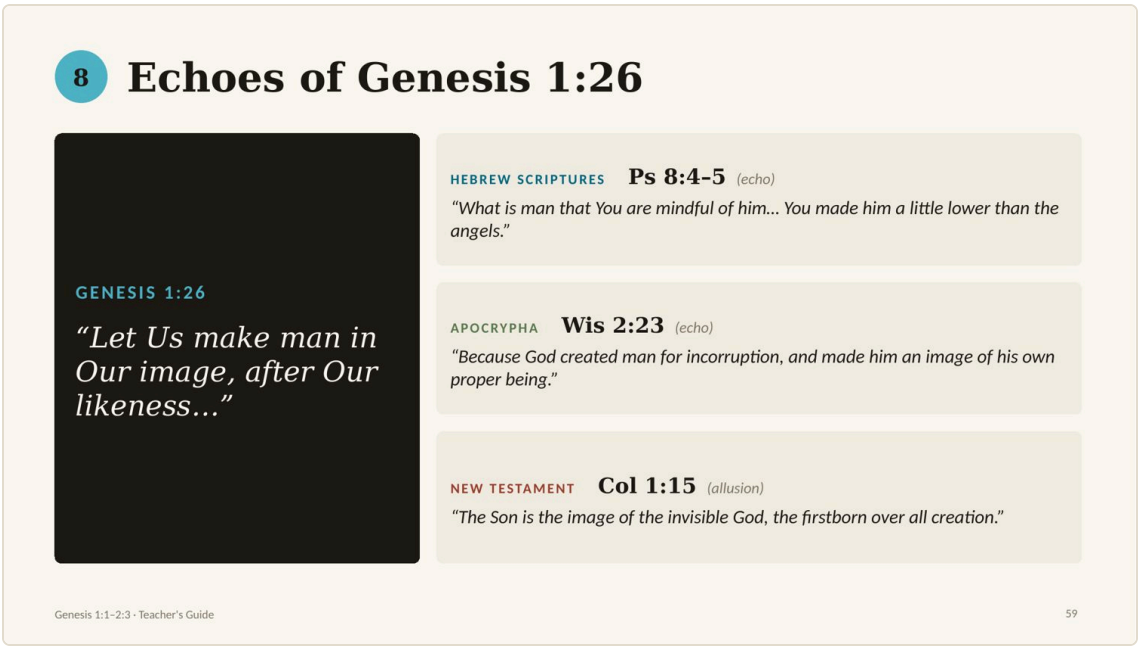
SLIDE 58



TEACHING NOTES

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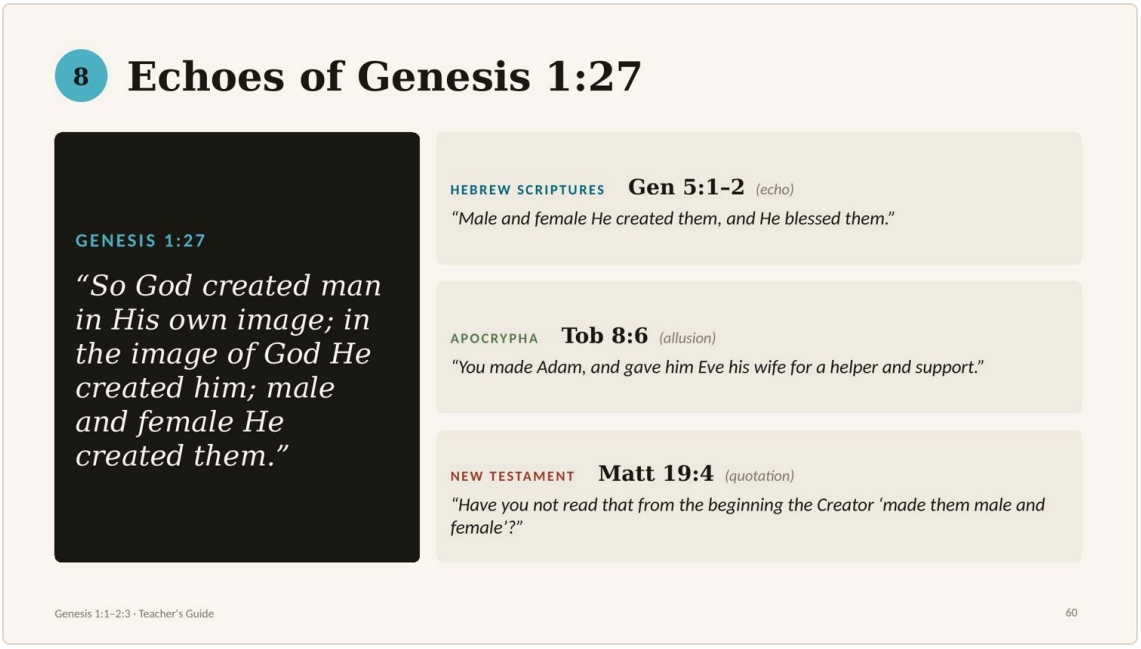
SLIDE 59



TEACHING NOTES

Click 1: the Genesis verse. Clicks 2–4: one echo each from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. Students have the full 'More to read' list in their guide (section 8). Canonical quotations are BSB; Apocrypha quotations are WEB (the BSB has no Apocrypha). 2 Esdras = 4 Ezra.

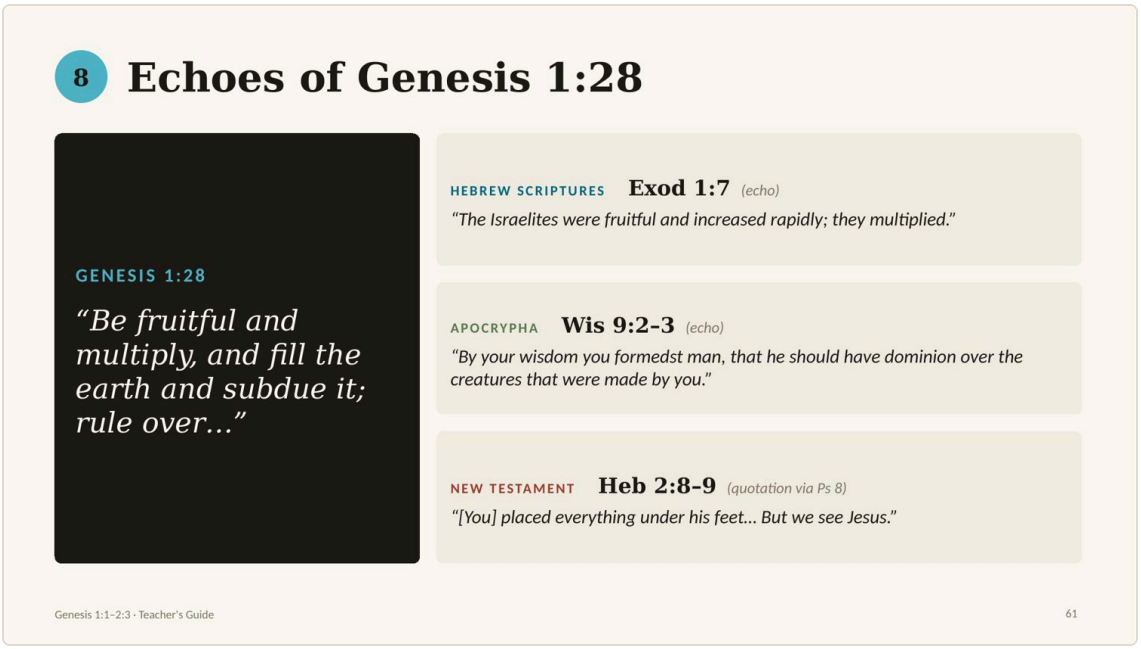
SLIDE 60



TEACHING NOTES

Click 1: the Genesis verse. Clicks 2–4: one echo each from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. Students have the full 'More to read' list in their guide (section 8). Canonical quotations are BSB; Apocrypha quotations are WEB (the BSB has no Apocrypha). 2 Esdras = 4 Ezra.

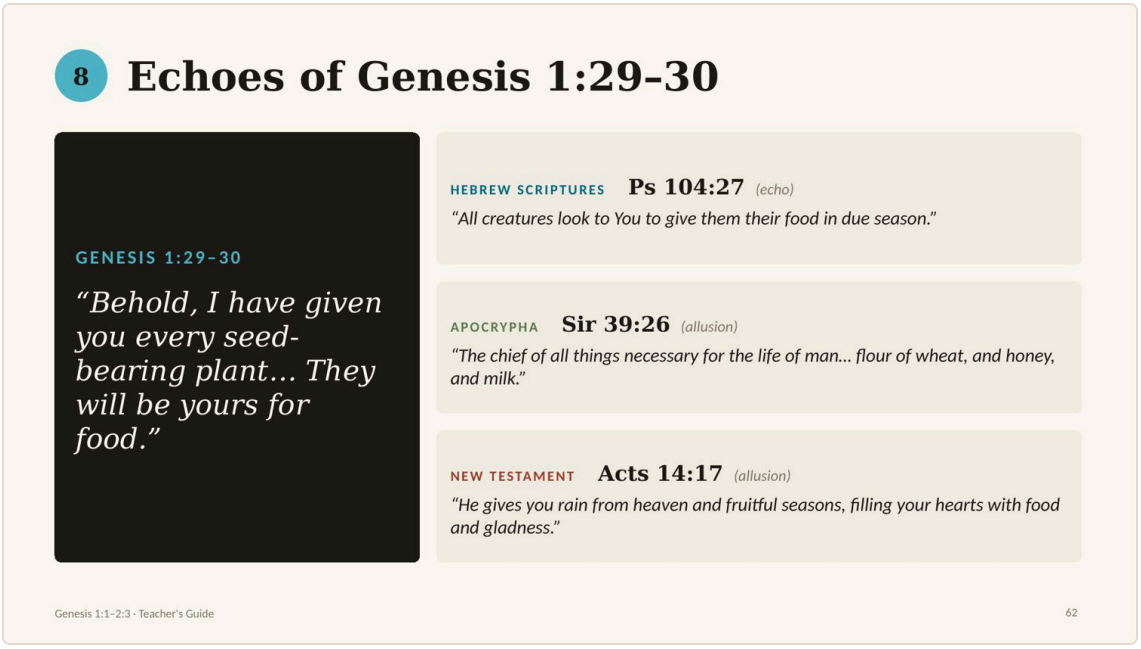
SLIDE 61



TEACHING NOTES

Click 1: the Genesis verse. Clicks 2–4: one echo each from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. Students have the full 'More to read' list in their guide (section 8). Canonical quotations are BSB; Apocrypha quotations are WEB (the BSB has no Apocrypha). 2 Esdras = 4 Ezra.

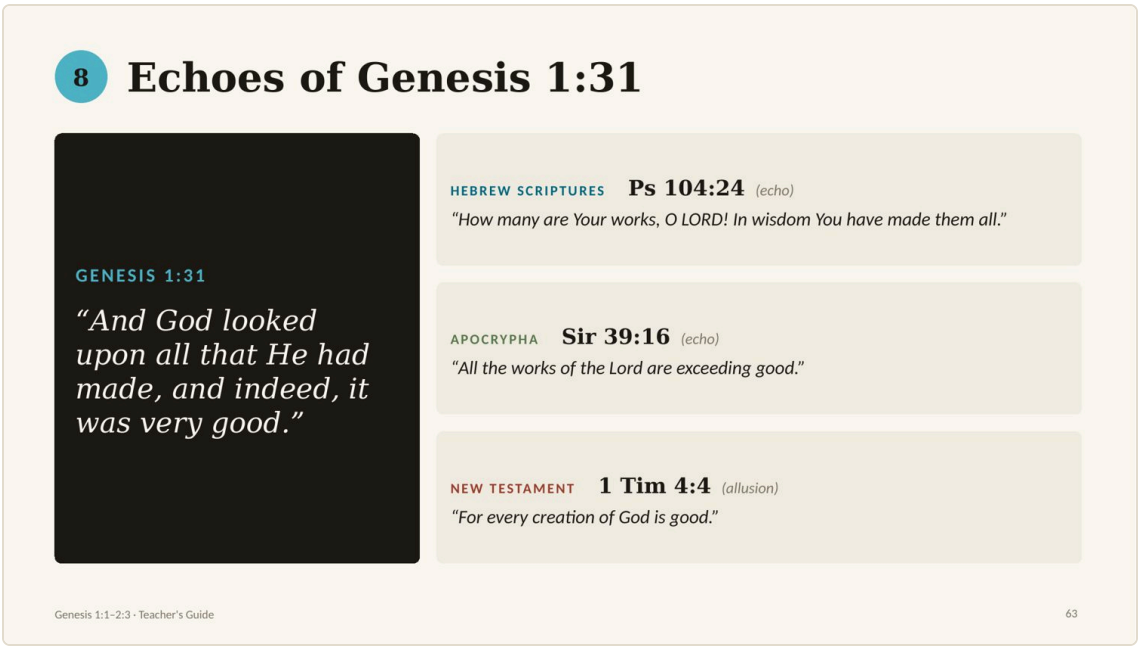
SLIDE 62



TEACHING NOTES

Click 1: the Genesis verse. Clicks 2–4: one echo each from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. Students have the full 'More to read' list in their guide (section 8). Canonical quotations are BSB; Apocrypha quotations are WEB (the BSB has no Apocrypha). 2 Esdras = 4 Ezra.

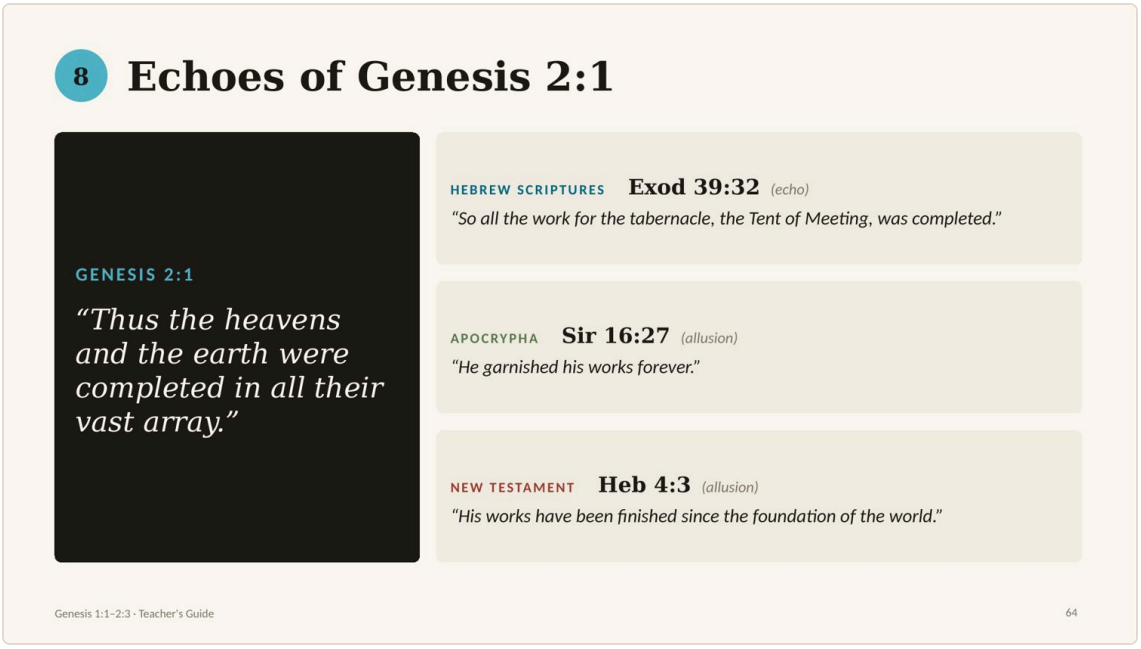
SLIDE 63



TEACHING NOTES

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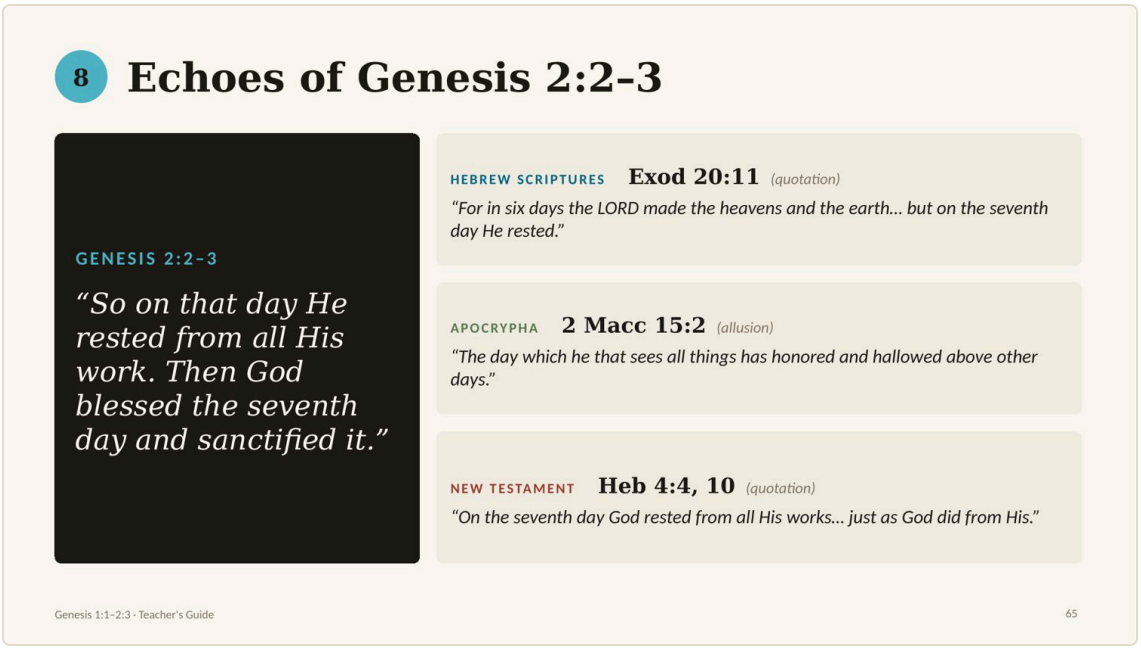
SLIDE 64



TEACHING NOTES

Click 1: the Genesis verse. Clicks 2–4: one echo each from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. Students have the full 'More to read' list in their guide (section 8). Canonical quotations are BSB; Apocrypha quotations are WEB (the BSB has no Apocrypha). 2 Esdras = 4 Ezra.

SLIDE 65



TEACHING NOTES

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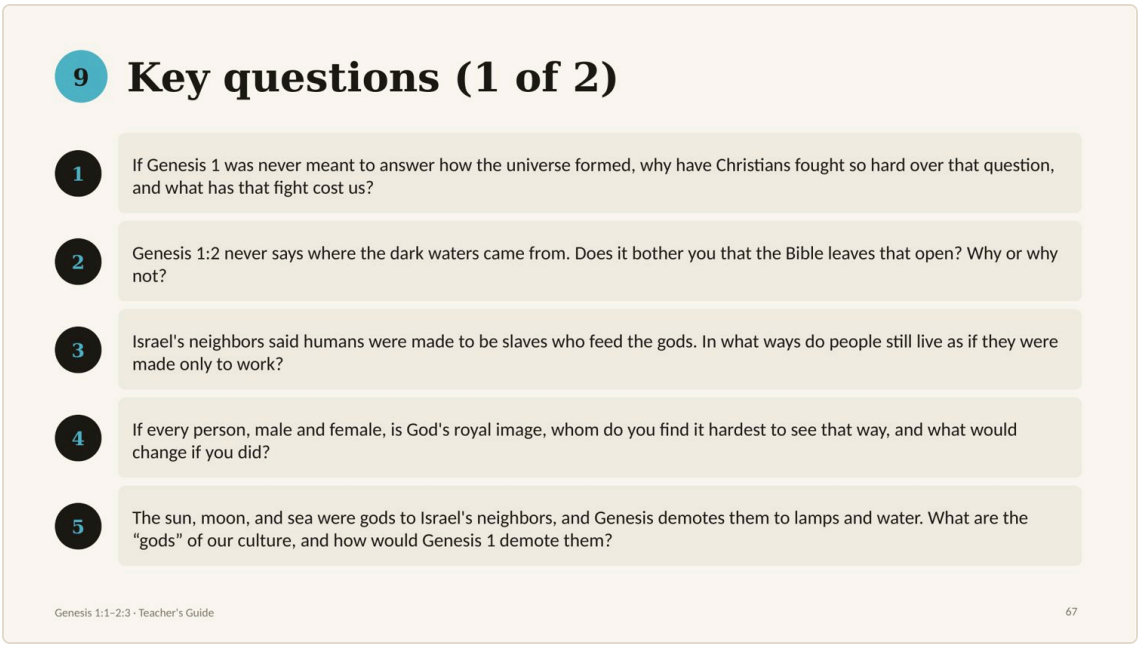
SLIDE 66



TEACHING NOTES

No notes for this slide.

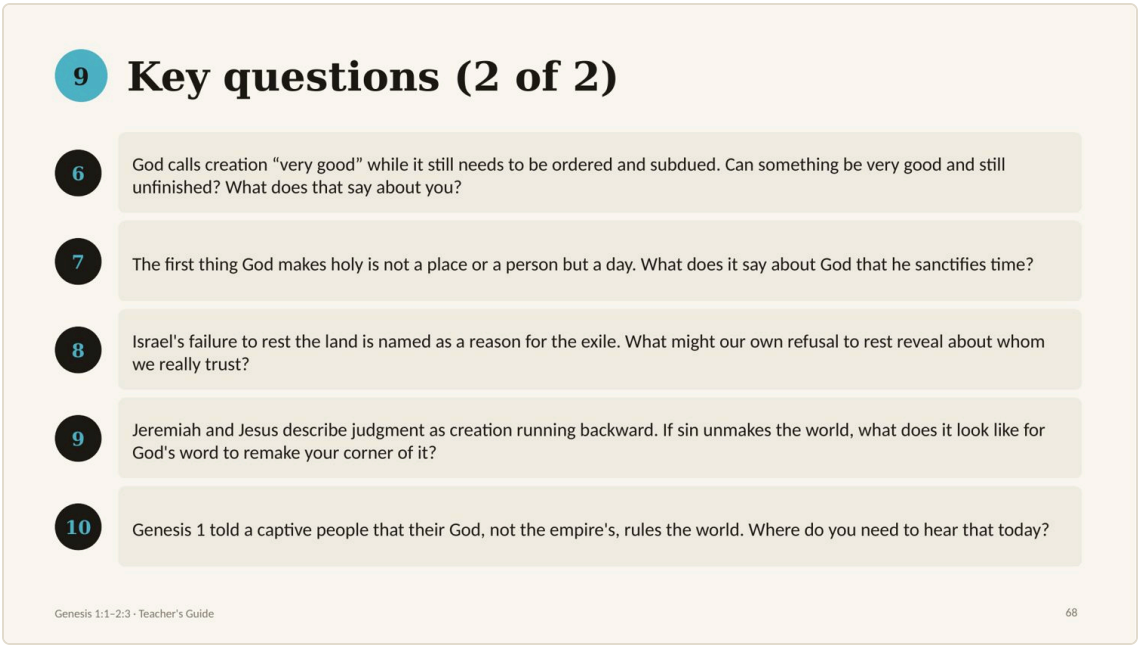
SLIDE 67



TEACHING NOTES

Provocative questions drawn from the whole study, matching the student guide. One click per question; let the room wrestle before moving on.

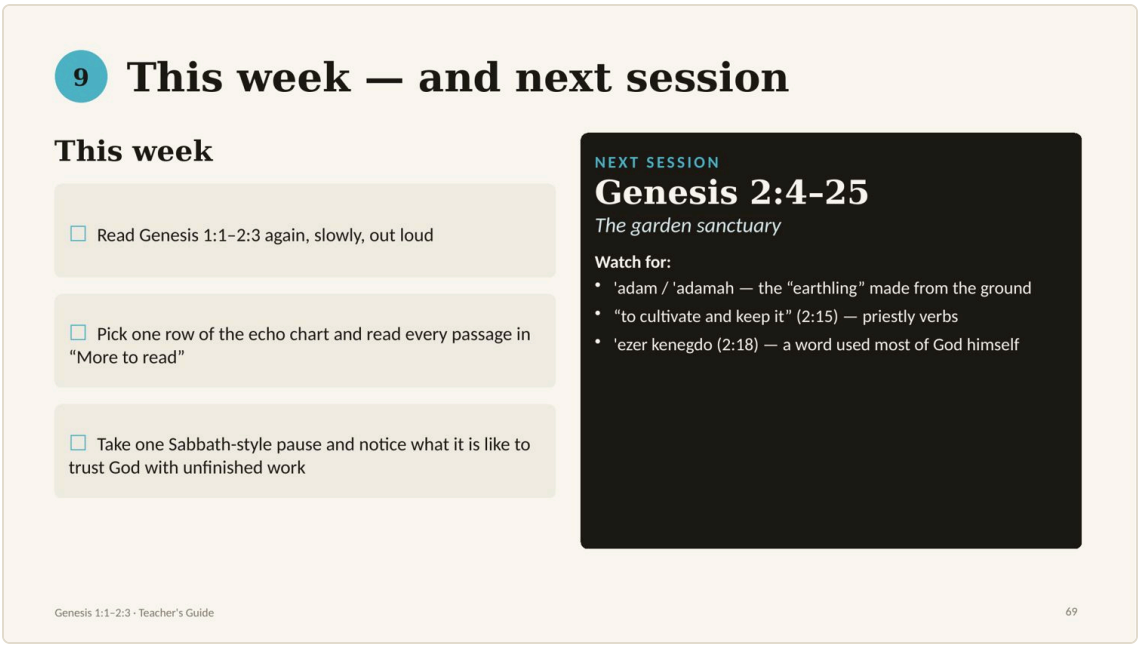
SLIDE 68



TEACHING NOTES

Provocative questions drawn from the whole study, matching the student guide. One click per question; let the room wrestle before moving on.

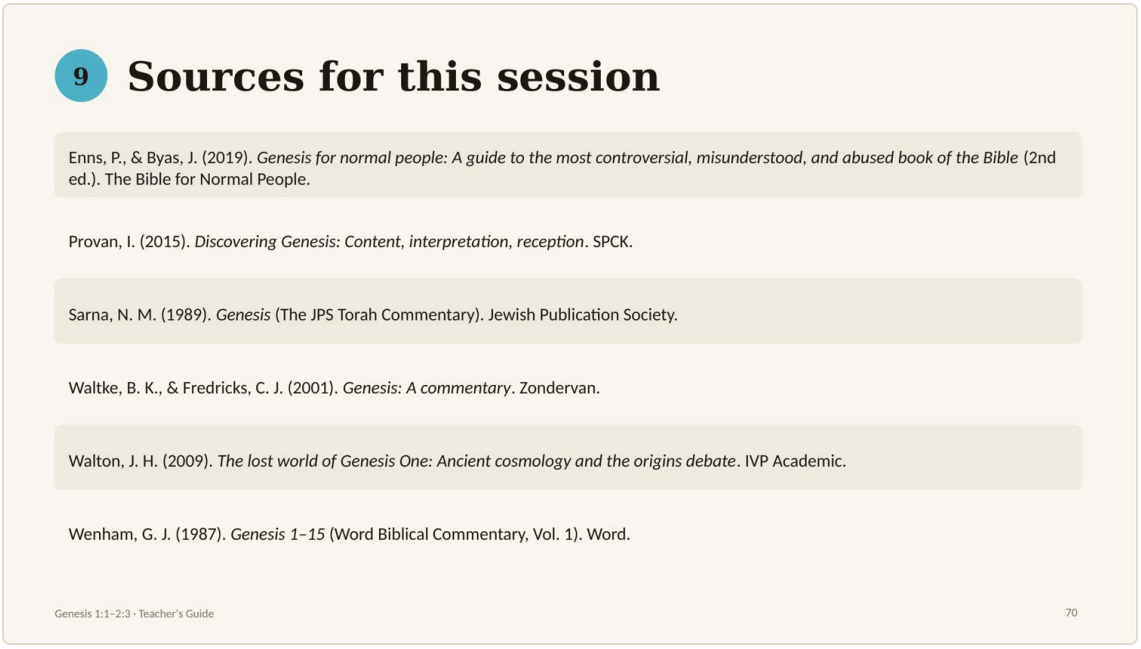
SLIDE 69



TEACHING NOTES

Next session: Genesis 2:4–25, the garden sanctuary. 'Earthling' (Provan, 2015, p. 68); priestly verbs (Num 3:7–8; Provan, 2015, p. 66); 'ezer kenegdo (Provan, 2015, p. 77).

SLIDE 70



TEACHING NOTES

APA 7 entries matching the student guide.