

DEEPER

Daily Bible Study

2020, Quarter 2, Lesson 9

Creation: Genesis as Foundation—Part 2

This study guide contains additional materials to accompany the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide for the second quarter of 2020, titled How to Interpret Scripture. This Deeper Daily Bible Study develops the broad theme of studying and interpreting the Bible into some areas not covered by the Sabbath School Study Guide. While the general topic of each week's set of lessons corresponds to the Study Guide topic for that week, the daily focus will vary at times from that guide. We hope that you will find this approach to be a valuable added resource in your Bible study.

The "Digging Deeper" section probes into the day's topic, and illustrates the study principle or tool being discussed. Suggested answers, if included, are provided in parentheses. Sabbath School teachers will find this section especially helpful in the Sabbath School setting. The "Apply It" section gives the student an opportunity to apply the subject at hand to their own study of the Bible, and the "Share It" section provides an opportunity for those in group studies to discuss and share their response to the day's theme.

Sabbath (May 23, 2020): Christianity and the Scientific Method

The Bible presents Christianity as a logical and "testable" experience that can lead us to reasonable conclusions about God, reality, and ourselves. In this sense, it may be regarded as a "scientific" religion, one that can appeal to logic, reason, and empirical evidence. In today's lesson we will look at this possibility more closely.

Digging Deeper

Scientists often refer to the "scientific method," which may be summarized in the following five steps:

1. Observation: Ask a question
2. Conjecture: Construct a hypothesis
3. Testing: Collect evidence or conduct an experiment
4. Analysis: Compare the evidence or results with the hypothesis
5. Communication: Share the results of the experiment or study

Science applies the five steps of this process to studying and understanding the natural and physical world. However, the Bible applies these steps spiritually, and reveals that God invites us to an experience with Him that can also be tested, analyzed, and shared.

Read the verses that follow each step below and discuss what they suggest about how we can pursue a "spiritual scientific method."

1. Observation. Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 14:1
2. Conjecture. Malachi 3:10
3. Testing. Psalm 34:8; 1 Peter 2:2,3; 2 Peter 1:3,4,16,19
4. Analysis. Isaiah 1:18; Psalm 14:1,2
5. Communication. Matthew 5:13-16; 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:20

Share It

- In what ways have you found the Bible and Christianity to be tested and reliable in your life?

Sunday (May 24, 2020): A Flat Earth

The Bible contains passages—such as Revelation 7:1 and Revelation 20:7-8—that speak of the “four corners of the earth.” Does this mean that the Bible teaches that the earth is flat? If it does, what would the implications be spiritually? We will take a look at these issues in today’s lesson.

Digging Deeper

- Read Revelation 7:1 and 20:7,8. What is the setting and context of these passages? Is this literal or symbolic language? (This is symbolic language and the context is that these are apocalyptic passages containing numerous symbols.)
- Read Isaiah 11:12. What is the setting and context of these passages? Is this literal or symbolic language? (The point of this passage is that God will bring back His exiled remnant from all parts of the earth, and from every direction. The context is that of national and spiritual restoration; not a literal explanation of earth’s shape or geography.)
- Read Job 26:7-10. What does this passage suggest about the nature of the earth? (God has stretched it out and “hung” it in space “upon nothing.” The impression is that of a ball hanging in space.)
- Isaiah 40:21,22. What does this passage say about the shape of the earth? (It is a circle.)

Apply It

- Read Psalm 103:12. If the earth was literally flat, how would this impact the spiritual meaning of this passage? If the earth is indeed a globe, how does that impact the spiritual meaning of this passage?
- Psalm 75:5-6 and 48:2. In which direction do these passages reveal that God’s throne is located? If the earth is flat, how does the positioning of God’s throne “in the north” lose some of its spiritual significance, when compared with the positioning of His throne “upward” in the north?

Monday (May 25, 2020): Creation in Ancient Literature

Kanji is a system of Japanese writing using Chinese characters. In today’s lesson we will look at evidence that suggests the creators of Kanji were familiar with the Genesis creation story. Ethel R. Nelson and Richard E. Broadberry find many more examples in the book, *God’s Promise to the Chinese*.

Digging Deeper

 <p>boat</p>	 <p>to covet, desire</p>	 <p>to create</p>
 <p>vessel eight people</p>	 <p>two women to covet, trees women desire</p>	 <p>speak dust, life walk mud</p>

The Discovery of Genesis, C.H. Kang and Ethel Nelson, p. 55

The Discovery of Genesis, C.H. Kang and Ethel Nelson, p. 59

The Discovery of Genesis, C.H. Kang and Ethel Nelson, p. xiii

完

*complete,
finish*

二 + 儿 = 元
two person first
元 + 宀 = 完
first home complete

The Discovery of Genesis, C.H. Kong and Ethel Nelson, p. 49

禁

*forbidden,
to warn*

林
two trees

示
*God
(abbreviated form)*

The Discovery of Genesis, C.H. Kong and Ethel Nelson, p. 59

園

garden

土 + 口 + 𠂔 + 口 = 園
dust breath two enclosure garden
persons

The Discovery of Genesis, C.H. Kong and Ethel Nelson, p. 54

魔

tempter

厶 + 儿 + 田 + 丿 = 鬼
secret man garden [alive] devil

鬼 + 林 + 广 = 魔
devil trees cover tempter

The Discovery of Genesis, C.H. Kong and Ethel Nelson, p. 4

Apply It

- Read Acts 14:17; 17:26,27. What do these verses reveal about God's concern for all people on earth, regardless of when or where they have lived?
- Read Romans 1:20. Do you think this is still true today? If someone did not have a Bible or someone to explain the gospel, would it still be possible to be led to God by the things He has created?

Share It

- What hidden or unexpected evidences have you seen of God? What has this revealed to you about God's character? How has it impacted your relationship with God?

Tuesday (May 26, 2020): Genesis Versus Paganism

Although Moses uses the words *sun* and *moon* elsewhere in his writings, in Genesis 1 he avoids these terms and replaces them with the phrases “greater light” and “lesser light.” In today’s lesson we will look at his reasons for doing so, and what that reveals about some of the differences between the Genesis creation account and ancient paganism.

Digging Deeper

- Read Genesis 1:14-19. What terms are used to refer to the sun and the moon? (“Greater light” and “lesser light.”) According to this passage, for what purpose did God create the sun and moon? (“For signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years,” “to give light upon the earth,” and to “divide the light from the darkness.” In other words, God created the sun and moon to mark time and facilitate life on earth.)
- Read Ezekiel 8:15,16. What great sin are the people committing here in Ezekiel’s vision? (They are worshipping the sun. Sun worship is the earliest form of idolatry, and Moses may have avoided using the names “sun” and “moon” in the creation account in order to direct attention away from them and towards the One that created them.)

“Sun worship was the earliest idolatry.” (Fausset, *Bible Dictionary*, p. 666; quoted in Vance Farrell, *Sunday Is Not the Bible Sabbath* (Harvestime Books), p. 13.)

“It is almost impossible to find in the history of the world a form of idolatry that is not connected with sun-worship. And in almost every nation sun-worship has been the principal worship; so that it may fairly be described as the universal worship.” (A.T. Jones, *Empires of the Bible*, p. 42.)

- Read Job 31:26-28. What does Job say about the lure and danger of sun and moon worship? (God will punish this idolatry in the judgment.)

Apply It

The concept of sun worship—worshipping a source of light—really began in the courts of heaven when sin began:

- Read Isaiah 14:12-14. What was the name of the rebellious angel in heaven? (Lucifer, which means “light bearer.”)
- Read Ezekiel 28:12-14. Did Lucifer shine with his own light? (No. He stood in God’s presence and merely reflected God’s glory. As sin grew in Lucifer’s heart he desired to share in God’s glory and shine with his own light.)
- Read 2 Corinthians 11:14. How does the Bible say Lucifer, or Satan, will present himself to fallen men? (As an angel of light. It is interesting to note that many world religions, including those in Roman Catholicism and those in the New Age movement, are expecting the appearance of a supernatural being of dazzling brightness.)

“She appears ‘clothed in sunlight,’ that is, clothed in God,” observed the Pope. “The Virgin Mary is in fact completely surrounded by the light of God and lives in God. ... The ‘Immaculate One’ reflects with all of her person the light of the ‘sun,’ which is God.” (National Catholic Register; <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/pope-in-her-sinless-perfection-mary-is-a-great-sign-of-hope/#ixzz2gUjH535y>)

“Hammurabi, in the introduction to his laws, states that he received them directly from the Great Sun God, Who to us is the Cosmic Christ.” (Violet Tweedale, *The Cosmic Christ*, p. 110.)

Compare the following statement from the book *The Great Controversy*, regarding Satan’s final deception on the world before Jesus Christ returns:

As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: "Christ has come! Christ has come!" The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion. Like the Samaritans who were deceived by Simon Magus, the multitudes, from the least to the greatest, give heed to these sorceries, saying: This is "the great power of God." Acts 8:10. {GC 624.2}

Wednesday (May 27, 2020): Creation and Time

When God created Adam and Eve, He presented them with a test of loyalty and obedience—the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Their eternal existence depended on their response to the test and temptation that would come to them through that tree. In today's lesson we will look at the concept of probationary time into which Adam and Eve were placed at creation. In particular, we will look at what God intended Adam and Eve to accomplish with the time given to them, and what that means for us today, as well.

Digging Deeper

- Read Genesis 2:16,17. What was the condition of life that God presented to Adam and Eve? (If they didn't eat from the forbidden tree, they would live forever.) For what reasons do you think God placed Adam and Eve on probation? (Answers will vary. See the passage below for additional insights into this question.)

God placed man under law, as an indispensable condition of his very existence. He was a subject of the divine government, and there can be no government without law. God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automaton. Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could have been no development of character. Such a course would have been contrary to God's plan in dealing with the inhabitants of other worlds. It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule. {PP 49.1}

- Read Genesis 1:31 and Deuteronomy 32:4. Was Adam created perfect? (Yes.) Was Adam created sinless? (Yes.) Was Adam created without any evil tendencies? (Yes.) Was Adam created righteous? (No. He was created with the ability to form a righteous character. "It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law" [*Steps to Christ*, 62].)
- Read Romans 8:1-4. After the fall, is it possible for fallen men to form a righteous character? (Not on our own, but it is possible through Jesus Christ.)

Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted

righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned. {SC 62.2}

Notwithstanding the prevailing iniquity, there was a line of holy men who, elevated and ennobled by communion with God, lived as in the companionship of heaven. They were men of massive intellect, of wonderful attainments. *They had a great and holy mission—to develop a character of righteousness*, to teach a lesson of godliness, not only to the men of their time, but for future generations. Only a few of the most prominent are mentioned in the Scriptures; but all through the ages God had faithful witnesses, truehearted worshipers. {PP 84, emphasis added}

Man was promised a Redeemer, and was granted a second trial, to see if he would develop a righteous character; but he is left a free moral agent. And in all ages the multitudes have accepted the Cain principle, and have maintained that a partial obedience is all that is necessary. They have claimed a right to the favor of God, while disregarding his positive commands. This is the position of the Christian world today. God has given men a code of laws, and the fourth precept of that code enjoins the observance of the Sabbath as a memorial of creation. There is but one Sabbath of the Lord, and that is the seventh day. Special injunctions have been laid upon men to remember this day to keep it holy; but many show their contempt for the divine authority by keeping, in its place, a day which God has given them as a day of labor. {ST December 23, 1886, par. 10, emphasis added}

Thursday (May 28, 2020): Creation in Scripture

The Bible is full of references to God as Creator. Throughout both the Old Testament and the New Testament, Bible writers identify God as the Creator of this world, and of life. Review the passages below from the New Testament, and discuss what each one reveals about God's work of Creation:

- Matthew 19:4,5
- Mark 10:6-9
- Luke 11:50,51
- John 1:1-3
- Acts 14:15
- Romans 1:20
- 2 Corinthians 4:6
- Ephesians 3:9
- 1 Timothy 2:12-15
- James 3:9
- 1 Peter 3:20
- Jude 11,14
- Revelation 2:7; 3:14; 22:2,3

Apply It

Read Romans 5:12-21. What references to a literal, historical Adam do you find in these verses? (Over six times Paul refers to Adam and his sin in Eden.) How would the gospel message, and the purpose of Christ's death and resurrection, be affected if Adam were not a real person created by God at the beginning of time? (In this passage, Christ's death is explained as reversing the effects and curse of sin brought on by Adam's sin. Christ's substitutionary death loses its meaning and significance without the context of Adam's sin in Eden.)

The inheritance of children is that of sin. Sin has separated them from God. Jesus gave His life that He might unite the broken links to God. As related to the first Adam, men receive from him nothing but guilt and the sentence of death. But Christ steps in and passes over the ground where Adam fell, enduring every test in man's behalf.... Christ's perfect example and the grace of God are given him to enable him to train his sons and daughters to be sons and daughters of God. It is by teaching them,

line upon line, precept upon precept, how to give the heart and will up to Christ that Satan's power is broken. {CG 475.3}

In the Bible, God's physical work of creation is portrayed in Scripture as a model for His continued work of spiritual re-creation. Just as He created the world through His Word (Genesis 1:3, 6, etc.) and His Spirit (Genesis 1:2; 2:7), He creates spiritual life through the same agencies.

- Read John 17:17 and Romans 15:16. What two Agencies does God use to sanctify people? (His Word and the Holy Spirit. See also Psalm 119:25 and John 6:63.)

Share It

- In what ways have you experienced God's creative power at work in your life?

Friday (May 29, 2020): Christianity and Isaac Newton's Laws of Motion

Isaac Newton, one of the most influential scientists of all time and a serious student of the Bible and of prophecy, is remembered today in part for his "three laws of motion." Briefly stated, these three laws are:

1. Inertia. An object at rest and an object in motion stays in motion with the same speed and in the same direction unless acted upon by an unbalanced force.
2. Acceleration. The acceleration of an object is dependent upon two variables—the net force acting upon the object and the mass of the object.
3. Interactions. For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

The same God that created these physical laws of motion also created spiritual laws to govern His creatures. In today's lesson we will take a brief look at these laws of motion from a spiritual perspective, and discover some fascinating parallels and lessons.

Digging Deeper

Inertia. Isaac Newton's law of inertia contains some interesting insights into the origin of and solution to sin.

Read Ezekiel 28:14,15. Where did God "set" Lucifer? (As a covering cherub around God's throne.) How long did God intend Lucifer to stay in that position? (Forever.) What was the only thing that was able to move Lucifer out of that position? (Sin. Sin acted on Lucifer as an "unbalanced force." Sin was "unbalanced" in a spiritual sense because it originated outside of, and operates outside of, God's creation.)

Satan trembled as he viewed his work. He was alone in meditation upon the past, the present, and his future plans. His mighty frame shook as with a tempest. An angel from heaven was passing. He called him and entreated an interview with Christ. This was granted him. He then related to the Son of God that he repented of his rebellion and wished again the favor of God. He was willing to take the place God had previously assigned him, and be under His wise command. Christ wept at Satan's woe but told him, as the mind of God, that he could never be received into heaven. Heaven must not be placed in jeopardy. All heaven would be marred should he be received back, for sin and rebellion originated with him. *The seeds of rebellion were still within him. He had, in his rebellion, no occasion for his course, and he had hopelessly ruined not only himself but the host of angels also, who would then have been happy in heaven had he remained steadfast. The law of God could condemn but could not pardon.* {SR 26.1}

- Read Romans 6:23. As fallen, sinful creatures, toward what direction is our "spiritual inertia" taking us? (Death.) Is there anything we can do on our own power to change directions or avoid death? (No.) What is our only hope for salvation? (Some power outside of ourselves to act as an "unbalanced force" and save us from death. This is what God's grace provides. Compare John 3:16.)

Acceleration. Just as acceleration is dependent on the net force acting on an object and the mass of that object, temptation's effect on us depends on the force of that temptation and our "spiritual mass" at the time of temptation.

- Read Isaiah 51:12 and 1 Peter 1:24. What is man compared to in these passages? (Grass.) Does grass have much mass? (No.) What is the spiritual lesson for us regarding the quality of our own righteousness? (It is worthless and fading, like grass.)
- Read Psalm 1:1-3 and Jeremiah 17:7,8. What is man compared to in these passages? (A tree.) Do trees have a lot more mass than grass? (Yes.) What makes the difference between men that are like grass and men that are like trees? (Christ's righteousness accepted into the life provides a righteousness that is solid and has much "spiritual mass.")
- Read John 12:32. We can look at this parallel with Newton's second law of motion in another way. This verse says that God draws all men to Himself. What is the only thing that can prevent us from being drawn to Christ? (Our own "selfish mass" and "self-righteousness." In this comparison, if the love of God is the net force drawing us to Christ, we should have as little "selfish mass" as possible!)
- Read Philippians 2:5-8. What aspect of Christ's character are we encouraged to emulate? (We should be emptied of self, just as He was.)

Interactions. Just like the equal and opposite reactions identified in Newton's third law of motion, the Bible reveals the plan of salvation—an opposite reaction to the power of sin.

- Read Romans 5:12-21. What "equal and opposite reactions" in the spiritual realm do you find in this passage? (Adam plunged humanity into sin; Christ provides salvation from sin. Adam placed all men under death; Christ frees all men from the power of death. Adam doomed all men to condemnation; Christ provided pardon and justification for all men.) Would you say that Christ's work for us is merely an "equal and opposite reaction" to Adam's sin, or does it provide more than what was lost? (Answers will vary.)