

DEEPER

Daily Bible Study

Adult Sabbath School Lesson

Podcast, Study Notes, and Teacher Helps

God Created...

2019, Quarter 3, Lesson 1

Sabbath (June 29): God Created...

The Bible begins by recording how God created this world, and it is significant that the first thing Scripture reveals about God is that He is the Creator. In many ways, the rest of the Bible, and our understanding of the great controversy between good and evil, and God's plan of salvation, hinges on the Genesis creation account. This quarter, as we look at what the Bible says about ministering to those in need, it will be well for us to remember that God is the Creator of all.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Genesis 1. How many times does the Bible declare that God's work of creation was "good"? (Seven times.) What might this indicate? (Seven is the number of perfection and completion, and God's work of creating physical life during Creation week was done perfectly and completely. Nothing was left undone that needed to be done.) What does this reveal to you about the character of God? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Deuteronomy 32:4. How is God's work described here? (His work is perfect.) What confidence should this give us, not only in God's work at Creation, but also in His work of salvation and redemption in our lives today? (His work of dealing with sin is also perfect, even when we can't understand or see why He does what He does, or allows what He allows.)
- Read Nahum 1:9. What comforting promise is given here? (Sin, or "affliction," will not rise up a second time.) What reassurance should this promise give us in our life here, in a world that is still wrecked by sin? (Answers will vary. Sin, as destructive and painful as it is, is a temporary curse that God will someday remove completely and eternally from the universe. We can have confidence that God's work today is just as "good" and perfect as it was at Creation.)

Sunday (June 30): God: A Glimpse of Creation

Just as a work of human artwork can reveal much about the person who created it, God's creation reveals much about its Creator. This is perhaps most clearly seen in God's original intent for humanity.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Genesis 1:26. In whose image did God create humanity? (In His image.)

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- Read Genesis 1:26-28. In what ways was humanity to reflect the image of God? (Answers will vary. Humanity was to exercise dominion over the rest of creation, be relational and relationship-oriented, and multiply through the miracle of pro-creation.)
- Read Hebrews 1:1-3. How does this passage describe the relationship between Jesus Christ and God the Father? (Jesus was the “express image” [KJV] of the Father. The Greek word translated as “express image” here is *charaktēr*, or “character.” In other words, Jesus reflected the character of the Father.) What does this imply about God’s intent for humanity at Creation? (God intended for humanity to reflect His character.)
- Read Hebrews 1:9. How does this verse describe God’s character? (God loves righteousness and hates iniquity, and His work of salvation and redemption includes His purpose to re-create His character in people.)
- Discuss the following characteristics of God as they might be reflected in Creation week:
 - Self-sacrificing:
 - Just:
 - Compassionate:
 - Relational:
 - Accessible:
 - Orderly:
 - Faithful:
 - Truthful:

Monday (July 1): A Complete World

The Bible describes this world at the time of Creation as a perfect place, full of beauty and reflecting its Creator. The Bible is clear that God’s work at Creation was a complete work—nothing was omitted in the process of Creation that was necessary for life. This completeness is mirrored in the fact that God took seven days to accomplish His work. The number seven, of course, represents completeness, fullness, and perfection.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Romans 1:20. What should we seek to understand by observing and studying the natural world? (We should seek to understand God and His “eternal power and Godhead” by studying the things of nature.) For what reasons might God have designed nature to reveal important things about Himself? (Answers will vary. Lessons from nature are applicable to all people, are not dependent on age or language or nationality, have remained virtually unchanged for thousands of years, and are continually instructive.)
- What aspects of Creation reveal God’s “eternal power” most clearly to you? (Answers will vary.)
- In what ways does Creation reveal the “Godhead”? (While the exact nature of God will always remain a mystery to finite beings, the Bible does make it clear that more than one Being comprises the Godhead, for in Genesis 1:26 God says, “Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness” [emphasis added]. Helpful, yet imperfect, illustrations of this mystery may be seen in God’s creation. For example, the uniting of Adam and Eve together in marriage may reflect, to a small degree, the mystery of the Godhead. Nature, too, is full of animals and plants that multiply “according to their kind,” that is, while all

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are part of a single species, the individual members of that species grow and function as independent organisms. In a final example, on Day 1 God created light, then on Day 4 God created three types of lights in the sky—the sun, moon, and stars—all of which work together, yet independently, to give light upon the earth. In the same way, the Godhead is comprised of three Beings that work together, yet exist and function independently of each other, to sustain life on earth, and throughout the universe.

Tuesday (July 2): Stewards of the Earth

Genesis reveals God’s purpose for placing humanity on earth was at least twofold: to reflect His image, or character, and to be stewards of the earth. In today’s lesson we will study what was included in God’s gift of stewardship.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Genesis 1:28. What five things does God charge humanity with doing at Creation? (Be fruitful, multiply, replenish the earth, subdue the earth, and have dominion over the animals.) Discuss what each of these five things meant for Adam and Eve, and what they may mean for us—physically and spiritually—today:
 - “Be fruitful”: Adam and Eve were called to be fruitful in their marriage union. Spiritually, to be fruitful is to reveal the characteristics of God in one’s life, and to help others do the same (compare John 15:1-5).
 - “Multiply”: God intended the original human family to grow and spread over the earth. Spiritually, to multiply indicates a continuing spiritual growth that results in more and more “fruit” in one’s life. It also indicates a continually increasing influence on other people (compare Matthew 28:18-20).
 - “Subdue” the earth: This word in the original Hebrew (*male*) literally means to “fill” or “complete.” Humanity was to continue multiplying until they filled the earth. Spiritually, we as Christians are given the same charge to share the gospel and God’s love with others until “all the world” (Matthew 24:14) has heard.
 - “Subdue the earth”: The Hebrew word translated as “subdue” (*kadash*) means to “subject” or “make subservient.” It is interesting to note that in Genesis 2:15, Adam and Eve are given the task of “dressing” and “keeping” the Garden of Eden. While their job was of course enjoyable and free from the many obstacles that face gardeners today, there was still an aspect of bringing the elements of nature under control. Spiritually, the gospel is to exert a subduing influence on all that hear and accept it.
 - “Have dominion”: Adam and Eve were to work with the assurance that God would give them success, and that His purpose for them as the stewards of this world would be fulfilled. Spiritually, as followers of Christ we must have the same confidence in the calling we have received, and in the enabling power of the One Who has called us.

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Wednesday (July 3): A Broken World

When Adam and Eve sinned, the results of their choice became immediately apparent. We have, of course, continued to deal with the disastrous results of sin ever since. In today's lesson we will look at what the immediate effects of sin were on the world and on Adam and Eve.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Genesis 3:7. What was the first thing Adam and Eve realized after sinning? (That they were naked. Adam and Eve realized their own guilt and helplessness.) In what ways have your eyes been “opened” after doing something wrong? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Genesis 3:8. What was the next effect of sin on Adam and Eve? (They became afraid of God.) Have you ever experienced fear of God? (Answers will vary.) In what ways have you later discovered that your fears of God were really part of Satan's lies? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Genesis 3:11,12. What additional destructive effect did sin have on Adam and Eve? (Sin destroyed their unity, love, and respect for each other. Adam blamed his wife for his sin.)
- Read Genesis 3:13. What did Eve do here that revealed sin's continuing destructive power? (Eve blamed the serpent for her sin.) Why is it so natural and easy to blame others for our mistakes, sins, and shortcomings? (Answers will vary. Sin blinds us to the real issues at stake, and in particular it blinds us to our own condition.)
- Read Genesis 3:16-18. What additional curses did sin bring upon humanity? (Eve would have pain in childbirth, her desire would be toward her husband, Adam would rule over her, and Adam would work the ground with sorrow and great effort. Virtually every aspect of human life on earth was altered by sin.)
- Read Genesis 3:19. What enemy would humanity, and all life on earth, now face as a result of sin? (Death.)
- For what reasons do you think God allowed all of these curses to come on this world? (Answers will vary. If God had ignored sin, or worked miraculously to neutralize its effects, the true nature of sin would have never been realized, and the universe would be at risk of having sin run rampant.)

Thursday (July 4): The Family Web of Humanity

Although it can be hard to remember in today's broken and fractured world, all humanity is tied to each other, for we are all descendants of Adam and Eve. More than this, we are all called to be part of the family of God, a spiritual privilege that can unite us even more closely than physical bloodlines. In today's lesson we will look at how God views this family web of humanity.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Matthew 25:31,32. What is the setting for this passage? (Jesus is speaking about the judgment.)
- Read Matthew 25:33-36. According to these verses, for what are the “sheep” commended for? (They have given food, water, clothing, and shelter to those in need.)

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- Read Matthew 25:37-40. To Whom does Jesus say they have really done these acts of kindness and mercy? (Jesus says that they have done these good deeds to Him.) What does this reveal about the connectedness of humanity with each other, and with our Savior? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Matthew 25:41-43. For what are the “goats” condemned? (They have not given food, water, clothing, or shelter to those in need.)
- Read Matthew 25:44,45. Why do you think God has chosen to base the judgment, in part, on how we treat other people? (Answers will vary. Our treatment of others reveals how we really feel about and view God. It also reveals whether our hearts are still caught in the selfishness of sin, or if we have been changed by the love of God.)
- Read James 1:27. What makes “pure religion”? (To minister to those in need, and to seek for purity of heart, mind, and soul.) In what ways can you, your family, and your church more closely approach this “pure religion” in practical ways every day? (Answers will vary.)

Friday (July 5): The Eye of Faith

Thousands of years after sin entered this world, the author of Hebrews wrote about the link between faith in God and the Genesis creation account. In the final lesson for this week, we will investigate this connection, and what it means for us today.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Hebrews 11:1. What is faith? (Faith is “the evidence of things not seen.”)
- Read Hebrews 11:3. What will faith lead us to understand and believe about God? (That He created this world from “things which do [not] appear.”) Why is this so significant? (God did not merely re-arrange or re-shape this world to create life. Instead, His work at Creation revealed unhindered Divine power to create life from nothing.) When considering God’s work of salvation and redemption, what can this fact—the fact that He can create life out of nothing—do to help strengthen our faith in Him? (Answers will vary. If God can create physical life out of nothing, then He can also create new spiritual life within us, even when there seems to be no evidence that this is possible.)
- What thing or things in your life right now is God asking you to accept and believe in faith, even when there appears to be no evidence that God can, or will work? (Answers will vary.)