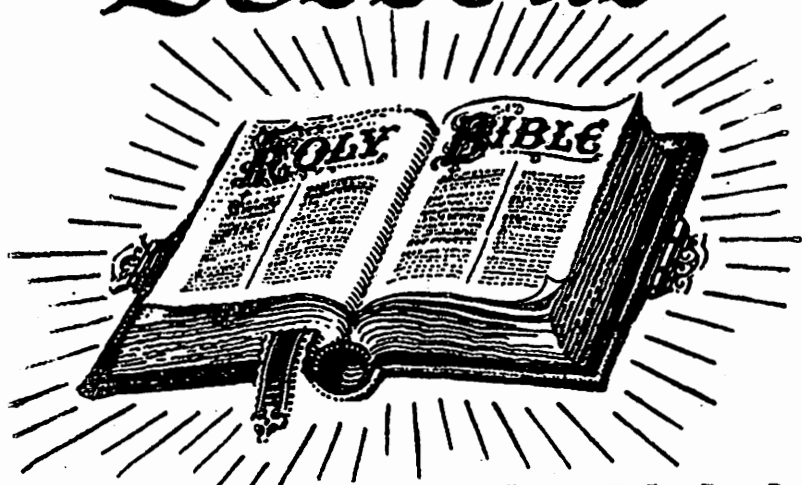


Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18**

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 30, No. 4
Oct., Nov., Dec.
1998**

**Faith Pub. House
Guthrie, OK
73044**

Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People
(USPS054-680)

Volume 30

Oct., Nov., Dec.

No. 4

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Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of
Jesus Christ and His Church
Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Wayne Murphey

Subscription Price-\$1.00 a copy for quarter of year, or
\$4.00 per year, issued quarterly.
Periodical postage paid at Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Published Quarterly By:
FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE
920 W. Mansur Ave.
Guthrie, Oklahoma 73044
Postmaster: Please send address corrections
to above address.

THEME FOR FOURTH QUARTER, 1998

For our lessons for this quarter we are greatly inspired to have a series of studies on the creation of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them by the Almighty God. We will begin at Genesis 1:1 and endeavor to survey the work of the creation in the light of the scriptures and by the anointing of the Holy Spirit and how He has so richly inspired our hearts. We trust that the Lord will bless this study to everyone's good and edification. After the creation of the heavens and the earth, and man, we will finish with lessons on the fall of man into sin and the prophecies of the salvation of God to be brought to earth through Jesus Christ, His holy Son. This whole subject has been one of great enlightenment and spiritual enlargement to my soul. I have been profoundly overwhelmed as the Holy Spirit opened up a grander view of the creation, something I have believed in ardently, all of my life, making it more vivid, and richly assuring of its truth. We trust it will prove of spiritual value to every student of the precious Word of God.

—Brother Leslie Busbee



OCTOBER 4, 1998

THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Job 38:1 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Isaiah 40:12 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

13 Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?

14 With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?

Psalms 104:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

MEMORY VERSE: Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Hebrews 11:3.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The present heavens and earth in which we live and upon which we move were preplanned and designed and brought into being by the power of the Word of the almighty God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 1:2), *"Without form"*: Waste; desolation; shapeless, worthless, and without order. *"Void"*: Empty, useless, a vacuum. *"The deep"*: The Hebrew meaning here is "the abyss (as a surging mass of water)". The word "abyss" is defined by Webster as the primeval (at the first or the beginning) great deep or chaos. "Abyss" is a Greek word which means without bottom. Everything mentioned here to describe the state of things before God created the heavens and the earth is full of horror. Think of it: no shape, no form, no light, no order! All there was was a deep and bottomless chasm of water in which there was no life, no warmth, and no light. It certainly was no place for a human being to live in. *"The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"*: The Hebrew expression here is: "The spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters". Adam Clarke, who was

blessed to master the Hebrew language, says that the word here means "brooding over," and it "expresses that tremulous motion made by the hen while either hatching (sitting on) her eggs or fostering her young. It here probably signifies the communicating a vital or *prolific* principle to the waters. (Prolific means producing many young or much fruit *and* turning out many products of the mind.) The idea of *incubation*, or hatching an egg, is implied in the original word." This opens up a volume of insight to the creation of God. The spirit of God here mentioned was not, as some suppose, just a violent wind blowing over the face of the chasm of waters. It was the real Holy spirit of God, the third person of the Holy Trinity. The Spirit of God was moving with deep thoughts and designs from the Father, Jehovah, planning, purposing, and premeditating on what He wanted to create and how He wanted it to be.

(Job 38:4), "*The foundations of the earth*": The foundations here refer to the appointments and consultings of God in His planning and design for the earth and its contents.

(Job 38:7), "*The morning stars and the sons of God*": These are the angelic beings filled with light and glory, existing with God before the creation of the world. They sang praise and shouted for joy in exultation at the designs of God in creating the world and mankind.

(Isaiah 40:12-14), "*Who and with whom?*": These scriptures ask the question similar to that which God asked Job. Who laid the foundation of the earth? Was there any mortal man there for God to consult with? Who directed His Spirit or counselled him as to what to do? The answer is obvious: No one!

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a study in the state of things prior to the Lord God's formation of the heaven and earth. What we want impressed upon our minds is the awful condition things were in before God brought light and order into the picture. We begin with the account in Genesis and we want to let our minds dwell upon that scene so vividly described. It is a dark, dismal scene. But the thought (and a sweet thought it truly is) of the Holy Spirit brooding and planning and designing life and happiness for a created world and its inhabitants brings a bright hope. The

Lord God was filled with good thoughts and plans for a people to love and serve Him. Isaiah 51:15, 16 so beautifully says, "But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people."

After all of what Job had endured from his "miserable comforters" and the final speech from young Elihu, God spoke to Job from the whirlwind and asked him about what part he had in the creation. It is a sobering answer, very obviously true for every one of us: NOTHING! We were not around when He did all of this. And who did He do it for? It was for us. Oh, the goodness that God has manifested toward us in His creation!

Isaiah takes up this same question and we are forced to admit that we had no part in bringing forth life and creation that we enjoy today.

From Psalm 104 (from which we will be drawing much light and understanding in future lessons) we have the truth emphasized again of the planning and founding of the earth. He made it to stand forever, but because of sin God had to destroy it once by a flood of water and He has decreed to destroy it again by fire in the last great day.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the condition of things before the Lord created the earth?
2. How many things can you name that were brooding in the mind of God, in His designs for the earth and mankind?
3. For whose good did the Lord plan and bring forth His creation?
4. With whom did the Lord take counsel from in creating the world?
5. What should this thought in question 4 teach us?
6. What were all the things that are seen created from?
7. Why is it vital for us to believe in the Genesis account of the creation?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

This thought of the Holy Spirit brooding over the desolate

and empty place and the deep abyss of water is very inspiring to me. This shows that God was planning and designing everything that was brought forth in the creation. Everything about the earth and what was to go in it was in the mind of God. What the earth was to be like and its shape, along with its gravity and relativity to the heavens above, was in greatness of the Eternal Thought. Just think of all the many different plants, animals and creeping things! All these were the production of the infinite heart of love and mind of understanding. Oh, what a great and wonderful God to conceive and plan such a wonderful world! He did it to make manifest His greatness of power and wisdom. He wanted us to be impressed with His goodness and bountiful provision. He wants us to look upon His work with awe and wonder. He wants it to cause us to admire and worship Him. If we look upon the earth and the heavens and count it as just the result of chance and circumstance, we will not be moved in our hearts to worship the Creator. But when we look upon the rose, the apple, the dog, the horse, and the creatures of the wild and think: "These were created by a wise and loving God who planned them all and spoke them into existence," it will create an intense longing to love and be close to Him. And that is what He wants. Ah, how Satan has deprived the human race of the greatest treasure in life in that he has obscured from their darkened minds this wonderful truth!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Many people have debated the authenticity of creation, therefore it is important to know how to categorize the story as told to us in Genesis.

The story of creation cannot be justly pigeonholed as science, for it doesn't fit all of the parameters of how theories are proven. There are no scientific means at hand by which to validate the depth of what the story of creation declares. Its revelation is not in the findings of reason, but in the course which nature has taken in the hands of a power with greater abilities than that of nature.

The story of creation is not simply history, for history is the accounting of what has transpired in time, and Genesis reaches

back into eternity before time existed. History is the recounting of an event which has validation by several sources or witnesses. There was no man at the beginning of creation,—just God, His Son and the Holy Spirit.

The story of creation does not follow the pattern of mythology. Authorities of ancient myths are able to recognize them because of the local coloring or national peculiarity which they contain. What Genesis reveals is no more Jewish than it is Indian or Assyrian or Persian. It doesn't hold the traditions of any ancient culture.

Therefore, we accept the story of creation as DIVINE REVELATION. The Genesis account seems plausible and feels right to one who believes in God. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God,..." Heb. 11:3.

—Wayne Murphey



OCTOBER 11, 1998

"LET THERE BE LIGHT!"

Genesis 1:3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

I John 1:5 ...God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Psalms 36:9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

Psalm 104:1 ...O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.

Psalm 89:15 Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

Psalm 90:8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

MEMORY VERSE: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. II Cor. 4:6.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The first thing that was needed in God's work of creation was light upon the situation. And since God is light and the very essence of wisdom and understanding, it was surely the light of His love and holy countenance that shone out upon the dark emptiness before Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 1:3), "*Light*": The meaning in both the Hebrew and Greek is "illumination". Adam Clarke says that the original Hebrew word "owr" signifies not only light but also fire. Fire is the source of light. Any kind of natural or artificial light that we have comes from some sort of fire. Light and illumination are the greatest and most essential of the attributes of God. And this light comes from the fire that is part of God. "God is a consuming fire". Heb. 12:29. "Fire out of his mouth devoured". Psalm 18:8. "A fire goeth before him". Psa. 97:3. These are among the many scriptural texts that associate God with fire. We among so many, have wondered and questioned as to what this light that sprang up on the first day was. Seeing that the sun, moon, and stars were not created until the fourth day, what then was this light that shone on day one? Adam Clarke has some very interesting observations on this. He believed that this light was a part of God's being which, in the form of fire and heat, was released upon the dark spectacle of the chaos and abyss of darkness. He observed that this heat is latent (or hidden) in all the creation. Enough friction can bring forth heat and fire as when flint strikes steel or when two sticks are rubbed together.

Clarke says, "Light is one of the most astonishing productions of the creative skill and power of God. It is the grand means by which all His other works are discovered, examined, and understood." Whatever this light was, it was no natural light, but was part of the spiritual essence of God Himself, radiating out in brightness and glory, illuminating and shedding a glow without which none of His great work would be of any value.

(Genesis 1:4), *"God divided the light from the darkness"*: God made a very clear-cut distinction between light and darkness, which is the absence of light. Think what you will about it, but let us remember that God is light and the absence of light is the absence of God. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." I John 1:6. God made His light to be separate from the absence of His light for the sake of the value and importance of light. Darkness is to be turned away from and light is to be sought and gone after. A mixture of light and darkness is poor management and business.

(Genesis 1:5), *"The evening and the morning"*: Since there was no sun nor moon nor stars at this stage of creation, we must look for the meaning of the evening and the morning in another light. Perhaps all our thoughts and ideas will not all coincide at this point. But I like to think about it as God's way of marking the first day by separating and making a distinction between the light and the darkness and making the darkness serve as the evening and the light serve as the morning. All things God is doing on these first three days are in the light of that light He brought forth from Himself on day one.

(John 1:1), *"In the beginning was the Word"*: This Word became flesh in the form of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. He was the Word of God made manifest to us. And here it says that this Word was in the beginning. Perhaps this Word was a vital part of that light that shone on the first day.

(John 1:5), *"The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"*: Comprehend in the Greek means to seize or hold down. The meaning is evident that when light shines in darkness the darkness does not hinder nor prevent the light. When light comes, the darkness leaves because darkness is merely the absence of light. Now if the light shines and another

agent produces a blind or veil to obstruct the penetration of the rays of light, then you have voluntary darkness. This is accomplished by the god of this world, Satan, who seeks to blind the mind and keep the light of God from shining in. (II Cor. 4:4.)

(Psalm 104:2), "*Coverest thyself with light as with a garment*": This is another expression of God calling for light in approaching His great work of creation. He clothed Himself with this beautiful light to illuminate His proceedings.

(Psalm 89:15, Psa. 90:8), "*The light of thy countenance*": The light that glows from His holy bearing and face. This was some more of the light that shone on that first day of creation. The all-seeing eye of God, the warmth of His holy burning love, and the radiant purity of His smile or frown—all of this comes in His countenance.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was light so greatly needed as the first act of creation?
2. What are your thoughts regarding just what this first light was?
3. What happens to darkness when the light shines? Why?
4. Why does God want darkness and light to be separated and not mixed?
5. How can the light of God's countenance be a blessed thing to us?
6. How is the light of His countenance a dread and a fearful thing?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

This matter of light and darkness is an all-persuasive truth concerning the Almighty God. Light was the first thing that He brought forth in His creation. The darkness that pervaded things had to fall back. Nothing could live in the terrible cold darkness and watery element. So the light was brought forth, and with the light came warmth, comfort and hope. No one likes to work in the dark. God can work in the dark for He is light and the darkness and the light are both the same with Him. (Psalm 139:12.) But for us creatures of earth, we need light. Mainly we need spiritual light, light to our hearts and minds to give us understanding of what is right and good. God is a God of light.

He shines His light into the darkness of man. Man that realizes and senses his darkness will rejoice and welcome the light. But those who are not aware of the darkness and vanity of their life will not appreciate the light. Light shows up things. Light reveals error and wrong. It means much for us to have an open mind to the correction of God. By means of His Word and Spirit we can have the full light so we can know what is pleasing to the Lord.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How do we know that there is light? Is it not self-revealing? There is no way that we could see the sun if it did not put forth light.

The story is told about a young Texas circuit riding preacher who was given the oversight of three rural Methodist churches.

At one of the churches, the chairman of the board of trustees greeted the circuit rider and said, "Pastor, we sure are glad to have you preach to us. We want to help with the work. Is there anything you can see which needs improvement?"

The pastor's gaze lingered on the single small light bulb which hung from the ceiling, and then shifted to the bronzed face of the lay leader. "I think that a chandelier would be most helpful," was his modest suggestion.

Weeks later, he mentioned it again.

"Well, pastor," drawled the chairman, "we hit a little snag on that request. In the first place, none of us could spell it, so we couldn't order it. Furthermore, nobody here can play one. Besides that, we all decided that the first thing this church needs is more light."

This church needed light on light. And many people in the world need light on God, and to understand the light which was revealed on the first day of creation. It is hard to comprehend the light of truth God has unveiled to us without first reaching out by faith and seeing God. Unless God reveals truth to us, we will not see it.

—Wayne Murphey



OCTOBER 18, 1998

A FIRMAMENT IN THE MIDST OF THE WATERS

Genesis 1:6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

Psalms 104:1 ...O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind.

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

Isaiah 45:18 For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else.

Isaiah 48:13 Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.

Deuteronomy 10:14 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.

Psalms 148:1 Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

5 Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.

MEMORY VERSE: The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them. Psalm 89:11.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: God spoke the word and caused a

great expanse of space to open up in the midst of the mass of water. It was like spreading out a great curtain, dividing one part of the waters from the other part. He called this wide expanse heaven into which later He was to place the sun, moon and stars.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 1:6), "*Firmament*": Adam Clarke defines this word from the Hebrew as meaning "to spread out as the curtains of a tent or pavilion", an expanse or space. Another commentator, Matthew Henry, agrees to this definition. This wide opening of space was placed in the midst of the waters. It is evident that this expanse was occupied by the whole solar system if not the whole universe. Think what a great God He is to work with such overwhelming greatness!

(Genesis 1:7), "*Waters which were above the firmament*": The comments of the commentator Matthew Poole are very good on this: "They are either, 1. A collection or sea of waters placed by God above all the visible heavens, and there reserved for purposes known to himself. Or rather, 2. The waters in the clouds." Whatever these waters are supposed to be, it is a great work that God accomplished. Our verse in Psalm 148:4 speaks about the waters that be above the heavens.

(Genesis 1:8), "*God called the firmament Heaven*": The Hebrew word here means the lofty sky. God designed that there be a sky above the earth He was about to bring into being. And in this sky He planned to put the lights that would be needed to lighten the earth.

LESSON BACKGROUND

On this second marked day in the history of the world God accomplished a very important work. Water was everywhere it seemed, above and below. It was no place for people to live and breathe the breath of life. What was needed was a space free from water, an ample, abundant opening in the midst of the waters. And, when God works, He does it abundantly. His word caused a great expanse to suddenly exist right in the midst of everything. It was a dividing between two watery parts. The waters above were pushed far out of the way. The waters below

were to be shaped and put in the needed proportions on the next day.

We have sought to gather, from the various scriptures, expressions concerning the Lord's hand in spreading and stretching out the heavens. It is spoken of like the spread of a sheet or curtain. Today we can look up and see this beautiful curtain of majestic beauty and splendor. We call it our sky. Part of this sky is the atmosphere that the Lord placed as a girdle around the earth. In it is the air and the elements that make for life, breath and health. There are the clouds, the potential bearers of the weather in all of the seasons. And, as we shall study later, there are hung the sun, moon and the myriad stars. How important was this firmament! Let us not take it for granted. It was the work of the Almighty God in making room for us to live and have our being. Before, it was all a watery mess of confusion and disorder. Now there is a great space, a roomy place for what was in the mind of God to come later.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did God need to do on the second day?
2. Why was this firmament needed?
3. How did God bring this firmament into being?
4. What all do you think that this firmament took in?
5. Where do you think these waters above the firmament were placed?
6. What causes us to be assured that this account is true?
7. Are you persuaded that this account of the creation is beyond doubt the truth?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

There are numbers of things in the Genesis account of the creation of the heavens and the earth that are difficult to understand and explain. It is hard to comprehend a condition of everything being covered and submerged in water. Of course this is because of our present condition where water is most generally in its boundaries and under control. We can pretty well imagine a great opening or expanse coming into the midst of the waters, but we wonder about those waters that were pushed up above the expanse. Are they still up there? How far

away are they? Would it be possible for them to come back down upon our world and drown all humanity? We read about how later the fountains of the deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened and after 40 days and nights of such a deluge of water, the earth was completely submerged again up to fifteen cubits (approx. 25 feet) above the highest mountains. These things are hard for us to take in. And, if we are of a mind to question everything, we will find many questions here that are hard to find an answer to. So, what shall we do? Because we do not understand everything satisfactorily are we going to discredit it and count it not so? Can you understand and explain how your car engine, transmission, electrical and cooling systems operate? Some people can pretty well know the ins and outs about these things, but most of us are not up on these matters. But we still use these things and can learn how to operate them. Can you explain how a tiny needle can extract from the tiny groove of a phonograph record all the sounds of the singers and instruments of the orchestra? Can you explain how a seed can be put into the ground and grow up the fruit that it does? We cannot explain all of these things, but we know they are true and they work for us. Even so let us accept the Biblical account of the creation of God and believe in Him as the great and wise Creator who planned, designed, and brought into being the heavens and the earth and everything that is therein contained. And the Spirit of God can and will bear witness to us of His truth. and we will be richly blessed and comforted to know of His greatness and goodness in His great work of the creation.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What great power there is in the Word of God. We feel a great sense of accomplishment when we create a little project with our hands. Man has done some wonderful inventing with his intelligence, but how insignificant his work is compared to God's. Just by speaking the word the genesis of all things was established.

Note the power in God's Word. Not only did it create the heavens and earth, but II Peter 3:7 says, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of

ungodly men." It is the power of God that keeps this 6,000 year-old universe in its orbit. It is also the same Word that will make the earth melt with fervent heat.

Another aspect of the Word of God is that it creates a new heart. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." I Peter 1:23. The Psalmist said, "For thy word hath quickened me." This is something only God can do. Man can no more accomplish this than he can create the universe. God's great power will reach to the lowest sinner to create a clean, pure heart within.

Just as the Word of God preserves the order of the universe, it also preserves the soul from sin. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Psalms 119:11.

Sometimes we can only stand back and observe with admiration the miraculous things God's Word has accomplished.

—Wayne Murphey



OCTOBER 25, 1998

THE DRY LAND WITH PLANTS AND TREES

Genesis 1:9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.
Psalm 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Psalm 104:5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it

should not be removed for ever.

6 Thou coverdst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;

16 The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

17 Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house.

MEMORY VERSE: ...Sing praise... unto our God; who covereth the heaven with clouds, who preparerth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. Psalm 147:7-8.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: God caused the dry land to appear along with the waters, shaping the earth as it was to be fit for living creatures. He caused grass to grow along with herbs and trees for the service of man.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 1:9), *"Let the dry land appear"*: It has been thought, (and it could very well be so), that the land was covered or even mingled with the waters before God separated them and caused the land to appear. Peter said in II Peter 3:5 that "By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water." Or it could have been that God shaped the waters into certain areas and spoke the land into existence to make up the empty areas where the waters were not. However He did it, we are filled with wonder.

(Psalm 24:2), *"For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods"*: Matthew Henry has some excellent comments on this: "He made it (the earth) as no one else could. It is the creature of omnipotence, (that is, the earth was created by the Almighty, all powerful God,) for it is founded

upon the seas, upon the floods, a weak and unstable foundation (one would think) to build the earth upon, and yet, if Almighty power please, it shall serve to bear the weight of this earth. The founding of the earth upon the floods should remind us how slippery and uncertain all earthly things are; their foundation is not only sand, but water; it is therefore our folly to build upon them."

(Psalm 104:6), *"Thou coverdst it with the deep as with a garment"*: It would appear, according to this saying, that the earth was a great globe of water with the earth submerged therein.

(Psalm 104:8), *"They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys"*: Matthew Poole Commentary says, "Some read the words thus, 'The mountains ascend, the valleys descend.' The Hebrew Interlinear reads something like this: 'The mountains go up, the valleys go down.'" God could have caused certain parts of the earth to go up higher than others making the lofty peaks of the mountains, while he had other parts of the earth to sink downward for valleys and plains.

(Psalm 104:16), *"The trees of the Lord are full of sap"*: The words "of sap" are added by the translators and are not part of the original text. The Hebrew says, "The trees of Jehovah are satisfied." The trees and plants are watered and nourished by the great water system that God set in motion. By way of the nourishing elements of the soil and the showers of distilled rain, the trees and plants are sustained.

LESSON BACKGROUND

On this third day of creation we see the Lord God bringing shape and arrangement of the waters with the dry land rising to its place. Thus the globular shape of the world appears. And on this same day He clothed the earth with foliage of grass, plants and trees. It is a marvellous wonder to consider all the hundreds of grasses, plants, and trees that God planned and designed in His great omnipotent mind. One can take a good encyclopedia and survey the numerous specimens of growth of the plant kingdom. Science has determined that there are about 20,000 different kinds of trees in the world and 1,000 of them grow in the United States. There are about 15,000 species of

wildflowers growing in the United States north of Mexico. But we should remember, as we view this great realm of beauty, that God had each and every one planned before they came forth. Think of all the different kinds of grass, the different shapes and sizes of leaves and stalks! Think of all the different flowers and vegetables there are! Think of all the many trees, not only fruit trees, but the many other trees of various sizes and shapes, too. The many different kinds of wood that man has found so useful, the wonderful variety of grasses for hay and grain for both man and beast, and all the fruits, nuts and oils that they produce,—all of these are not the products of chance or evolution. No, they were the designs of a great and wonderful God, a living God, who brooded over the unfathomed waste and planned this beautiful world for us to live in and enjoy. God desired to impress man with His goodness and loving care. So He prepared all of these things in advance, so that man could open his eyes upon a world of beauty and blessing and be made conscious of the God who gave it to him. Let us not be like the proud and vain carnal minded throng who have no thoughts of where all of these things come from. They are the gifts of the Almighty God to us.
—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was God's purpose in creating the dry land?
2. Why did God not make ALL the earth dry land?
3. What were the 3 kinds of things that God caused the earth to bring forth?
4. What other kinds of trees did God create besides the fruit trees?
5. In what way did God found and establish the earth upon the seas and the floods?
6. What did God command the waters to do?
7. How many kinds of grasses can you name?
8. How many kinds of herbs, flowers, and plants can you name?
9. How many kinds of fruit trees and other trees can you name?
10. How many different kinds of grain can you name?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Think of the soil that God provided in the creation of the earth with all of its nutrients and health contents! Is not this a marvel? And think of the color of most of the foliage that God brought forth. It is green, which, being the medium wave length of light, is the easiest on the beholding eye. What if the plants and trees were red instead of green? God knew what was best for man. He was making and shaping everything up for the welfare, happiness and pleasure of man and woman who were soon to be created. God still works in our lives today. He plans, designs, foresees, and purposes blessings to be developed and poured out upon us. If we will humble ourselves and seek Him with all the heart and be willing to obey Him in all things, He will work His wonderful works in our lives. Just as He fashioned and planned the earth to be the wonderful place that it was in the beginning, so He will fashion and work His works in our lives today. I love the prayer of the Psalmist in Psalm 90:16, 17. "Let THY work appear unto thy servants, and THY glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We learn valuable lessons, as well as what the nature of God is like, when we view His creation. Notice the diversity in His work. The waters were divided into oceans, lakes and rivers. The land was divided into mountains, hills and valleys. The plants consisted of grasses, herbs and trees. And not only is it all connected together, but each aspect of the creation complements the rest. That is what God's church is designed to be like. It is composed of vessels of differing types, but all are important because each has its own particular use. (II Tim. 2:20.)

Every key on a piano has a different sound, but beautiful music is possible if each key is played properly. Sameness is not required in order to have unity, but what is required is that we all have the Holy Spirit within us motivating our actions. God loves it when this happens, and it brings glory to His name just as much or more than nature in its splendor of diversity.

—Wayne Murphey

NOVEMBER 1, 1998

THE SUN, MOON, AND STARS

Genesis 1:14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lessser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

Psalm 104:19 He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

Psalm 147:4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.

Amos 5:6 Seek the Lord, and ye shall live;...

8 Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion,...

Psalm 8:3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

MEMORY VERSE: Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by

number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. Isaiah 40:26.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: On the fourth day God created the sun to give light upon the earth for the daytime, and the moon to give light at night, and the vast multitude of stars to adorn the heavens. The sight of these wonderful lights gives a token of the greatness of God for all people of the earth, and they speak a universal language to all mankind.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 1:14), "*Signs*": The word here means a signal, monument, or evidence. Clarke observes: "Let them ever be considered as continual tokens of God's tender care for man, and as standing proofs of His continual miraculous interference. The sun and moon also serve as signs of the different changes which take place in the atmosphere, and which are so essential for all puposes of agriculture and commerce." We might also add that the four seasons, that is, winter, spring, summer, and fall, are regulated by the position of the sun in its various distances from the earth. "*Seasons*": Clarke says that the Hebrew word denotes the times of the year when the sacred festivals should be held. Others believe that it signifies the month cycle that the moon essentially serves. God wisely made certain times of the year to be different so they can be marked or identified as appointments for special incidents and occasions.

(Psalm 19:1-5), This most sublime Psalm wonderfully shows how the heavens and the glory of the lights God placed in them are continually speaking to us earth-bound creatures and declaring how great, wise, faithful, beautiful and holy our Creator really is. They speak not in audible and articulate words, but their presence and glorious beauty alone utters forth a message to the heart of man. It is like one old farmer to whom an infidel was declaring his intentions of blotting out all testimony or witness of God. The farmer pointed to the starry heavens above them and said, "What are you going to do about that up there?"

(Psalm 104:19), *"The sun knoweth his going down"*: This is expressing the fact that the sun never gets lost or loses its way in its rising and setting.

(Psalm 147:4), *"He telleth the number of the stars"*: God has an accurate count of the stars. Man has made his estimate of their number, but God has the true figure. *"He calleth them all by their names"*: Job 9:9 and 38:31-32 gives us the names of some of them: "Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south." "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?"

(Amos 5:8), *"Seven stars"*: The Hebrew word definition is "a cluster of stars" and is the same word translated Pleiades in Job 9:9. Perhaps someone with greater knowledge of astronomy and the study of the stars could bring out more on these matters.

(Isaiah 40:26), *"Not one faileth"*: The Hebrew word here alludes to mustering an army or arranging for battle and not one soldier is missing. When the prophet speaks of the great hosts of the heavens, he declares that God calls them and sustains them by the greatness of His might and not one of their mighty host is ever found missing.

LESSON BACKGROUND

On this fourth day in our lesson God placed the wonderful lights in the vast expanse of heaven above the earth. Here in plain view of the creatures of earth shines forth the greatest manifestation of the power and glory of the Heavenly Father! And, sad to say, us earth-blinded mortals are prone to live our days unconscious of the message that the heavenly hosts declare. As the poet says, "Instead of the star-spangled heavens we look at the dust at our feet; we drain out the cup that is bitter, forgetting the one that is sweet."

It is interesting to note that Psalm 19:4 that we have in our lesson is quoted by the apostle Paul in Romans 10:18, and associates this with the preaching of the gospel of Christ. "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world" Now, to me, this opens up a wonderful thought. If the apostle associates

the message of the heavens with the message of the gospel, then we can see that these beautiful and glorious heavens, which are within practically every mortal's view, are a wonderful type of the dispensation of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. In their shining forth the glory of God they typify the glorious gospel of Christ and its light and beauty!

We also include a part of the 8th Psalm which expresses a comparison of the grandeur of the heavens with man. If the sun, moon, and stars are the work of God's fingers and they are so vast and seemingly unmeasured, what is man that God would take note of? The writer in Hebrews 2:6 quotes from this Psalm and "What is man?" in reference to Christ as the Son of Man unto whom all things are to be subjected in His victory over sin, death, and the grave. How wonderfully the scriptures combine the glories of God's first creation with the New Creation that He accomplished in His Son, Jesus, in the salvation of our souls!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What were the sun, moon, and stars placed in the heavens for?
2. What was God's purpose in there being day and night?
3. What do the heavens declare and how is it declared?
4. What is the glory of these heavens telling us?
5. How far does their message reach?
6. How is the sun like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber?
7. How is the sun like a strong man rejoicing to run a race?
8. What does the greatness of the heavens make man seem to be?
9. Why does God want us to look up and behold thoughtfully the heavens?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus, the Son of the living God, who came into the world to bring salvation for our souls, taught us to love our enemies and do good to them that hate us. He said to do this "that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh

his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5:44-45. Notice he spoke of the sun as being "His" (the Father's) sun. That blazing sun that daily passes over the earth and is such a blessing to us is our Father's sun. It belongs to Him. He made it and put it in the right position in the heavens at the right distance from the earth. Science has ascertained that the sun is about 93 million miles away. Many things they have discovered about the sun. But the main thing we need to remember is that God put it there for us.

Let us consider the moon, how soft and gentle are its rays shining down upon the earth. And think of its phases. There are times during the month when the face of the moon is turned completely away from us. Then as the days come and go we begin to see the moon returning to shine upon us, little by little. First there is seen just a thin crescent of the moon in the west after sunset. As each day passes this crescent becomes larger until in a week it is half full. In another week it is full moon. Then it begins to recede. Each night it comes up later and diminishes in size. Soon it is a thin crescent coming up just before day-break. Then it disappears and is not seen until it begins its showing again in the west. Through the years I have marvelled and enjoyed the moon changes. Many times we have risen from our bed and stepped outside to drink in the beauty of the moonlit night. And then the stars! How we love to gaze upon the grandeur of their glory! There are so many artificial lights aglow on the surface of the earth that the glory of the stars is not noticed. But if one can get away from the city lights, out to where the stars are more clearly seen, there is a blessing in gazing up into the depths of the heavens. God wants us to take notice of what He has created. And let us bear in mind, as we behold these wonders, that they are the work of His skill and wisdom and are given to us for our welfare and happiness!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Robert MacArthur, a well-known minister of earlier generations, once said, "The mountains are God's majestic thoughts. The stars are God's brilliant thoughts. The flowers are God's beautiful thoughts."

Alfred Tennyson, walking in the garden with a friend, was

asked what he thought of Jesus Christ. Pointing to some flowers Tennyson said, "What the sun is to these flowers, Christ is to my soul. He is the Sun of my soul."

As Catherine Louise Nichla once looked in wonder at the evening sky, she exclaimed, "Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven, blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels."

These expressions of admiration which come from the soul are very similar to what the Psalmist David expressed in our lesson. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." *Psa. 19:1.* —Wayne Murphey



NOVEMBER 8, 1998

CREATURES IN THE SEAS AND IN THE AIR

Genesis 1:20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

Psalm 69:34 Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein.

Psalm 104:10 He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.

12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

24 O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

25 So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

Matthew 6:26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

MEMORY VERSE: Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? Luke 12:24.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: God fashioned and designed all the many different kinds of creatures that live in the rivers and seas, and He also likewise preplanned all the various birds and flying fowl. These all came into being at the command of His Word and His great care overshadows them.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 104:12), The Hebrew rendering of this is clearer: "Over them the birds of the heaven dwell; from between the branches they give voice."

(Psalm 104:24), "*Manifold*": multiplied, increased, and abundant.

(Psalm 104:25), "*Things creeping innumerable*": Science has determined that there are about 21,700 different kinds of fish. "*Small and great beasts*": Probably a more proper word for beasts would be "living creatures."

(Psalm 104:26), "*Leviathan*": This can refer to any of the large sea and water creatures.

(Matthew 6:26), "*Behold the fowls of the air*": Science has

determined that there are about 9,700 different kinds of birds.

(Matthew 10:29), "*Farthing*": The fourth part of anything. It generally refers to a British coin that is worth about one half of a penny in U. S. coins. "*Without your Father*": This means without your Father's notice or concern. The sparrow is one of the most common and abundant birds. They are worth scarcely a trifle, yet they are precious in God's sight. This shows how much more is the Lord God concerned with the needs of His trusting children.

LESSON BACKGROUND

On the fifth day God caused to come forth the living creatures in the waters and the winged, living creatures that fly in the midst of the heavens. It is wonderful to behold the many different kinds of birds and fish. One can find in a good encyclopedia, such as the World Book Encyclopedia, very good and informative articles concerning birds and fish with many beautiful illustrations. One should consider when beholding these living creatures that they were designed and created by the heavenly Father. He created them and blessed them and commanded them that they be fruitful and multiply. Oh, how glad we are to be assured in our hearts that the Bible account of the creation is true, that it really happened like it says, and, more so, that all of the rest of the Bible is just as true!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did God create on the fifth day?
2. What did God bless and command them to do?
3. For what purpose did God create so many different creatures?
4. What does God's care for all of these many different creatures show to us?
5. How many different kinds of birds can you name?
6. How many different kinds of fish can you name?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Not long ago I was helping my wife with dinner prepara-

tions and my part was to pick meat off of chicken bones that had been cooked. As I pulled the meat off of one of the wings I was amazed at the sight of the bone structure and how the different bones were positioned and connected to each other. It struck me right there of the design of God in how that chicken was made. My heart was overwhelmed as I thought of the wisdom and goodness of God. And then I began to meditate more on the thought of nature and the many examples we have of the wise manner in which everything is made. It sure enough brought my soul into a greater sense of wonder and admiration for our God. He surely is a wise, almighty and wonderful Creator!

So many of these things in nature we too often just take for granted. We just accept them as being real without any sense of why and how they became real. When we can truly from our hearts attribute them to God, it helps us to understand more clearly how great He is. The many different kinds of creatures are amazing. I have thought so much about it and how that God thought all of these up in His mind before He spoke them into existence. What mortal could have planned and designed so wisely and efficiently so many different creatures? From the tiny hummingbird that is about two inches in length, to the giant ostrich that is nearly eight feet tall, the bird kingdom is one masterpiece of art and wonder! From the elegant and beautiful peacock, to the homely starling, there are birds of so many colors and shapes and sizes that we are filled with wonder and admiration which, in turn, brings the wisdom and goodness of God into clearer focus. Think of the many different kinds of fish and what a blessing this nutritious food has been to humanity. These are all the gifts of the Almighty God who created them with our happiness and welfare in mind. I, for one, appreciate and offer praise to God for all of His great creation. May all of us become more awakened to the beauty and blessing of God's created wonders!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The same intelligence which planned and created all the

many varieties of fish and birds, is still in action today. God's intellect is everlasting.

We are told that if we don't use our brain we lose the ability to do so. That is one reason some believe children should be educated at a young age,—so that they can take full advantage of the brain's potential.

It is obvious God has lost none of His intellectual capacity. For instance, consider the thought of Matt. 10:30 about the hairs of our head being numbered. I used this scripture in a recent message, and afterwards someone made the amusing observation that God has an easier time numbering some people's hairs than others. But think of the intellect it would take for God to keep track of everyone's hair, even considering that some people have more than others! I cannot begin to estimate the number of head hairs I have, let alone those of all the heads in the world. But God, after using His wonderful power to create the world, has continued to use His vast knowledge to know His creation intimately. That gives us courage to trust Him as the Maker of all things.

—Wayne Murphey



NOVEMBER 15, 1998

**GOD CREATES CATTLE, CREEPING THINGS,
BEASTS AND MAN**

Genesis 1:24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Psalm 104:18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies.

20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.

21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

MEMORY VERSE: O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. Psalm 104:24.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: On the sixth day God created the reptiles, the cattle, and all other beasts of the earth, and, as a crowning work of His creation, He created man in His own image and after His likeness to have dominion over all of His creation.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 1:25), *"Beast, cattle, and creeping thing":* This

takes in all the creatures of the animal, reptile, and amphibian categories. Amphibians are those creatures who live both on the land and in the water. Science has determined that there are over one million different kinds of animals. There are 6,000 kinds of reptiles, 3,200 kinds of amphibians, and 4,000 kinds of mammals.

(Genesis 1:26), "*Man in our image, after our likeness*": Man in God's image means that he is to imitate and be a copy of what God is. I believe that this image has to do with the nature and the heart. Man in God's likeness means that he was to resemble God, be in His shape and fashion. This is probably having to do with man's outward form and shape, having a head, arms, hands, feet, body, etc. "*Dominion*": Authority, control, rulership.

(Genesis 1:28), "*Replenish*": The word replenish here means to fill again, and is really not the proper word. The original Hebrew word means to fill or make full.

(Psalm 104:18), "*Conies*": It is believed that these were small rabbit-like creatures who made their habitation in rocky areas.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have in our lesson today the Lord God finishing His great work of creating the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. On this sixth day we see the creeping things, the beasts of the earth, the cattle, and man created. We do not know how long it was after God created man that He created the woman. But the account of it in the next chapter shows that the woman was given to man after man had accomplished his great task of giving names to all the living creatures. How man could have accomplished this great task in one day would be difficult to say. But our account in Genesis 1 labels the Lord's creation of man as male and female, even though the creation of the woman may have come later. We have also included a few more scriptures from the 104th Psalm which we have found as a very inspiring description of the creation.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What all did God create on the sixth day?
2. How many creeping things can you name?
3. How many different kinds of cattle can you name?
4. How many different kinds of beasts can you name?
5. What does it mean for man to be in the image of God?
6. In what way was man to have the dominion of the earth?
7. What did God have to say about all that He had created?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

God really accomplished a lot on the sixth day, did He not? He brought forth the animal kingdom and the man that He wanted to be in His own image. He wanted man to be like Him, not only in outward form, but in his nature and in his heart. He wanted man to be merciful, loving, patient, obedient, industrious, earnest, honest and sincere. I like to think that man, upon his awakening to life in this new world, was made conscious of the countenance of the Almighty looking down upon him. As he sensed the kind and loving beauty of the face of the Almighty and was won to worship and adore his Creator, that image was impressed upon his mind and affections. It was the work of Satan later that got his interests turned in another direction and toward other desires, thus marring that image of God that had originally been reflected in the heart of man. Today it is the things that we are desiring, loving, following after, interested in and concerned about that determine what image is in our hearts. Man was placed in a beautiful world with many things to see about and relate to. But the Creator rightfully and justly deserved the first place in his affections and desires. So today the Lord God yet yearns to have our worship, praise, devotion and love.

God created man with the express purpose of him having His image and likeness reflected in his heart and mind. With this image in his nature and attitude, man would be able to subdue the earth and bring everything into subjection to the will of God. But with his heart turned toward the flesh and the

earthly realm, the image of God would be lost and man would drift into iniquity and wickedness. Let us take heed to this thought and seek earnestly to yield all into God's will that we might have His image shining in our hearts and lives.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In six days God created an awesome universe, resplendent with sun, moon, stars, aerial canopy, green mantled ground, Alps, Grand Canyon, oceans, rivers, small furry animals and roaring beasts. All were like clay in the hand of a master potter. But man was a different creation. He embodied God's personality. Light, air, land, sea, sun, moon and stars were "things." Plants, fishes, fowls and animals were "lives." Man was a "person." He was created after the image of God and put into the garden with a pure heart. Even after his fall into sin, we can still see some of the attributes of God in man. But the wonderful news is that God has made a way that we can again bear the "express image" of Himself in our hearts. (Heb. 1:3.)

—Wayne Murphey



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We trust that these Sunday School books and the lessons they contain will be an inspiration by helping to open up just a few of the hidden mysteries of our majestic God.



NOVEMBER 22, 1998

GOD'S REST ON THE SEVENTH DAY

Genesis 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

Exodus 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Hebrews 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Colossians 2: 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Hebrews 3:12.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: After God had finished all of His work in creating the heavens and the earth in six days, He ceased from His creative works on the seventh day. He blessed and made holy the seventh day and commanded in the law He gave to Moses on Mt. Sinai that it was to be a sabbath, or day of rest, in which no work was to be done. God wanted His people to enter into His rest with Him. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to fulfill the sabbath day rest into a spiritual rest of believing, obeying, and trusting in God and ceasing from our own works of self, unbelief and sin.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 2:2), "*He rested*": This means that He ceased from operations. He did no creative work on the seventh day. He rested, not because He, the Almighty God, was weary or exhausted from the exertion of His great power. But it was rather to institute a principle of life for His creation to follow and enter into. God wanted man to have a holy ceasing from his mortal and earthly endeavors, and a recognition that it is not human toil and exertion that accomplishes the will of God. It is rather a loving faith and obedience to the Lord that brings fellowship with God and His holiness.

(Exodus 20:8), "*Sabbath*": This is a Hebrew word and it means to repose or desist (or cease) from exertion (effort and energy).

(Hebrews 4:3), "*We which have believed do enter into rest*": We that truly believe the Word of God and the promises in Christ by the gospel, do enter into that true rest that God had in mind in the giving of the seventh day rest. "*As he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest*": The apostle has quoted from the 95th Psalm in which the Holy Spirit gives a warning to not follow the example of unbelief that Israel showed when they drew back from going over into the Caanan land. (Numbers 14.) He said, "Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest." Psalm 95:11. The writer is associating the seventh day rest with the rest of the Caanan

land, and is showing the fulfillment in the rest of faith that Christ came to bring.

(Hebrews 4:9), *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God"*: There still is a keeping of the sabbath for the saints of God. But this is not a literal seventh day rest from physical exertion and toil. It is rather a ceasing from unbelief and everything associated with it, namely, worry, fret, anxiety, gloom, lust, selfishness and greed.

(Colossians 2:17), *"The body is of Christ"*: Jesus Christ is the body or substance that the shadow of the law of the sabbath day falls from. He is the grand fulfillment of all the Old Testament ordinances. Faith and obedience to Him delivers us from the curse of the law and satisfies the holy pleasure of the Heavenly Father. In Christ we have the real thing, the true rest. Therefore we are no longer under the rule of the seventh day rest.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Today we have the lesson of the Lord God and His rest on the seventh day, ceasing from His works, and making holy the seventh day. We also include with our text the commandment from the Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mt. Sinai concerning keeping the Sabbath (or day of rest) and not doing any work therein. But we have also included what the writer in Hebrews has to say about the rest that God wants us to enter into today. I believe that if we will address this matter with an open mind and a willingness to be taught of the Lord we will be able to see and understand just what the Sabbath is to us as a spiritual sabbath, a rest for the soul, and a ceasing from our own works.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What work did God do on the seventh day?
2. Why did God rest from His works on the seventh day?
3. What did keeping the sabbath day under the law involve?
4. What other kind of rest did the writer in Hebrews mention?
5. What kind of rest and sabbath are we to keep now?

6. What does it mean to "cease from our own works"?
7. How is "believing" associated with the rest we must enter today?
8. What are some things that we must cease from in this rest?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

On the seventh day God rested from all of His works. And because He did no work on that day, but ceased from His works, God sanctified and hallowed the seventh day. He made it a special day to be remembered and kept holy. It was the fact that He rested, that made that day special and holy. Now in the law of Moses, a strict observance of the sabbath day was commanded. During each seventh day there was to be no work done. To show how serious this commandment was we refer to Numbers 15:32-36 in which judgment was pronounced by the Lord upon a man who was caught gathering sticks on the sabbath day. The Lord commanded that the man be stoned to death. Thus the breaking of the sabbath day was a serious offence. But the New Testament makes it very plain that we are no longer under the requirement of the old law sabbath of not doing any work on the seventh day. I was once brought into controversy over this doctrine with a very conscientious seventh day sabbath keeper a few years ago. We had quite a discussion about it until the Lord helped me to present the question like this: Was the rest spoken of in Hebrews 4:1-11 the seventh day rest or was it a spiritual rest of the soul? Weighing everything the writer said concerning the relation between the seventh day rest and the Caanan rest, spoken of in Psalm 95, the Lord helped me to confront this Seventh Day Adventist man with that dire question. He had to admit that it was speaking about the spiritual rest. And I remember the statement that he further made about it: "Our people (the Seventh Day Adventists) are very strong and strict about the keeping of the seventh day rest, but we are very loose and neglectful about keeping the spiritual rest." Now that is a serious situation to be in. Let us not be thus deceived. This is something that everyone should really pray about. Let us fear, lest we come short of this rest that God through Christ has left for us to enter into. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is a much deeper purpose and meaning to the Sabbath than literal rest. Otherwise, it would hold true that the lazier you are the more holy you become. That isn't what God was fostering when He sanctified the Sabbath. It was a time when God wanted man to lay aside the cares of life and enjoy His creation with Him. We can't properly do this until we experience the rest which Christ has made possible. We are unable to enjoy the fullness of the beauties of living until we are rid of the load of guilt sin puts upon us. To feel free in your soul and to enjoy God's presence with you as you feast upon His wonderful works is what Jesus termed "inheriting the earth." It restores the joy of the Garden of Eden in your heart. God's rest isn't laziness; it's taking time to enjoy the fineness of His goodness which surrounds us continually.

—Wayne Murphey

QUIZ

MATCH ITEMS ON THE LEFT WITH THE CORRECT ONE ON THE RIGHT:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Before the first day | a. beasts, cattle, creeping things, and man |
| 2. The first day | b. birds and fish |
| 3. The second day | c. light |
| 4. The third day | d. firmament or expanse |
| 5. The fourth day | e. darkness and water |
| 6. The fifth day | f. sun, moon, and stars |
| 7. The sixth day | g. dry land with trees, grass, and herbs |
| 8. The seventh day | h. rest |



NOVEMBER 29, 1998

THANKSGIVING TO GOD

Psalm 26:6 I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord:

7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Psalm 69:30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

Psalm 50:14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Psalm 100:1 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

2 Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

3 Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

II Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

II Corinthians 9:15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

I Corinthians 15:55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

MEMORY VERSE: Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing. Psalm 107:21-22.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The Almighty God has done wonderful works in creating the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and He has also made a way that we can be saved from sin and death and have the victory over the grave. For this we owe Him all our thanks and praise which we ought to be offering to Him continually.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 26:7), *"Thanksgiving"*: The Hebrew meaning for this is to worship with extended hands. The Greek meaning is gratitude. Webster's definition of gratitude is a feeling of thankful appreciation for favors or benefits received; warm appreciative response to kindness.

(II Corinthians 2:14), *"Savour of His knowledge"*: The fragrance of the wonderful life and fellowship with Jesus. If we are one spirit with this holy and blessed Saviour, our life will bear the fragrance that others may be able to sense that there is something very sweet within us.

(I Corinthians 15:55), *"O grave, where is thy victory"*: The victory of the grave was to quench all hope and power to be resurrected to life again. Outside of Jesus Christ the grave reigned over the children of men.

(I Corinthians 15:57), *"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"*: To gain the victory over the grave we must gain the victory over death. To gain the victory over death we must gain the victory over sin and the condemnation of the law. God has given us the victory over all of this.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have so richly enjoyed our study of the great works of God in His creation. And we want to blend with the season of thanksgiving we have been blessed to enjoy again a lesson on gratitude to God for His wonderful works. We not only praise

and honour Him for His creation, but we give thanks to Him anew for His new creation, the souls of all who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. We thank Him for the precious blood that atoned for our sins and the deliverance we experience and triumph over the power and nature of sin. We thank Him for the Holy Spirit that He has filled our hearts with to sustain and guide us through this life of toil and temptation. And we thank Him for the blessed hope we have in Him, an assurance of victory over death and the grave, and a share in the eternal resurrection with Christ in that last great day. We can never thank Him enough for all that He has accomplished for our salvation and eternal good. Let us not be forgetful of these wonderful treasures and offer thanks every day for the Father's unspeakable Gift.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is being thankful so important to God?
2. Why is it important to express outwardly our thanks to Him?
3. Why is it important to express our thanks to others for their kindness and benefits to us?
4. In what way is the giving of thanks a sacrifice to God?
5. What are some of the temporal blessings you are thankful for?
6. What are the spiritual blessings you are thankful for?
7. When we are unthankful what does that show?
8. What can we have the victory over in Christ?
9. How can we offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually?
10. What are some of the attitudes that keep one from being thankful?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

One of the most important things that God likes to see down in the human heart is sincere and loving thankfulness. There is something about being thankful that is so important to happiness and success with God that we cannot say enough about it. The Scriptures declare it over and over again that God

is to be thanked and praised. How often should we offer thanks to Him? One said, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments." The same writer also said, "Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments". Psalm 119:62, 164. Good, old-faithful Daniel fell on his knees three times a day and prayed, and gave thanks before his God. An unthankful person is a vain and shallow soul who always has a word of complaint or criticism to throw around. Instead of being thankful and looking on the bright side of life they are always ready to growl and let loose with murmurings which are very displeasing to God.

We have so much to be thankful for that we do not have time for strife, disputings and murmurings. Look at all that the Lord created and made. Look at the many lovely flowers and luscious fruits and vegetables that we have so much in abundance. On a cross country trip a few years ago I allowed the great number of giant semi-trailer trucks to get on my nerves. It just seemed that there were so many of these giant rigs and we traveled in such close formation with them. But the Lord turned my thoughts around. He made me to realize that these trucks help to bring to us the many wonderful products of food and merchandise that are so useful to our ways of life. After the Lord dealt with my soul about this, I thanked God for the trucks and prayed for those drivers and they never bothered me anymore. I can just go down the road thanking the Lord for these trucks and what they mean to our economy, and offer a prayer to God for their safety. This is just one of many things that we can be thankful for instead of letting them bother us. Let us be attentive to this thought and seek to be more thankful than we have ever been before.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The owner of a large department store offered a \$5,000.00 prize to the person giving the best answer to the question, "How can my business be most speedily and surely improved?" Many students of economics submitted different lengthy answers, but the man who won the prize had written simply on a postcard, "Tell your clerks to say 'Thank you.' "

We all like to be thanked for the things we do. In fact, unless

a job offers that intangible reward, our inspiration for a task may soon cease.

God likes to be thanked, too. And He has, by far, done more for us than anyone else. The outward comforts of life are only the surface evidence of His gracious giving. In regard to material blessings, someone once asked, "What should you be thankful for on Thanksgiving Day if you are trying to lose weight?"

I think most everyone knows the answer to that.

—Wayne Murphey



DECEMBER 6, 1998

MALE AND FEMALE CREATED HE THEM

Genesis 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8 And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

18 And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Genesis 2:7.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: God created man and put him into the beautiful garden of Eden to cultivate and guard it, giving him a commandment to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He also blessed man with a companion, a woman, to help him and be his best earthly friend.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 2:7), *"The Lord God formed man"*: This word "formed" from the Hebrew means that God determined how man was to be and shaped and moulded him thereby. *"Living soul"*: Man is a two-fold being. The outer man is made from the dust, but the inner man is breathed into being by the breath or the Spirit of God. This breath of life makes man to have a rational and immortal spirit like unto God.

(Genesis 2:15), *"Dress it and keep it"*: Although the ground brought forth fruit and vegetables readily and easily, yet God did not want man to be inactive. There was work to do in dressing, that is, tilling and cultivating the soil.

(Genesis 2:18), *"Help meet"*: A helper corresponding to him; a counter-part; one answering to his need for companionship, love, friendship and assistance.

(Genesis 2:19), *"Adam"*: The word "man" used up to this point is from the same Hebrew word as this word "Adam." It

principally means ruddy or red as showing blood, flushed and rosy. From this same word comes the word "Edom" which was the name given to Esau when he partook of the red pottage from his brother Jacob. (Genesis 25:30.)

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we have the more detailed account of God's creation of man, male and female. God made man first. He moulded and shaped him, using the elements of the dust as his composition. He made him with bones as the basic structure, with flesh and muscle as the shape and texture, and with organs and the various systems for life, health and energy. Think of the various systems in the human body: the digestive system, the circulatory system, the respiratory system, the elimination system, the filtering and purification system, and the reproductive system. Man is fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:14.)

Man had plenty of things to do and to enjoy, but somehow he failed to realize the seriousness of guarding and keeping his inheritance from God. And so it is today. We are to be on our guard, for we do have an adversary just as Adam and his help meet did. It is a beautiful thought of Adam naming all the creatures and probably sensing that while all the animals seemed to have a mate or counterpart creature, he had none. "For Adam there was not found an help meet for him." This makes me to know that Adam felt the vacancy and the need. The Lord pronounced the truth that it is not good that the man should be alone. And it is still that way today. If every person will look to God to supply their need for a companion the Lord will supply that need or will make one satisfied and happy in Him alone. How fitting that the Lord took a rib from the side of Adam instead of a bone from his foot, head or hand. He wanted the woman to be side by side with Adam. And here in verse 24 is found the ancient and yet true precept of God that a man should leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and be one flesh with her. How beautiful is the plan of God!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Of what material did God form man from?
2. What did the breath of God impart unto man?
3. Where did God put man whom he had formed?
4. Why did he put man in the garden?
5. What privileges did God give man in the garden?
6. What restrictions did God put on man?
7. Why did God say that it was not good for man to be alone?
8. What was man's first task?
9. What did woman coming from Adam's side signify?
10. What was Adam's reaction to receiving his help meet?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Many things about the function and health of our mortal bodies we too often take for granted and fail to stop and consider how wonderfully and delicately we are made. When God formed man from the elements of dust, He had him already planned out and designed. He knew just what man was supposed to be. Eyes to see, ears to hear, a tongue to speak, hands to move, and feet to walk were in His wise design. Man was to be a living creature that moved, thought, studied, pondered, decided, reacted, felt, loved, and had all the emotions and affections of life .

Think of how God planned for man to have a help meet, one who would be a pleasure and joy to his heart as well as an assistant and comfort. He allowed man to be without a companion for a time and then, at the right time, He made the woman and "brought her unto the man." The Lord operated on Adam. He took one of his ribs out. That was an interesting thing to do. Why did he do that? I wonder if Adam ever really felt the absence of that rib. He could have. But if he ever felt the absence of it I am sure that the joy of his little wife made up for it many times over. The Lord might work in a similar manner today. He has a way of bringing us through the depths of need and emptiness before He fills our hearts with answers to prayer. May we encourage everyone, especially the young, to make this great step of choosing a lifetime companion a

matter of prayer and supplication before God. It will surely pay off if one does it with all the heart. Thank the Lord for His faithful help and wonderful blessings upon us!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Marriage has in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than the single life; it hath not more ease, but less danger; it is more merry and more sad; it is fuller of sorrows and fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity; and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities and churches, and heaven itself."

—Jeremy Taylor

"Never marry but for love; but see that thou lovest what is lovely."

—William Penn

"Woman was not made to be the admiration of all, but the happiness of one."

—Edmund Burke



DECEMBER 13, 1998

MAN YIELDS TO THE TEMPTER

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be

desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

I Corinthians 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

MEMORY VERSE: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. James 1:14-15.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The tempter caused the forbidden fruit to seem more desirable than obedience to God, and allured Adam and Eve into sin and condemnation. Satan is still working in this manner today, seeking to corrupt man from the purity that is in Christ.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 3:1), "*The serpent was more subtil*": Subtil means cunning and crafty. Cunning means clever, skillful in deception, shrewd and sly. "*Yea, hath God said*": The question put to Eve by the tempter in the Hebrew reads: "Is it so that God has said, You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?" It is to be noted that the tempter's first approach was to test the woman's knowledge of what God had said. His suggestion was an extreme and fanatical idea. "Has God forbidden you to eat from any tree of the garden?" We find Satan works that way today. Many times, before he succeeds in beguiling a soul, he has worked in the opposite direction first. Before he depresses, he inflates. Before he inflates, he depresses. He is probing to test our knowledge of the will of God and then seeks to obscure and confuse us as to what it really implies. Here we must be on our guard diligently. Satan still seeks to corrupt us from the purity that is in Christ.

(Genesis 3:5), "*As gods*": The original Hebrew expression is "as God."

(Genesis 3:8), "*Voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day*": The Hebrew says, "The sound of the Lord God walking up and down in the garden in the breeze of the day." The word "wind" is translated from the Hebrew word which is translated "spirit" in many other places. God came to them in the Spirit and made His presence to be heard and felt.

(James 1:14, 15), "*Drawn away of his own lust, and enticed*": This is the first stage of the temptation of the devil. The word lust means strong desire. "*When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin*": The word "conceived" here means in the Greek to clasp or take hold of." "*And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*": When the deed or act is committed, then the result is spiritual death and separation from God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have in our lesson today the account of Adam and Eve yielding to the temptation of partaking of the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve were free moral creatures with the power of choice. God wanted

them to obey and serve Him by choice and pure decision. Therefore He wisely made it possible for them to not serve Him if they so chose. And it is important to note that the temptation to sin against God was made to be convenient, desirable, profitable, beneficial, easy, uplifting, enjoyable, attractive, and a wise and good choice. The tree had these three attractions: 1. It was good for food. 2. It was pleasant to the eyes, and 3. It was a tree to be desired to make one wise. She took hold of the forbidden fruit with a different thought than she had before. Now it seemed desirable and beneficial when before it had been avoided and shunned. Let us learn a lesson from this. We must learn the value of resisting the temptations of the flesh and maintaining fellowship and communion with God. God is faithful and will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. But He *will* permit us to be tempted through the avenue of the desires of the flesh. It is not wrong to be tempted and to feel the weight and the drawing attraction that will come to us. But it is wrong to yield to the temptation and consent to reach out and take hold of the forbidden fruit. Thank God for Jesus, who was tempted in all points like as we are and yet without sin. In that He has suffered, being tempted, he is able also to help them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:18, 4:15.)

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the tempter's first question to Eve?
2. What was Eve's response to that first question?
3. What did this show that she had?
4. How did the tempter make the forbidden fruit seem less harmful?
5. What were the three things that drew Eve to make her decision?
6. What was the immediate effect of Adam and Eve disobeying God?
7. What was their reaction when they heard God's voice?
8. What was their answer when God questioned their actions?
9. What hope do we have concerning temptations that we will face?

10. When, in the stages of temptation, is sin brought forth, and how?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The same evil power that tempted and overcame our forefathers in the garden of Eden is the same influence that rules this present age in all of its wickedness and sin. It is a power that contests every child of God who is born from above in God's family. He accomplishes his evil purposes by so much the same method that he used on Eve. The apostle Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity (purity) that is in Christ." II Corinthians 11:3. The apostle John warned the early Christians to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." I John 2:15-16. Eve was tempted by the food value of the forbidden tree. That was the lust of the flesh. She was also tempted because it was pleasant to the eyes. It was pretty. That was the lust of the eyes. She was tempted with the idea that to partake of the forbidden fruit would make her wise, even as God Himself. That was the pride of life. By means of these three attractions Satan overthrew our foreparents in the beginning. We today face these three attractions in the world we live in. Jesus met this three-headed power of the temptation of Satan and overcame it. He can give us power if we purpose to overcome this present evil world. We must live close to God and strive every day to be led by His Holy Spirit if we would gain the triumph over that evil one who overthrew our foreparents in the garden of Eden.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Near the close of His life on earth, Christ left this advice with Peter: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak." Christ

understood by experience the importance of being prayed up and spiritually awake. When He was tempted in the wilderness, the key to His victory was His preparedness. The devil approached Him at a time when His body was in a weakened state and susceptible to temptation, but we find that Christ's spirit had been nourished and strengthened by forty days of fasting and prayer.

All temptations brought about by Satan work through the avenue of the flesh. For this reason a person should never place his body in a situation where the spirit will be unable to exercise control. The advice of one mother to her son as he left on a journey was, "Son, never do anything to place your body where your soul would not be the master."

If we follow the example of Christ's diligence in prayer and possess a knowledge of the Word of God, we also can share in the glories of heaven throughout eternity. The apostle James perceived this and wrote, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

—Wayne Murphey

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DECEMBER 20, 1998

THE RESULTS OF ADAM'S DISOBEDIENCE

Genesis 3:14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is

the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

MEMORY VERSE: ...By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Romans 5:12.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The result of man's disobedience to God was the entrance of sin and death into the world which passed upon all men. The woman was given the pain of childbirth and subjection to her husband. The man was given the sorrow and toil of producing food and sustenance from the ground which was cursed to bring forth thorns and thistles. Hope was given in the Seed of the woman to bruise the serpents head. This was to be the Saviour, the Son of God, who would come to deliver us from the curse of sin and death.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 3:15), "*Enmity between thee and the woman*": This speech is directed toward Satan. Between Satan and mankind is conflict and hatred. Even though man falls a victim to the devices of Satan and goes his way, yet through the

visitation of the wisdom from on high, man can be awakened to the abuse of Satan and may become filled with wrath and vengeance against the enemy of his soul. "*Enmity between thy seed and her seed*": This same enmity will be strong and paramount between Christ Jesus (who was to be born of a woman to be our Saviour) and Satan. "*It shall bruise thy head*": This is the first prophecy of the victory Christ would accomplish over Satan and his works. Christ was to bruise the head, or the dominion, of Satan. He was to dethrone him from the hearts of men and restore the soul to fellowship with his Creator. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." I John 3:8. "*Thou shalt bruise his heel*": This is referring to the suffering of death that would be inflicted upon the Saviour at the hands of the sons of the devil.

(Genesis 3:16), "*Thy desire shall be to thy husband*": This means that her dependence shall be toward her husband and she shall be under his rule, jurisdiction, care, and protection.

(Genesis 3:18), "*Thou shalt eat the herb of the field*": Man was no longer to enjoy the luscious fruits of the beautiful and convenient Garden of Eden. He was now to find his sustenance from tilling the soil. His food would be whatever he could obtain by planting seed and harvesting its crop.

(Genesis 3:24), "*Cherubims*": These were angelic beings commissioned by God for a time to guard the entrance to the Garden of Eden to keep anyone from having access to the tree of life. It is evident that in time God removed the tree of life and destroyed the garden.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We continue from our previous lesson to finish the story of the fall of man and what it resulted in. We find God putting judgment and punishment upon those involved in the offence that had been given against God in disobeying Him. Each one of these judgments are still in force today, and, especially for the men and women, to be lessened or worsened, adjustable in each individual case. For instance, Paul said in I Timothy 2:15 that the woman shall be saved in childbearing, if they

continue in faith, charity and holiness with sobriety. This means that God will be with the godly women who hold to holiness and the fear of God and will help them in their child bearing years. For the man, God can and will, in each individual case as He sees best, temper the hardships and sorrow for the good and comfort of man. In the case of the tempter, the devil, his doom is pronounced and in the fulness of time his judgment is to come. Jesus would overcome and conquer, and bring the victory back to man over Satan. Our memory verse from Romans 5: 12 brings out the truth that in Adam and his disobedience sin came into the world. Sin found a place in the heart of man and it brought death. This death, of course, is two-fold. There is spiritual death, that is, separation and broken fellowship with God. Then there is the natural death, that is, the severing of the spirit from the body. All of this was taken care of by the coming of Jesus Christ into the world as our Redeemer.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was the judgment against the serpent really for?
2. What was the enmity between the serpent and the seed of the woman?
3. How was the Seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head?
4. How was the serpent to bruise His heel?
5. What was the judgment placed upon the woman?
6. What was the judgment placed upon the man?
7. What was to take place at the end of man's life?
8. Why did God send man forth from the Garden of Eden?
9. Why did God put Cherubims at the east of the Garden of Eden?
10. What came into the world because of Adam?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

All of humanity down through the ages have been affected by the failure of Adam and Eve to resist the temptation of the devil. Their costly error brought the domination of sin and wrong into the world. Sin reigned over man from that time

until the Lord Jesus Christ came and rescued us from his woeful bondage. It was like a loathsome disease, perhaps light and insignificant at first, but progressively worse as time went by. All of the judgments and punishment for their disobedience Adam and Eve not only bore in their own lives, but has been passed on down to us even to this day. The hardships, sorrows, pain, discomfort and the final scourge of death is still a reality in this world. We are dust, and to dust shall we return. People still have to die because of the first Adam. Thank God for the second Adam, which was the Lord Jesus Christ! He came to redeem us from the curse of Adam and bring life and immortality to light through the gospel of His grace! And God's judgments are always tempered with His mercy. Although God drove out the man and his wife from the beautiful Garden of Eden, He still loved His creation. And, according to the scriptures, He already had a plan worked out to bring mankind back to His blessed fellowship. Christ "verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for" us. I Peter 1:20. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:8. The eternal Spirit overbrooding all remains eternal love. For erring man there is mercy and hope.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When Adam and Eve were placed in the garden they had the capability to handle any situation which might arise. With access to the tree of life to meet their needs, all they had to do was watch after the garden. Their life was simple. But when they indulged in sin, it tremendously complicated things and they were unable to handle the effects and consequences sin brought about. This is a principle which many people seem to disregard—you cannot contain sin. It doesn't matter how young and strong you are, or how wise you may seem to be, sin will complicate your life to the point where things will develop beyond your control. As one songwriter noted, "Sin will take you farther than you want to go."

—Wayne Murphey



DECEMBER 27, 1998

THE SAVIOUR FORETOLD IN PROPHECY

Genesis 49:10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

I Samuel 2:35 And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Isaiah 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

Isaiah 11:2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

MEMORY VERSE: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Through the ages, since the fall of man into sin, God has whispered of His love and inspired His prophets with promises of a coming Saviour and King who would overthrow the rule of Satan and sin and bring everlasting righteousness for His people to live and to die by.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Genesis 49:10), "*Sceptre*": A rod of dominion and rulership. "*Shiloh*": The original Hebrew word means "tranquil", and the name here prophetically refers to Jesus Christ as the giver of peace and rest for the souls of men.

(I Samuel 2:35), "*He shall walk before mine anointed forever*": This is speaking of Jesus who would faithfully please and obey His Father and would become the pattern and example for all of God's children to follow. Jesus walks before the saints of God forever in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who reveals Christ to the soul so wonderfully.

(Isaiah 7:14), "*Immanuel*": Matthew 1:23 interprets this to mean "God with us."

(Isaiah 11:10), "*Ensign*": A banner or flag lifted up to portray or signal the standard of a cause.

(Isaiah 11:3), "*Quick understanding*": The Hebrew word here means "to blow or to breathe." This means understanding and perception by means of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

(Isaiah 11:4), *"The rod of His mouth, and the breath of His lips"*: This is referring to His Word and His Spirit for it is through His gospel anointed and backed by the Holy Spirit that Satan is subdued and conquered and the souls of men are set free from the power of sin.

(Micah 5:2), *"From old, from everlasting"*: From the beginning, and the Hebrew says, "from the days of eternity."

(Galatians 4:5), *"The adoption of sons"*: The Greek meaning is "the placing as a son," and refers to the work of salvation from sin and transgression in giving us power to become related to God as sons.

LESSON BACKGROUND

For our final lesson for this quarter and as a finishing up study on this series of lessons about the creation of God and the fall of man, we feel inspired to set forth a few of the various scriptures that are prophecies of the Saviour of the world. It is also an appropriate lesson for the present Christmas season. Through these divine utterances by the holy men of old, we are given a picture of what the Saviour of mankind would be like and what He was to accomplish. And, as the apostle Paul said in our scripture from Galatians 4:4-5, in the fulness of time God did send forth His Son to fulfill His pleasure in delivering us from the power of sin so that we can actually be His sons and daughters even as Adam and Eve were before their fall into the state of disobedience and transgression. We rejoice, not only at this special season of remembering Christ's birth, but all year long in experiencing His salvation and victory over the power and dominion of Satan. How wonderful to be saved and sanctified, having the Spirit of God to dwell in our very souls so sweetly! We speak these truths not merely from an intellectual knowledge, but from the real living testimony of a good and clear conscience before God. "Who (He) hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality

to light through the gospel." II Timothy 1:9-10. Praise His holy name forever and ever!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is Shiloh, and how are we gathered together unto Him?
2. Just how serious should we be about hearing and giving heed to the words of Jesus?
3. Why did Christ have to be born of a virgin?
4. What kind of darkness are souls in who are without Christ?
5. Why does mankind need an "ensign" to look up to?
6. What kind of spirit was to rest upon Christ?
7. In what way does Christ smite the earth and slay the wicked?
8. How is Christ's goings forth from old, from everlasting?
9. What does it mean to have a child born unto us and a son given unto us?
10. What was Christ's purpose in being born of a woman?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

When Satan seduced Adam and Eve to disobey the known commandment of the Lord God, it brought sin into the world. And it was not just in the world, but it was imbedded in the human nature and heart. It threw the race of mankind under the dominion of Satan and sin. And with sin came spiritual death and separation from God and physical death. Death began its woeful reign. From Adam to Moses death reigned even though there was no written law to make man conscious of his sinful condition. Through Moses, God gave His holy law and commandments. This law did not impart to man the power to overcome his sinful ways, but it helped to make man aware of his sinful nature and the destruction that it was bringing him. So, all through the ages of the law and the prophets, man grappled with the principle of sin and the law that it wrought in his heart and in the members of his body. In an earnest confession of guilt and condemnation for his sin, one uttered these words of anguish: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm 51:5.

In another place it was stated: "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Psalm 58:3. Man was groaning in the prison house of sin, condemned to death. George Whitfield pictured man in one of his sermons as being dead and in the graveyard of the law, but delivered when Christ unlocked the gates to bring him to life again. Yes, sin is to blame for all woes and sorrows upon the human race. If sin could be conquered and man be delivered from its bondage, things could be like it was in the beautiful Garden of Eden for the soul. And, thanks be unto God, this is what happened when Jesus came as the second Adam to restore us to fellowship with God. All the prophecies pointed forward to the gospel day in which our blessed salvation would be made available to us. Oh, what a message they bring! Not only do we have the ones we have included in our lesson today, but there are many more prophecies of Christ and His kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit! Jesus fulfilled them all in coming down to human flesh and going all the way to the cross to suffer as an atonement for sin. And God raised Him up from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places to reign and intercede for us while this world lasts. And some day He will come in power and great glory to take all who have believed and obeyed Him to a new and eternal world of peace and love. Oh, let us make our calling and election sure about this that we may be granted an abundant entrance into that everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel;..." This and other prophecies of Christ's birth foretold even the location of the divine event. Sadly, however, though Bethlehem was a city just five miles south of Jerusalem, there is no record of a single person who went out from Jerusalem to see Christ. The important thing for us is that we know where He is today. We cannot afford to ignore Him or fail to worship Him in our hearts.

The Old Testament foretold of Christ coming to earth, and the New Testament traces His path back into the heavens. With the Word of God as our guide, there is no need for anyone to fail to find Him today.

—Wayne Murphey



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