

GENESIS 1-11 - A TEACHER'S GUIDE

THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

What does this book/story say to us about God?

This question may be broken down further as follows:

- a. Why did God do it/allow it?
- b. Why did He record it for our study?

“To be permitted to have a view of God is the highest privilege accorded to man. This privilege should be prized above all earthly distinction or honor.” ST, June 16, 1898

Introduction to Genesis

1. What picture of God would you have if the only evidence you had was the book of Genesis? Genesis is the only record we have of events for several millennia—one-half or more of this world's history. Does that seem adequate?

In the book of Genesis, we see the description of God creating our world, warning our first parents of the danger of the deceiver, putting them out of the garden after they sinned, asking Noah to build an ark, preserving Noah and his family in that ark as He drowned the rest of humanity, picking Abraham and his descendants to be His special representatives in the earth, and then working with Abraham's descendants despite their very human lives. While God decided it was necessary to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, He discussed the matter with His friend Abraham before He did so. (Genesis 18)

The book starts with the most wonderful promise of a perfect world: “In the beginning God created...”; it ends with the results of man's sins: “...a coffin in Egypt.” We have almost no external evidence by which to corroborate any of the events of the book of Genesis especially Genesis 1-11. Archaeology has found a lot of material which is *not inconsistent* with the accounts of Genesis, but does archaeology positively confirm what we read in Genesis? It is important to note that we cannot disprove any part of Genesis from archaeology.

In the book of Genesis, God is not only the all-powerful Creator, but also the One who sits down to discuss personal matters with Abraham. While Adam and Eve were excluded from the Garden of Eden on their first offense, Abraham and Sarah were blessed with a child despite laughing at God's promise and then lying about it! (See Genesis 17:17; 18:10-15.)

God miraculously preserved the family of Jacob by working against their schemes and blessing Joseph in the land of Egypt. Fortunately, at that time, the rulers of Egypt were the Hyksos, “the Greek form of an Egyptian word meaning ‘ruler(s) of foreign land(s),’ i.e., of alien origin (Redford 1970), used to refer to non-natives who ruled over portions of Lower Egypt as the 15th Dynasty in the first half of the 2d millennium B.C.” [*Anchor Bible Dictionary*] The Hyksos, whose language seems to suggest they came from western Asia, perhaps Amorites from Canaan or Phoenecians, apparently felt a close kinship with Joseph. In turn, Joseph was very Godlike in his treatment of his brothers despite the terrible way in which they had treated him.

2. God began His work on this earth by creating the beautiful Garden of Eden and giving it to Adam and Eve. When their descendants became so evil that God was afraid of losing

contact with the human race, He preserved Noah and his family to start over. It was not long before conditions seemed to be just as bad again, (See Genesis 11:1-9.) and God had to pick Abraham and move him away from his family so He could work with him and his descendants. They were certainly not saints, but their history serves as a lesson book for the rest of us.

While this book tells stories about people, it is first and foremost an account of what God has done. It begins with the affirmation that God created the universe, and it ends with a promise that God will continue to show his concern for his people. Throughout the book the main character is God, who judges and punishes those who do wrong, leads and helps his people, and shapes their history. This ancient book was written to record the story of a people's faith and to help keep that faith alive. (Introduction to Genesis-electronic version, *GNB*.)

3. The name *Genesis* comes from Greek and means "beginnings" or "origins" and was the name assigned to this book by the Greek translators about 250 B.C. when it was first translated into Greek from the original Hebrew. In Hebrew the book is called *Bereshith* which is the first Hebrew word in the book and means "in the beginning."

GENESIS: First, God. God is the subject of life. God is foundational for living. If we don't have a sense of the primacy of God, we will never get it right, get life right, get our lives right. Not God at the margins; not God as an option; not God on the weekends. God at center and circumference; God first and last; God, God, God.

Genesis gets us off on the right foot. Genesis pulls us into a sense of reality that is God-shaped and God-filled. It gives us a vocabulary for speaking accurately and comprehensively about our lives, where we come from and where we are going, what we think and what we do, the people we live with and how to get along with them, the troubles we find ourselves in and the blessings that keep arriving.

Genesis uses words to make a foundation that is solid and true. Everything we think and do and feel is material in a building operation in which we are engaged all our life long. There is immense significance in everything that we do. Our speech and our actions and our prayers are all, every detail of them, involved in this vast building operation comprehensively known as the Kingdom of God. But we don't build the foundation. The foundation is given. The foundation is firmly in place.

Jesus concluded his most famous teaching by telling us that there are two ways to go about our lives—we can build on sand or we can build on rock. No matter how wonderfully we build, if we build on sand it will all fall to pieces like a house of cards. We build on what is already there, on the rock. Genesis is a verbal witness to that rock: God's creative acts, God's intervening and gracious judgments, God's call to a life of faith, God's making covenant with us.

But Genesis presents none of this to us as an abstract, bloodless "truth" or "principle." We are given a succession of stories with named people, people who loved and quarreled, believed and doubted, had children and married,

experienced sin and grace. If we pay attention, we find that we ourselves are living variations on these very stories: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and his sons, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, Joseph and his brothers. The stories show clearly that we are never outsiders or spectators to anything in “heaven and earth.” God doesn’t work impersonally from space; he works with us where we are, as he finds us. No matter what we do, whether good or bad, we continue to be part of everything that God is doing. Nobody can drop out—there’s no place to drop out to. So we may as well get started and take our place in the story—at the beginning.—Peterson, E. H. (2005). *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Ge). Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.

Following is the introduction to the study of the book of Genesis from the *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* in 2006:

In 1997 a Nobel prize-winning physicist made a stir when he wrote, “The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it seems pointless.” Responding to the statement, one astronomer wrote, “Why should it have a point? What point? It’s just a physical system; what point is there?” Another scientist, agreeing, said, “I am willing to believe that we are flotsam and jetsam.” (*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, Fourth Quarter, 2006, page 2.)

4. Some relatively recent scholars have contended that Moses could not have written the books we attribute to him. For a brief answer to those charges, see the handout: “**Who Wrote Genesis?**” posted on www.Theox.org in the section for Genesis in the teachers guides.
5. When you read Genesis, what picture of God do you see as He dealt with Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc.? What kind of God would create Lucifer—and this earth—if He had foreknowledge of sin, the flood, etc.? Why did He give Solomon wisdom (1 Kings 3:5-9; 2 Chronicles 1:7-12; Matthew 12:42) and Samson strength? (Judges 13:25; 16:28)

God is not afraid to move ahead with His plans even when He knows in advance that not everything is going to work out just the way He would like to see it work out. To God, love and freedom which are inseparable are the essential principles by which He constantly works. While we believe that God has always had the power and authority to overrule the events of the universe to make things work out the way in which He wants them, He refuses to create “robots” or to treat us as “robots.” (See the handout: “**Love.**”) Thus, God created all His creatures with the power to love Him or hate Him and spit in His face.

In order for freedom to work, we need to see not only the results of good choices but also the results of bad choices. God allows us to proceed and reap the consequences of our choices. The Bible discusses not only the lives of those who mostly did what is right, but also the lives of those who rebelled against God and lived lives which were mostly wasted. God intends that the story of this one rebellious planet will be preserved as a warning for all eternity against the hazards of rebellion and sin. So, the consequences of both good and bad choices must be preserved in the record for eternity. (See *ST* Dec. 30, 1889 par. 4; *5SDABC* 1132.9.)

Would you prefer to live in a world or a universe without “love” or “freedom”? What does Satan think about love and freedom? Would you be willing to give up some of your freedom in order to have a little more “security”?

6. What were Satan’s charges against God at the very beginning? (Compare Genesis 3:1-5; Job 1 & 2; Revelation 12:7-12; Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:1-6,12-15.) Do you think it is significant that this planet became the center of the great controversy almost immediately after it was created?

This planet has become the “Theater of the Universe.” (1 Corinthians 4:9) Satan has believed and taught that his way is superior to God’s way. He has accused God of being a liar and a tyrant and of being an arbitrary, severe, vengeful, unforgiving, and exacting Ruler and Judge. After war broke out in heaven, (Revelation 12:7-12) Satan could not remain in heaven; he ended up here on planet earth. When God decided to create “a new and distinct order” of beings (*1SDABC* 1081.3; *RH*, February 11, 1902 par. 1; *SDG* 7.2; *TA* 48.1) to populate this earth, Satan demanded to be given opportunity to invite, i.e., tempt, them to join his side in rebellion against God. God created this earth in such a way as to answer many of Satan’s accusations even before Satan had a chance to speak them to our first parents. But, when they sinned, God set about to make sure that this “sin experiment” would never happen again. Sin will be a one-time event. God has worked very hard and even has been willing to come and live among us and give His life to answer all of Satan’s accusations and provide a permanent and convincing proof that Satan’s way leads only to unhappiness and destruction.

We chose to become the “guinea pigs” in this “sin experiment.” The entire universe is watching to see what the final outcome will be. God has won His case; (Romans 3:4) but, He is still having a very difficult time reaching and convincing us of the rightness of His cause.

As perverse as it may seem, down through the generations, Satan has used religion as the primary weapon against God! If Satan came out and identified himself and began to make accusations against God, most of us would probably reject his statements out of hand. Instead, he finds ways to get religious peoples and leaders to believe in his lies and promote them as “religious truth.” Sometimes, this makes it very difficult to decide who is telling us the truth.

Can you identify some “lies” about God that are believed as “gospel truth” by certain religious groups?

7. What questions do you have about Genesis 1-11? About creation? The flood? About prehistory in general? On what basis do you decide to believe/disbelieve these stories?
8. Be honest with yourself! Do you believe Genesis is inspired and correctly represents prehistory because of: 1) The influence of your parents? 2) The influence of peers? 3) Your personal study? 4) You are not sure why you believe it? 5) You do not believe it?
9. We have often spoken of the idea that faith should be based on evidence. What evidence do you have for believing the stories in Genesis 1-11?
10. Is it important to believe that God created our world? If so, why? Would it really matter if we did not have the first eleven chapters of Genesis as part of the Bible?
11. Recognizing that God created our universe has several implications.

First, it is an admission that there is some Power above and beyond human power. It also suggests that we might have some responsibility to that Power and a need to act accountably. Like almost every teenager, humans have wanted to rebel against any Ultimate Authority. We want to believe that we can take care of ourselves and that we do not need Someone above and over us to whom we might be responsible.

Second, there are three major questions that man has struggled with through all of time. They are sometimes called the “existential questions.” They are: (1) Where have we come from? (2) Why are we here, and how do we achieve the greatest good in life? (3) Where do we go after we die? Genesis 1-3 provide the setting for the answers to those questions. This helps to give meaning to our everyday existence. We are not random accidents that are constantly fighting with all around us to see who will win in the war for the “survival of the fittest.” We are morally bound to treat our brothers and sisters not as objects or rivals to be overcome but as sons and daughters of the same Father. This implies that we must even treat those less fortunate than we are as people like ourselves, people to be cared for and loved.

Third, if God created our universe, He might eventually also bring it to judgment. He could hold us responsible for treating each other in a loving and caring way. As Creator, God has the power to re-create at the time of the resurrection. If He did not have that power, what hope do we have for a perfect future life. (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-5)

Fourth, if God is not the Creator as is stated in Genesis 1-2, then many books of the Bible will need to be changed, and we cannot regard the Bible as a reliable source of information. See Deuteronomy 4:32; 32:6; Psalms 33:6,9; 89:12,47; 102:25; 104:1-35; 148:5; Proverbs 8:22; Ecclesiastes 12:1; Isaiah 40:26,28; 42:5; 43:15; Malachi 2:10; Mark 10:6; 13:19; Romans 1:25; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:15-16; 1 Peter 4:19; Revelation 14:6-7. Clearly, from beginning to end, the Bible is built on the idea that God is the Creator of all. We could show more.

12. There are hundreds of other creation stories—sometimes called “creation myths”—in various other cultures around the world. Are there similarities in these stories? How do we explain the similarities? What major differences do we see? What is a myth? A myth is a story involving the “gods” and, therefore, cannot be proven or disproven. In your own personal thinking—on a scale of 1 to 10 with evolution being at 1 and creation being at 10—what number represents the cumulative evidence available for us? Is there more evidence for evolution? Or, for creation?
13. In this study guide, we will take a good look at Genesis 1-11. There will be many things that we will have questions about. Very little detail is given for many of the stories. We have no extra-biblical evidence for any of the stories in Genesis 1-11. Can we believe these stories? On what basis? Are you comfortable with the book of Genesis as a “foundation” for your faith?

Historical Background

14. Genesis was most likely written about 1500 B.C. by Moses, probably near Mount Sinai, while he was herding sheep for his father-in-law, Jethro/Reuel. Moses also wrote Job about the same time. Nineteenth century higher critics did not think Moses could have been the author of Genesis for the following reasons: 1) The use of three different names for God with different sections of the book seeming to prefer One or the Other; 2) Many repetitions

of stories suggests that the “author” drew from several different sources and could not fully put them together; 3) Conditions described in the book were not supposed to have been present until long after Moses’s death; 4) Location names from a much later period seem to be used instead of the earlier names; 5) The traditional stories of the creation, flood, and some patriarchs are so similar to other stories from Babylon and other cultures that it is assumed that the “author” or authors copied these stories. Fortunately for us, many of the claims of higher critics have been clearly refuted by modern archaeology. For more details see *SDA Bible Comm.* vol. 1, p. 201-204.

15. Discussion: Looking back into eternity, we see God seated on His throne; on His right hand, we see Christ the Morning Star or Light Bearer (in Latin, *Lucifer* means “Light-Bearer”); on His left, the creature named Lucifer bearing one of the names of God. Of all God’s creatures, none could better explain the things of God or better represent God than Lucifer. When God prepared to create this world, They did not include Lucifer, the creature, in Their deliberations because he had nothing to contribute. This was one of the factors that contributed to his growing jealousy of Christ who had humbled Himself so much that He was known as Michael the Archangel. Soon after Satan was cast down, God went ahead with His plans to create this earth. (Revelation 12:9)

As noted earlier, the story of Genesis is the sad story of the rapid decline of the human family from sinless perfection in the Garden of Eden to its conclusion with putting Joseph into a coffin in Egypt.

All of the books of the Bible need to be studied in their setting. But, how broad should we make the setting? To get the best possible understanding of what the issues were in the Garden of Eden, we must look at all the available evidence regarding what had taken place in the universe up to that point. Scripture can always be interpreted best when we take the broadest possible context. So, where in the Bible do we look to learn what had happened before Eden and to discover who else might be looking on? For example, during creation week, who was watching?

A. Who was present for the creation of our world?

God is eternal. All three Members of the Godhead (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) were there from the beginning. Isaiah 57:15 (NIV) - “For this is what the high and lofty One says—He who lives forever, whose name is holy...”

Habakkuk 3:6 (NIV) - “...His ways are eternal.”

John 1:1 (KJV) - “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...” John 1:14 “All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.” Compare Micah 5:2; Colossians 1:16; 1 Timothy 6:16.

Angels were there. See Job 38:1-7; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 12:7-9.

Sons of God were present. Conservative scholars imply that other worlds had been created and their inhabitants were also observing. Compare Job 1,2. See especially Job 1:6; 2:1 where some modern translations say *angels*, but in Hebrew the term is *sons of God*. To support this, see Job 38:4-7. First, please notice an important technical point. In Hebrew poetry when two lines seem to give a parallel thought, the second line is explaining or repeating or confirming what is in the first line, e.g. “Morning Stars” and “Sons of God.”

When God began the creation of the world, we thus see who was watching. When God had finished creation, they “sang together, and shouted for joy.” Inhabitants of the entire universe were watching very closely on creation week. Humans only showed up on Friday, as newcomers.

Lucifer was there. See Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-17; Revelation 12:7-9.

See Revelation 12:7 for the first mention of the war in heaven. When did Satan begin his work of deception and accusation? What has Satan actually been trying to accomplish by his accusations? See Isaiah 14:12; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Matthew 4:9. Notice how many times he tried to set himself up as a god.

After sin arose in the heart of Lucifer, (Ezekiel 28:15) he spread his rebellious thoughts to one-third of the heavenly angels; (Revelation 12:4) and then, there was “war in heaven.” (Revelation 12:7-9) Lucifer, now Satan-the accuser, (See Revelation 12:10. Compare Zechariah 3:1-5; Job 1:6; 2:1.) wanted to occupy the place of God and exercise the authority of God, but without using God’s loving, humble methods. Thus, he began to accuse God’s government and malign His character. Satan, a mere creature, wanted to be worshiped, not only by his fellow creatures but also by his Creator! (Matthew 4:8) Incredible as it may seem, at the very end of history here on this earth, he will almost succeed. (Revelation 13:3-4)

Satan’s charges and accusations against God have been made not in private, but before the entire universe. In 2 Corinthians 11:14, Paul gave us a clear idea about how Satan actually does his work, and how he appears to us. It should teach us that even if one lies in the most winsome of ways and no matter how appealing he appears, we must reject him if he is not telling us the truth. (Compare Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and 1 Kings 13 especially verses 18-19.)

On the other hand, God has gone out of His way to be gracious to both His fallen and His unfallen children. Everything He does is open before the entire universe. (Compare Job 1 and 2 which describe an example of one of the councils which God called to discuss plans with His unfallen children.) Even Christ’s death was for them. (See Ephesians 1:3; Ephesians 3:9-10; and especially Colossians 1:19-20.) And it is not only Christ who was being observed. (See 1 Corinthians 4:9.)

No doubt, the entire universe was watching as God created this earth. We have no evidence that any other world was created like our world. As the Creator proceeded from Day One to Day Seven, it was apparent that many of Satan’s claims were false. Imagine the freedom God gave Adam and Eve. At great risk, He shared with humans, as far as possible, the power to create. He was even fair with Satan including by placing the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden where he had access to Adam and Eve. See “The Great Controversy in Scripture.”

As we have noted, sin had already entered the universe. Revelation 12:1-12 discusses the “war” which began in heaven. What, if anything, did the war in heaven have to do with the creation of this world? Was the creation of our earth and especially us humans in response to Satan’s accusations in the war? What aspects of creation do you see helping to answer some of Satan’s accusations?

See the handout: “**Satan Before His Fall.**”

Author

16. Genesis is the first of the five books of the Pentateuch written by Moses. We believe that Moses also wrote the book of Job.

The long years amid desert solitudes were not lost. Not only was Moses gaining a preparation for the great work before him, but **during this time**, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, **he wrote the book of Genesis and also the book of Job**, which would be read with the deepest interest by the people of God until the close of time (*ST* Feb. 19, 1880 par. 14; 3SDABC 1140.3)

See the handout: **“Who Wrote Genesis?”**

17. What terms do we use when referring to these books? ***Torah***—which means “law” or “instruction”; ***Pentateuch***—a Greek term meaning five books; ***Bereshith***—the Hebrew word for “In the beginning” (the first word in the book); ***The Law***—usually the term used in Scripture to refer to the books of Moses; ***Tanakh***—the Hebrew word for the entire Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament. The *Tanakh* is also known as the Masoretic Text or *Miqra*. *TaNakh* is an acronym of the first Hebrew letter of each of the Masoretic Text’s three traditional subdivisions: *Torah* (Teaching, also known as the Five Books of Moses), *Nevi’im* (Prophets), and *Ketuvim* (Writings)—hence *TaNakh*. The name *Miqra* meaning “that which is read” is another Hebrew word for the *Tanakh*. We will sometimes use these terms somewhat interchangeably.
18. Do you regard these books which were written some 1400 or 1500 years before Christ as essential to your faith? Why?

Why Should We Believe the Book of Genesis?

19. Another evidence for belief in Genesis and the Old Testament is based on what the New Testament says. In your mind, how important is that evidence? Biblical writers such as Peter, Paul, and Luke wrote of Genesis and the stories of Genesis as being factual. Bible writers quoted Jesus as speaking of the stories of Genesis as factual. Review the following passages: Matthew 19:3-8; Luke 17:26-30; Acts 7:1-15; Romans 4:3, 9-21; 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Galatians 3:6; 1 Timothy 2: 13-14; Hebrews 11:3-22; 1 Peter 3:20. Could Genesis 1-11 be only a myth if these New Testament writers including Jesus Himself spoke of them as fact? Remember that the theological definition of *myth* is something that involves “the gods” and cannot be proven or disproven.
20. Why do you think there is so much doubt about the veracity and truthfulness—even scientific accuracy—of the book of Genesis? Was Genesis written as a scientific treatise? **Is it fair to pit science versus Scripture, especially the book of Genesis? Shouldn’t we compare facts with facts and belief with belief? If we ask scientists who believe fully in the theory of evolution to explain how they interpret their facts and how they explain origins, we could put together their contrasting system of belief. That would be their religion.** While virtually nothing in the book of Genesis can be proven archaeologically as a biblical minimalist would like it to be, everything that we can document about the book of Genesis is consistent with archaeology as we know it today. Is it fair to say that we should believe what the Bible says unless we can prove it wrong? Or, should we say that we should only believe those portions of the Bible which we can prove from extra-biblical sources? How much would be left?

21. When speaking of Genesis and origins, we are speaking about “who” and “why” and very little about “how.” Suppose for a moment that God could have given Moses a full understanding of every scientific detail of how He created this earth. Who would Moses have been able to tell? Who would understand any of it besides Moses?
22. What things about God do you think are clearly revealed in the book of Genesis?
23. Genesis speaks of God as the Creator: 1) of physical matter and all human and animal life, 2) of a special people, and 3) of history. In what way has God created a special people and history?
24. Do you think you have had personal experiences in which God has been involved in your life? Do you wish that God were more involved in your life every day? Or, are you more comfortable with the God who stands back and lets you make your own choices even if they are wrong?
25. Genesis 3:8 speaks of God walking in the garden in the cool of the evening to speak with Adam and Eve. In your mind, what kind of experience was that? Before sin entered the world, were those happy and joyous occasions? Do you think Adam and Eve had saved up many questions from the day’s activities to ask God? What do you think they talked about?
26. Many of our Christian friends pick and choose what stories they want to believe from the book of Genesis. Is that a valid thing to do? Could we call Genesis 1-11 “myth” and still believe the rest of Genesis is valid, inspired material? What about the rest of the Bible?
27. The New Testament gives us some examples from Jesus (Matthew 19:3-8) and also from Steven (Acts 7) in which they referred back to the beginning of this earth when asked certain questions. Is that an important principle that we should follow? Or, just a waste of time?
28. How much do you think Adam and Eve, and later Noah and Abraham, understood about the great controversy? Did God reveal to them any details about the war in heaven? Why do we have to wait until we read the book of Revelation to explicitly hear about the war in heaven? Is there evidence in earlier parts of Scripture that there was a war in heaven? (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-17) What kind of war was it? Over power? Or, ideas? (James 2:19)
29. In your thinking, is it important that our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, is also our Creator? Why is that important?
30. Faith seems to have two basic characteristics. Rightly understood, it seems to be based on evidence. But, after carefully considering the evidence, people of faith move forward in areas of their lives where they may not be certain which direction to go. What does it mean to move forward in faith? Is collecting the evidence on which we should base our faith more important than the act of moving forward in trust?

Before Creation

31. Is it essential to our faith to have a clear understanding of human origins? Why?
32. What scriptural evidence do we have for events which took place *before* the creation of this earth and our world? (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; Revelation 12:1-12) Ellen White suggested that Job may have been written before Genesis. Does the book of Job tell us anything about origins? (Job 38:1-7)

33. The book of Isaiah has some interesting discussions about God in Isaiah 40-55. The prophet Isaiah basically stated that the real God: 1) Is able to create out of nothing (Isaiah 40:21-22,26,28; 42:5; 44:2,24); 2) Is able to predict the future far in advance (Isaiah 41:22; 42:8-9; 43:9,12; 44:8,25-26; 48:5); and 3) Is able to perform supernatural acts that are beyond our understanding. In chapters 40-55, Isaiah hinted at the foolishness of worshiping idols made of wood, stone, or metal instead of our powerful and wonderful Creator-God. (Isaiah 44:9-20) What do you think about Isaiah's arguments? Would you use other arguments in our day? Do you think all of Isaiah's arguments are valid even today?
34. The rebellion of Satan in heaven occurred before the creation of man here on earth. (Revelation 12:7-12) Do you believe that our world was created at least partly to answer Satan's accusations against God? Can you give some examples of Satan's accusations? Satan had accused God of refusing to share His creative power. What did Satan have to say after creation week? Satan had accused God of being selfish. Did the creation of our world and the Garden of Eden and our first parents say anything about God's attitude toward His creatures? If you believe there was something here on this earth before the creation week described in Genesis began, how do you believe it got here?
35. If Satan was cast down to this earth before creation week, (Revelation 12:7-12) to what was he cast down? He certainly was here in time to be in the Garden of Eden.
36. God allowed Lucifer to remain in heaven for a long time after he had begun to have rebellious thoughts, allowed him to attend "operations committee" meetings (See Job 1 and 2.) with representatives from other planets, and still allowed him to live after being cast out of heaven. On the other hand, Eve and Adam were thrown out of the garden when they made their first mistake and finally died as a result of their rebellion? Why was God seemingly so tolerant of Lucifer and seemingly so intolerant of Adam and Eve?

The answer to this question can seem to be very difficult if one takes too narrow and too short a frame of reference. From our current perspective, it seems that Adam and Eve have lost everything and the Devil has won. He rebelled right in heaven in God's very presence and led millions of angels into rebellion. Then, there was war in heaven. (Revelation 12:7) It might seem like God should have destroyed him at that point. But, what do we see? God allowed him to live and to spread his lies to this earth as well as apparently to have access to other beings to try to make his case. He is still apparently alive and well on planet earth!

But, it would have been torture for Adam and Eve to survive all these years and to see what their descendants have done to this earth. They would have blamed themselves for all the evil that has resulted. So, in fact, it was better for God to allow them to sleep.

More than that, we need to reconsider the long-term perspective. In a few more years, the Devil will be confined to this earth to spend one thousand years thinking about what he has done; then, after a brief interlude at the third coming, he will be destroyed forever. (Revelation 20) On the other hand, Adam and Eve have "slept" through all the difficult times since their deaths and will arise just in time to go to heaven for the thousand years. They will return to planet earth after a thousand years and re-inherit their Eden home for all eternity. From that perspective, it is very clear who will be the winner and who will be the loser in the long term.

First Creation Story

37. Scriptures: Genesis 1-2:4a; Psalms 33:6,9; Exodus 20:11; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:2; Revelation 14:6-7. See also *1SP* 24-26; *PP* 44-51; *Education* 13-22.

38. Acts 16:31 tells us that all God is asking from us is trust, perfect trust. Romans 14:23 says that sin is a breach of that trust. Imagine the universe watching carefully through the seven days of creation week. What did they—and what do we—learn about God from creation week? Do you see any evidence that God can be trusted? Do you hear any answers to Satan’s charges? Remember that Satan charges that God is arbitrary (not respectful of human freedom). Satan claims that God is vengeful, exacting, unforgiving, and severe. Satan says He cannot be depended upon to tell the truth. Were there any answers to his accusations given in creation week? Apparently, God could have created our entire world just by the snap of His fingers or by speaking a single word or by just thinking our world into existence. Why did He take so long? Do any of God’s actions during creation week suggest that He is selfish in any way? Imagine the beautiful place He has created for His creatures. Why do you think He made us male and female? What better way for God to show His willingness to share as much as possible of His creative power. Wouldn’t it be just like God to have this work in an atmosphere of love? And wouldn’t it be just like Satan to pervert that as much as he can? Consider how much Satan has done to pervert the power we have to procreate, and thus, to destroy what it says to us about God.

39. What does this ability of inhabitants of this earth to procreate ultimately say to the angels? Or, do we have any evidence that anywhere else in the universe there are creatures that reproduce?

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth. (*RH* Feb. 11, 1902; *1SDABC* 1081.3.)

40. Compare Christ’s discussion of marriage in heaven. (See the woman with seven husbands: Matthew 22:29-30.) When our children are young, we are like God to them. Can you think of any better way for God to illustrate the problems He was facing in dealing with us? Are you really willing to respect the freedom of your children so that when they are ready to leave you are ready to let them go? God did. We must be very careful what we say about parents. We sometimes suggest that if their children have problems, it is the parent’s fault. What about God? He lost a third of His children! What about God’s respect for our freedom? He gave us the freedom to love and obey Him or to hate Him and spit in His face.

41. A famous evolutionary scientist once wrote: “We’re here because one odd group of fishes had a peculiar fin anatomy that could transform into legs for terrestrial creatures.” (*Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, October 7, 2006)

42. Why did God take seven days to create planet earth when He, no doubt, could have done it in an instant? When He had finished His work, He “rested.” If God does not get tired, what does this mean?

The book of Genesis is primarily a book about God. Even if God had told Moses using the language of heaven all the details of how He created our world in the beginning, Moses could not have told anyone else because there was no developed vocabulary to discuss such ideas and issues in Moses’s day! Thus, the story of creation is intended not as a scientific treatise but as a simple and beautiful account of God’s activities during that first week of this world’s history. It is intended to provide only a brief overview of the “Who” of creation and not a discussion of the “how.”

When He was finished, God “rested” from His work, not because He was tired at all but simply because He was finished. The word *rested* in this context is the word used by a lawyer when he says, “I rest my case” because he is finished. It is not the word for rest from wearisome toil.

Genesis tells us that our heritage goes back to the God of the universe. We are His sons and daughters. We are created in His image. He cares about us. We all are truly brothers and sisters, the children of one “Parent.” This should lead us to regard each other and our “Father” in very different terms than many do today. If we descended from a long line of one-celled creatures, salamanders, and apes, then our evolutionary roots would suggest that we should be constantly fighting for the best place, the best spouse (or spouses), and the “right” to dominate our peers. In which of these two “worlds” would you prefer to live? So, does it matter to you that God is our heavenly “Parent”? If so, why?

43. Genesis seems to suggest that creation took place in seven, contiguous 24-hour time periods. Is there any wiggle room for longer time periods in Genesis 1? Is there any reason to compromise with the long time periods evolutionists believe were necessary? Are evolutionists making any effort to compromise with Christians—Bible-believing ones? There are many verses in the Bible that state blatantly that God created “the heavens and the earth.” In modern terms, God would probably have said, “The entire universe.” The question that some would raise is: Was that all done in the same six-day period?
44. “One could argue that, in many ways, the most important text in the Bible is Genesis 1:1.” (*Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, October 8, 2006) Do you agree with that? Why would it be true? If you do not agree, why not? Why might this verse be key to your understanding of the rest of Scripture?
45. Look at the logical sequence that God used in creating things on this earth. Would you expect God to do things in an orderly fashion? What do we learn about God by the sequence of events in creation week? Is this sequence of particular significance? What actually happened on Day Four?

Day	The Creative Work of God		Day
1 (Gen. 1:3)	light/darkness	sun/moon/stars	4 (Gen. 1:14)
2 (Gen. 1:7)	sky/water	birds/fish	5 (Gen. 1:21)
3 (Gen. 1:9)	sea and dry land	land animals	6 (Gen. 1:24)
3 (Gen. 1:11)	vegetation	man/woman	6 (Gen. 1:27)
The Seventh Day/The Day of Rest (Gen. 2:2)			

46. What do we learn by reading the following verses: Exodus 20:11; Job 38:4; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:2; and Revelation 14:6-7? Is there any question in your mind about the Bible’s position concerning who created our world and even the heavens and the universe?
47. “It’s a fundamental law that nothing created can be greater than its creator.” (*Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, October 8, 2006) Think about it! Do you agree with this basic concept? What would it mean to suggest that God is greater than the entire universe?

48. Seventh-day Adventists believe that God's creation in that initial seven-day period is one of the reasons why we worship God on the Sabbath. What is your understanding of the relationship between creation and the seventh-day Sabbath?
49. Look at some of the different creation myths: See the handout: "Creation Myths." Would you be happier to know that you were the result of some argument and a fight between "gods"? Or, a reward for winning a battle?
50. Read Genesis 1:1-3. Was there a gap of time between Genesis 1:1-2 and 1:3? How would you go about determining that? When God used the term *heaven and earth*, was He including the entire universe? Genesis 1:2 (Compare Revelation 12:9.) seems to suggest that there was some kind of planet here before God began His seven-day creative process. (Genesis 2:7, 19) How would you describe this earth? Would it be "without form, and void"? (Genesis 1:2) How do you fit Genesis 1:1-2 with Genesis 2:5-6?
51. What do you think Satan was doing during creation week? Was God answering some of his accusations?
52. One creation myth relegates humanity to a mere by-product of a struggle among the gods. Instead of being created to have dominion over the earth as in the Bible, (Genesis 1:26) that myth suggests that human beings were made by the higher gods to perform the work that the lesser gods refused to do. Remember that the theological definition of *myth* is something that involves "the gods" and cannot be proven or disproven.
53. The ancient Egyptians believed that their god, Ptah, created by speaking things into existence as God did in the Genesis account. While Ptah may seem a little like the God we worship, notice these very significant differences:
 - 1) He was not eternal and came into being himself through the operation of blind forces in the universe. The cosmos apparently just happened to have in it the ability to originate gods.
 - 2) Ptah did not create anything through any power in himself. When he spoke, he was merely activating something that was already latent in the cosmos. For example, if he said the word "tree", the word had programmed within itself—like a cosmic DNA or digital code—the capacity to produce a tree when uttered.
 - 3) Neither Ptah nor anything he brought into existence was eternal. Everything, including gods themselves, would someday collapse back into the original chaos from which they had come. (*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, October 2006 p. 21)
54. When discussing creation vs. evolution, the cry is often made: "It's all about time!" Why are there so few Christians who believe the story of creation being literal, contiguous seven-24-hour-days as suggested in Genesis 1 and 2? Are you comfortable with this time frame? What was created during the six days of creation? Sun? Moon? Stars?
55. Remember that these messages were written to a primitive people and that alphabetic writing was just barely a developing art. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Sabbath and the sacredness of the Sabbath is based at least partially on a correct understanding of that first week. If we cease to believe in the Genesis account of creation, do we destroy the Sabbath? Why? Or, why not?
56. Did God need to use any power above or beyond or outside of Himself to create our universe? Or, even our world?

57. Thinking about how people perceive the ideas of creation and evolution in our day, why didn't God do something different back in the beginning? Couldn't He see what was coming? Could God have created in such a way as to make evolution an impossible theory? Does God seek to remove every possibility for doubt?
58. Why was the Devil so determined to attack God's creation and the Sabbath?
59. Why do you choose to believe in this story of seven 24-hour contiguous days of creation? If those were long time periods, how did the trees survive for a long time period—from "day three" until "day four"—when the sun, moon, and stars were created or at least made apparent?
60. When do you think bacteria and viruses were created? Did God create destructive bacteria and viruses? Are there some forms of life which have been modified by the Devil's activity? What do we learn from the creation account that might affect our stewardship of planet earth and God's other creatures?

Christ never planted the seeds of death in the system. Satan planted these seeds when he tempted Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge which meant disobedience to God. Not one noxious plant was placed in the Lord's great garden, but after Adam and Eve sinned, poisonous herbs sprang up. . . All tares are sown by the evil one. Every noxious herb is of his sowing, and by his ingenious methods of amalgamation he has corrupted the earth with tares. (*MS 65*, 1899) [published in F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*]; *1BC* 1086.2; *2SM* 288.2; *16MR* 247.2)

But if there was one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, it was the base crime of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere. (*3SG* 64.1 (1864) ; *1SP* 69.1)

Every species of animals which God had created was preserved in the ark. The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation, were destroyed by the flood. (*3SG* 75.2 (1864); *1SP* 78.2)

61. Look particularly at the verses describing the creation of animals in contrast to the creation of man and woman. (Genesis 1:24-27; 2:7,19,21-23) What do those differences imply?
62. Why was Eve created in a very different way from the way Adam was? Was Eve an afterthought? Or, was she the crowning act of God's creation? Was she somehow different from Adam? One pundit has suggested that when God was ready to create Eve, He took a long look at Adam and said, "I can do better than that!"
63. Which do you believe would be more difficult: 1) To create all the creatures here on this earth, or 2) To create a system of DNA and RNA to perfectly reproduce them again and again?
64. How much adaptability is built into the DNA system? Is this the explanation for the finches on the Galápagos islands? We now know that the beaks of the Galápagos finches change with the amount of rainfall in that season! Why do you think animals were given reproductive power and yet no choice. Why do they have to suffer because of man's sin?
65. What does the Bible mean when it says that man and woman were created in the image of God? (Genesis 1:26) Do we look like Him/Them? Or, is it that we have freedom, the ability to choose?

66. What is the significance of using a rib from Adam to create Eve? Was it God's intention that men should regard women as their equals? Why was it necessary for God to emphasize that idea?
67. What was God's plan for Adam and Eve?

When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. "God created man in His own image." [Genesis 1:27, RSV], and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase. Vast was the scope offered for their exercise, glorious the field opened to their research. The mysteries of the visible universe—the "wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge" (Job 37:16)—invited man's study. Face-to-face, heart-to-heart communion with his Maker was his high privilege. Had he remained loyal to God, all this would have been his forever. Throughout eternal ages he would have continued to gain new treasures of knowledge, to discover fresh springs of happiness, and to obtain clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. More and more fully would he have fulfilled the object of his creation, more and more fully have reflected the Creator's glory. (*Education* 15.1.)

68. Is this still true about us? Given everything you know about science, does the plan of salvation and the creation of our world by God in seven literal days make more scientific sense? Or, does the theory of evolution with its long periods of time and gradual change seem to make more scientific sense?
69. Read Genesis 1 and 2. What institutions or customs do we have remaining that were established before the entry of sin into this planet?
70. There are four separate divinely established institutions that were given to Adam and Eve in the garden: the Sabbath, (pleasant) work, marriage, and the home. What do you think was God's original intention for each of these institutions? What has Satan done to these institutions?

Adam had themes for contemplation in the works of God in Eden, which was **heaven in miniature**. God did not form man merely to contemplate His glorious works; therefore, He gave him hands for labor, as well as a mind and heart for contemplation. **If the happiness of man consisted in doing nothing, the Creator would not have given Adam his appointed work. Man was to find happiness in labor, as well as in meditation.** (*RH*, Feb 24, 1874; *1SDABC* 1082.3; compare *DA* 421.4.) [Bold type is added.]

The Second Creation Story

71. Read Genesis 2:4b-25. Why do you think Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 are so different in their descriptions of creation? Are these two different creation accounts from different authors? What do we learn from Genesis 2 that we did not get from Genesis 1?
72. Could we understand the events portrayed in Genesis 3 without Genesis 2?
73. **There are two very important but controversial verses in Genesis 2: Genesis 2:7 and Genesis 2:17. What do you learn from those verses? What do they mean to you?**

74. Genesis 2 goes to some length to describe the creation of Adam, and later, the creation of Eve. Why do you think that is? Why do you think Eve was made from a rib while Adam was made from the clay or dust of the ground? Notice that the animals were also made from dust or clay. (Genesis 2:19)
75. Were Adam and Eve originally created to be equal? What is implied by the expression *a companion suitable to him*?
76. Read the last two verses of Genesis 2. What do these verses tell you about God's plan for marriage? Several New Testament authors have commented on the marriage relationship. (1 Corinthians 7:2-5; Ephesians 5:21-29; Hebrews 13:4) What do these additional verses tell you about the biblical plan for marriage? Are these the descriptions of marriage at its best in a sinful world? Or, the descriptions of an ideal marriage?
77. After Adam and Eve had been created and were brought to the tree of life, do you think God gave them a guided tour of the garden? What did God say to them about the tree of life? About the tree of knowledge of good and evil? After God had finished describing these two trees and their purpose, what do you think Adam and Eve later discussed between themselves? What questions were raised in their minds?
78. As many commentators have noted, the family is the basic unit of human society. Where the family is in trouble, society is in trouble! Who do you think is responsible for the major problems in families today? Could Christians re-create, in their own homes, the kind of relationship that Adam and Eve had in the garden?

Eden

79. In your own words, describe the work, duties, and privileges that Adam and Eve enjoyed in the garden. Was there anything unpleasant about their activities?
80. Read Genesis 2:10-14. Do these verses imply that Adam and Eve ventured outside the garden to follow any of those rivers to some of those other locations? How long do you think Adam and Eve lived in the garden?
81. How much do you think our world has changed from the way it was in the Garden of Eden? Does the world still reveal God's love? (Job 12:7-9; Romans 1:19-20) Is God still truly revealed in nature? Does the violence in nature today reflect God?
82. Think of the most beautiful and wonderful place that you have ever visited. In what ways is it like your mental picture of the Garden of Eden?
83. Did Adam and Eve ever need sleep? If so, what did they sleep on? If not, why do we need sleep?

The Edenic Diet

84. **As we know, God gave Adam and Eve an entirely plant-based diet in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 1:29) Furthermore, it was a diet which did not require the death of any plants. What later additions were made to the human diet? Were there still some restrictions? (Genesis 3:18; 9:3-4; Leviticus 3:17; 7:26; 17:10-16) Why were those additions made?**

What Is a Soul?

85. Read Genesis 2:7. Compare some more traditional translations, like the *King James Version* or the *Revised Standard Version*, with some of the newer translations. What is

implied by the final phrase in Genesis 2:7? Does man have an immortal soul implanted into him at the time of conception or birth? To many of our Christian friends, that is what separates human beings from animals. Why do more modern translations use words like *man began to live*? What is a “living soul”? What does it take to make a living soul?

86. **Can a “soul” sin? (Ezekiel 18:4). Is the soul immortal in any sense? (Matthew 10:28; 1 Timothy 6:16) Does this suggest that *soul* is just another word for *person* or *being*? Who suggests that the soul cannot die? (Genesis 3:1-5)**
87. Review the common beliefs of some of our Christian friends about the soul. What do Roman Catholics believe about the soul? Can you make a list of non-biblical ideas that have arisen from the idea of an immortal soul? Hell? Purgatory? What do these concepts say about God?

It is beyond the power of the human mind to estimate the evil which has been wrought by the heresy of eternal torment. The religion of the Bible, full of love and goodness, and abounding in compassion, is darkened by superstition and clothed with terror. When we consider in what false colors Satan has painted the character of God, can we wonder that our merciful Creator is feared, dreaded, and even hated? The appalling views of God which have spread over the world from the teachings of the pulpit have made thousands, yes, millions, of skeptics and infidels. (*Great Controversy* 536.2 (1888); *4SP* 356 (1884))

Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

88. The two most important trees in the entire garden were located somewhere near the center of the garden: 1) The tree of life, and 2) The tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:9) **What do you think was different about those two trees?** Were they physically different from other trees? Did Adam and Eve ever get lost or have difficulty finding their way back to the tree of life? Did Adam and Eve have to do anything to care of the tree of life? The Bible seems to imply that if a person could eat the fruit of the tree of life, and continue to do so, s/he could live forever. What quality about that fruit imparts eternal life? Or, is the food a symbol of something that gives eternal life? What was different about the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Was there something inherently poisonous about the fruit? (*ST*, February 13, 1896 par. 7) Or, did it merely represent a change in relationship? See the handout: “The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.”
89. Ellen White repeatedly suggested that Satan desires to reach the tree of life and eat of the fruit so as to gain eternal life. If the Devil were able to get to the tree and partake of the fruit, would it give him eternal life? (See #70 above and #95 below: *RH* Feb. 24, 1874; *TA* 62.3; *2Red* 13.1; *1SP* 30.3; *EW* 125.2.)
90. Why did God put the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden near the tree of life? (Genesis 2:9; 3:3) Was that fair to Adam and Eve? To Satan? God said they would die if they ate of the tree, (Genesis 2:17) and Satan said they would not. Who appeared to be right? Do we now know who was right? When did man first see that ultimate death that God had spoken about in Eden?
91. To be fair to Satan, and yet, to limit his access to Adam and Eve, he was allowed to approach them only at one tree. (#113 below; *PP* 53.3; *3SG* 39.1; *1SP* 34.2; *LHU* 20.7; *SR* 31.1; *TA* 52.1) However, this tree was placed in the center of the garden near the tree of

life. When God told them not to go near the tree, He was only trying to protect them. Had God said anything to Adam and Eve about death yet? When did He first talk about death? Remember that shortly, Satan was to claim that this was a lie and that God was a liar! (Genesis 3:4) The ultimate, direct answer to this question does not come until crucifixion week.

92. Contrary to what has often been suggested, placing the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden was certainly not a simple test of our obedience. Sin had already caused war in heaven, (Revelation 12:7-12) and the Devil was demanding equal access to the new creatures. God, realizing the hazard of that, told Satan that he could have access to them only at that one tree. Satan was not allowed to pursue them all around the garden, appearing in whatever attractive form he might choose to continually harass them. God limited him to that one tree. But, at the same time, God placed that tree near the tree of life in the center of the garden where Adam and Eve would be able to see it every time they went to eat of the tree of life. Thus, Satan could not claim that God had hidden him off in some inaccessible corner of the garden where they would never see him, and God could rightly state that He was giving the Devil adequate access to the new pair. Thus, the tree of knowledge of good and evil was intended to be a protection for our first parents—not a test! God tried His best within the limits of freedom to warn them about their wily foe. (See the handout: “**The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.**”)
93. **Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil:** Would it have been necessary for God to put a tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden if Satan had not rebelled? The tree of knowledge of good and evil was put where it was primarily to try to answer some of the questions that had already been leveled against God.
94. Perhaps, if Satan had not already rebelled and raised the questions, the tree would not have been there. Adam and Eve would have had an opportunity to exercise their freedom in some other way—as the rest of the universe has and does. In the garden, disguised as a beautiful iridescent snake, Satan appeared as Lucifer (*light bearer* in Latin) pretending to bring “new light.” He still claims that title; we must not forget that one day he will come claiming to be Christ Himself. Matthew 24:23-24.
95. Apparently, at the time of the fall, Adam was given authority over Eve. (Genesis 3:16) Why do you think that was? Down through the generations, what has been the result of that change? What has been the status of women through the ages? What is the status of women in many of the less-educated, less-civilized portions of the world today? Are there any places in the world where women are truly treated as equal? **While Eve was made from a rib taken out of Adam, every person from that day until this has been taken out of a woman. Does the fact that Eve was taken out of Adam make her in any way inferior?**

Had man after his fall been allowed free access to the tree [534] of life, he would have lived forever, and thus sin would have been immortalized. But cherubim and a flaming sword kept ‘the way of the tree of life’ (Genesis 3:24), and not one of the family of Adam has been permitted to pass that barrier and partake of the life-giving fruit. Therefore there is not an immortal sinner. (*Great Controversy* 533.3)

All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and

majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. In the beginning, man [645] was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. **Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will “grow up” (Malachi 4:2) to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory.** (GC 644.3-645.0)

Transported with joy, he [Adam] beholds the trees that were once his delight—the very trees whose fruit he himself had gathered in the days of his innocence and joy. He sees the vines that his own hands have trained, the very flowers that he once loved to care for. His mind grasps the reality of the scene; he comprehends that this is indeed Eden restored, more lovely now than when he was banished from it. The Saviour leads him to the tree of life and plucks the glorious fruit and bids him eat. He looks about him and beholds a multitude of his family redeemed, standing in the Paradise of God. Then he casts his glittering crown at the feet of Jesus and, falling upon His breast, embraces the Redeemer. He touches the golden harp, and the vaults of heaven echo the triumphant song: ‘Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again!’ The family of Adam take up the strain and cast their crowns at the Saviour’s feet as they bow before Him in adoration. (*Great Controversy* 648.1)

But measures were immediately taken in Heaven to defeat Satan in his plans. Strong angels, with beams of light representing flaming swords turning in every direction, were placed as sentinels to guard the way of the tree of life from the approach of Satan and the guilty pair. Adam and Eve had forfeited all right to their beautiful Eden home, and were now expelled from it. The earth was cursed because of Adam’s sin, and was ever after to bring forth briers and thorns. Adam was to be exposed to the temptations of Satan while he lived, and was to finally pass through death to dust again. (*RH*, February 24, 1874 par. 20) [Bold type and content in brackets are added.]

The Sabbath

96. **Why do you think God gave us a “monument in time” as a memorial of creation? In what ways does a monument in time best represent the truth about the Creator? Do you think God intended for us to remember creation week and all that was accomplished during that week each time we celebrate the Sabbath?**

After the significant events of the rest of creation week, came the Sabbath, the day of rest and celebration, to consider all that had taken place. At the end of crucifixion week, Jesus rested in His tomb over the Sabbath. Therefore, on the Sabbath, we should celebrate what Christ has done for us. The Sabbath was no mere test of our obedience. The Sabbath was

made for us. (Mark 2:27-28) The primary function of the Sabbath is to provide an opportunity for us to be reminded of the essential truths in the great controversy over the character of God and how He runs His universe, truths which were revealed in creation and in crucifixion. No wonder most people who do not understand the issues in this controversy find it difficult to understand why we observe the Sabbath. Without this background understanding, the Sabbath is regarded merely as a legalistic hangover from Jewish times.

On the seventh day, essentially, God said: "We would like to set aside this day to memorialize all that creation has said in answer to Satan's charges." Shouldn't we make this a time of special togetherness to celebrate God's answers given at the beginning, at Sinai, and at the cross—remember that Christ rested in the tomb over the Sabbath—to refute Satan's charges? Doesn't that say a lot about God and about the Sabbath and the risks He was willing to run in giving such freedom to us. That first Sabbath was a great day of victory for God and helps to explain why there has been so much conflict over the Sabbath down through the ages. No wonder Satan has worked so hard to destroy the meaning of the Sabbath!

97. In what ways was the Sabbath celebrated in the Garden of Eden? Did God and angels come to join in the Sabbath celebrations? Did any beings from other worlds come?

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made "in the image of God," and it was the Creator's design that they should populate the earth. (*RH* Feb. 11, 1902; *1BC* 1081.3; Compare *PP* 52.2.) [Bold type is added.]

98. Some have suggested that the Sabbath is important physiologically because it is man's seventh day. They believe that every seventh day, human beings need to rest. Which day of the week is actually our seventh day? It should be Thursday! The Sabbath was actually humanity's second day.
99. For various reasons, the correct observance of the Sabbath day has been a sort of hallmark of God's true people down through the generations. Why do you think that is? What subsequent, very important events helped to bring additional meaning to the seventh-day Sabbath? The exodus. (Deuteronomy 5:12-15) The crucifixion. (Matthew 27:62; 28:1) Plans for the new earth. (Isaiah 66:23)
100. Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15. Did Moses forget the reason for the Sabbath? Did the events of the exodus and the giving of the Ten Commandments at that time add anything of importance to your understanding of the Sabbath?
101. What do the events of creation week, the exodus, and crucifixion weekend over 1400 years later mean to our understanding of the importance and significance of the Sabbath?
102. Down through the events recorded in the Old Testament and New Testament, what other interesting events are mentioned as occurring specifically on the Sabbath? Read Joshua 6:1-5. Was the seventh day mentioned in Joshua 6:4 the Sabbath?
103. After Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel of Israel, usurped control of Judah when her son died, she exercised the rights of queen for about seven years. Finally, when Jehoida had decided that young Joash was old enough to sit on the throne, he arranged a coup to take place on the Sabbath! Does that sound like an appropriate activity for the Sabbath day? (2 Kings 11:4-16)

104. What do you think happened to the observance of the Sabbath during the exile in Egypt and later in Babylon? After coming out of Egypt, they were exhorted to “remember” the Sabbath day. (Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15) While in Babylonian captivity, they were given strong reason to “remember” the Sabbath by Ezekiel who was in captivity with them. (Ezekiel 20:12,20)
105. Eighty or ninety years after returning to Jerusalem, the Jews had fallen into doing ordinary business on the Sabbath day. Nehemiah took some very brisk and determined steps to stop the breaking of the Sabbath by merchants wanting to do business on that day! (Nehemiah 13:15-22)
106. Jesus warned His disciples about the difficulties of fleeing on the Sabbath day when Jerusalem would be surrounded by Roman armies as happened in A.D. 66. (Matthew 24:20)
107. Jesus Himself apparently kept the Sabbath throughout His life. (Luke 4:16) **Why do you think that virtually all of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament except the commandment to observe the Sabbath? Did the Jews need to have that commandment repeated? Or, did they observe the Sabbath meticulously?**
108. Paul also kept the Sabbath very faithfully. (Acts 13:44; 17:2)

The Entrance of Sin

109. Read Genesis 3:1-4:26. In this section, we will study about the entrance of sin into our world and some of its consequences, both immediate and long-term. Imagine if we could view the events of Genesis 3:1-4:26 in 3-D living color! Although that is not possible at the present time, we do have some considerable insights into what was going on in the thinking of the participants. Let us review the background of the “serpent.” Then we will look at Eve and what she was thinking as she approached the tree.
110. We already know from Revelation 12:1-12 that Satan had fomented rebellion in heaven. In order to better understand his thinking, let us review some of Satan’s claims against God:

Patriarchs and Prophets pages 37-43 delineates some of Satan’s charges.

1. God’s laws could and should be better.
2. Although God’s laws may be necessary for the inhabitants of other worlds, angels—being more exalted—need no such restraint; their own wisdom is a sufficient guide.
3. Angels are not beings that can bring dishonor to God. All their thoughts are holy. It is no more possible for them than for God Himself to err.
4. Exalting Jesus as the Son of God is an injustice to Lucifer who is also entitled to reverence and honor.
5. If Lucifer can just attain to his true, exalted position, great good would accrue to the entire host of heaven. Satan claimed that it is his object to secure freedom for all.
6. After God revealed the true nature of Christ, Satan claimed that an absolute Ruler, Christ, had been appointed over the beings in heaven and that to His authority all were required to pay homage.

7. While claiming for himself perfect loyalty to God, Lucifer urged that changes in the order and laws of heaven are necessary for the stability of the divine government.
 8. Those who remain obedient to God are “deluded slaves.”
 9. The preference being shown to Christ is an act of injustice both to himself and to all the heavenly host.
 10. Accepting Christ as the Ruler of heaven is an invasion of Lucifer’s rights and the rights of all angels.
 11. Under Lucifer’s rule, all will experience a new and better government under which all will enjoy freedom.
 12. Lucifer seeks to win all the angels to his side, to become equal with God Himself, and to be obeyed by the entire host of heaven.
 13. Angels who disagreed with him were accused of being indifferent to the interests of heavenly beings. (See also “Satan Before His Fall.”)
111. What pattern do you see in these claims? After being cast down to this earth, what do you think Lucifer/Satan wanted to accomplish? Did God give him an opportunity to demonstrate his creative abilities? If Satan was cast down to this earth, did he do any creating or attempt to do any creating? Is he capable of creating anything? He cannot even procreate as creatures on this earth can! Was the creation of our world, to a considerable extent, a response to some of Satan’s charges against God?
112. Were Adam and Eve warned about Satan and told of his rebellion in heaven?

Our first parents were not left without a warning of the danger that threatened them. Heavenly messengers opened to them the history of Satan’s fall and his plots for their destruction, unfolding more fully the nature of the divine government, which the prince of evil was trying to overthrow. It was by disobedience to the just commands of God that Satan and his host had fallen. How important, then, that Adam and Eve should honor that law by which alone it was possible for order and equity to be maintained. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 52.2) [Bold type is added.]

113. Why was the tree of knowledge of good and evil placed in the garden?

Satan was not to follow them [Adam and Eve] with continual temptations; he could have access to them only at the forbidden tree. Should they attempt to investigate its nature, they would be exposed to his wiles. They were admonished to give careful heed to the warning which God had sent them and to be content with the instruction which He had seen fit to impart. (*PP* 53.3; *3SG* 39.1) [Bold type and content in brackets are added.]

The tree of knowledge of good and evil was supposed to be a protection for Adam and Eve!

114. How did Eve happen to find herself standing alone beside the tree of knowledge of good and evil? What had God instructed Adam and Eve regarding their work together? What should Eve have done when she first realized that she was near the tree, especially after hearing the serpent speak to her? **If the benefits of eating the fruit were so great, what would have been lost by waiting a day and consulting with Adam and God about it?**

The angels had cautioned Eve to beware of separating herself from her husband while occupied in their daily labor in the garden; with him she

would be in less danger from temptation than if she were alone. But absorbed in her pleasing task, she [54] unconsciously wandered from his side. On perceiving that she was alone, she felt an apprehension of danger, but dismissed her fears, deciding that she had sufficient wisdom and strength to discern evil and to withstand it. Unmindful of the angels' caution, she soon found herself gazing with mingled curiosity and admiration upon the forbidden tree. The fruit was very beautiful, and she questioned with herself why God had withheld it from them. Now was the tempter's opportunity. As if he were able to discern the workings of her mind, he addressed her: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Eve was surprised and startled as she thus seemed to hear the echo of her thoughts. But the serpent continued, in a musical voice, with subtle praise of her surpassing loveliness; and his words were not displeasing. Instead of fleeing from the spot she lingered wonderingly to hear a serpent speak. Had she been addressed by a being like the angels, her fears would have been excited; but she had no thought that the fascinating serpent could become the medium of the fallen foe. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 53.5)

"He [Adam] mourned that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side...Adam reproached his companion for her folly in leaving his side,..." (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 56,57) [Bold type is added.]

115. How many of our sins are like Eve's? In what ways?

116. What specific claims and temptations did Lucifer, through the serpent, place before Eve?

By partaking of this tree, he declared, **they would attain to a more exalted sphere of existence and enter a broader field of knowledge.** He himself had eaten of the forbidden fruit, and as a result had acquired the power of speech. And **he insinuated that the Lord jealously desired to withhold it from them, lest they should be exalted to equality with Himself.** It was because of its wonderful properties, imparting wisdom and power, that He had prohibited them from tasting or even touching it. The tempter intimated that the divine warning was not to be actually fulfilled; it was designed merely to intimidate them. **How could it be possible for them to die? Had they not eaten of the tree of life? God had been seeking to prevent them from reaching a nobler development and finding greater happiness.** (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 54.2)

Satan represented to the holy pair that they would be gainers by breaking the law of God. Do we not today hear similar reasoning? Many talk of the narrowness of those who obey God's commandments, while they themselves claim to have broader ideas and to enjoy greater liberty. What is this but an echo of the voice from Eden, "In the day ye eat thereof"—transgress the divine requirement—"ye shall be as gods"? **Satan claimed to have received great good by eating of the forbidden fruit, but he did not let it appear that by transgression he had become an outcast from heaven.** Though he had found sin to result in infinite loss, he concealed his own misery in order to draw others into the same position. So now, the transgressor seeks to disguise his true character; he may claim to be holy; but his exalted profession only makes him the more dangerous as a deceiver.

He is on the side of Satan, trampling upon the law of God, and leading others to do the same, to their eternal ruin. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 55.1) [Bold type is added.]

117. At what point did Eve commit sin? Was it in wandering away from Adam? Or, was it Adam's sin because he allowed her to wander away? Was it in listening to the serpent? Was it in approaching the tree? Was it in engaging in conversation with the serpent? Was there no sin until she actually took of the fruit? Was the fruit poisonous in some sense? (*ST* Feb. 13, 1896, par. 7; *TA* 56.2) What was Eve's real sin? **Would Adam and Eve together have resisted Satan?** Was the sin the transferring her trust and allegiance from God to the creature in the tree?

Eve really believed the words of Satan, but her belief did not save her from the penalty of sin. She disbelieved the words of God, and this was what led to her fall. In the judgment, men will not be condemned because they conscientiously believed a lie, but because they did not believe the truth, because they neglected the opportunity of learning what is truth. Notwithstanding the sophistry of Satan to the contrary, it is always disastrous to disobey God. We must set our hearts to know what is truth. All the lessons which God has caused to be placed on record in His word are for our warning and instruction. They are given to save us from deception. Their neglect will result in ruin to ourselves. Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 55.2) [Bold type is added.]

118. What should Adam have done when Eve approached him with the fruit? What went through Adam's mind?

An expression of sadness came over the face of Adam. He appeared astonished and alarmed. To the words of Eve he replied that this must be the foe against whom they had been warned; and by the divine sentence she must die. In answer she urged him to eat, repeating the words of the serpent, that they should not surely die. She reasoned that this must be true, for she felt no evidence of God's displeasure, but on the contrary realized a delicious, exhilarating influence, thrilling every faculty with new life, such, she imagined, as inspired the heavenly messengers. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 56.1)

Adam understood that his companion had transgressed the command of God, disregarded the only prohibition laid upon them as a test of their fidelity and love. There was a terrible struggle in his mind. He mourned that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side. But now the deed was done; he must be separated from her whose society had been his joy. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 56.2)

119. What were the relatively immediate consequences of sin?

After his transgression Adam at first imagined himself entering upon a higher state of existence. But soon the thought of his sin filled him with terror. The air, which had hitherto been of a mild and uniform temperature, seemed to chill the guilty pair. The love and peace which had been theirs was gone, and in its place they felt a sense of sin, a dread of the future, a nakedness of soul. The robe of light which had enshrouded them, now disappeared, and to supply its place they endeavored to fashion for themselves a covering; for

they could not, while unclothed, meet the eye of God and holy angels. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 57.1)

They now began to see the true character of their sin. Adam reproached his companion for her folly in leaving his side and permitting herself to be deceived by the serpent; but they both flattered themselves that He who had given them so many evidences of His love, would pardon this one transgression, or that they would not be subjected to so dire a punishment as they had feared. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 57.2)

Satan exulted in his success. He had tempted the woman to distrust God's love, to doubt His wisdom, and to transgress His law, and through her he had caused the overthrow of Adam. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 57.3) [Bold type is added.]

120. ***Sin and God's Foreknowledge***: If God had the foreknowledge to know all this trouble was coming, why did He create the being who would one day become Satan? Why didn't He just blot Lucifer out and then blot out the memory of him so we would not know? Then, God could just go ahead and repeat that at anytime anyone would entertain the thought of sin. How do we know that God has not done that? The great controversy is proof. Only God would have known. Just imagine the lengths to which God has gone to prove to us that He does not manipulate us or our thoughts. God would rather lose one-third of His angels and most human beings rather than limit our freedom.
121. What really happened to Adam and Eve when they sinned? Did the very act of sinning change them?
- In effect, God said in Genesis 2:17 that sin is poison. That idea is repeated in several places in Scripture. See Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Romans 1:32; 5:12; 6:16,21, **23**; 8:6,13; Galatians 6:8; **James 1:15**.
122. We have become so accustomed to living surrounded and totally immersed in sin that we feel quite comfortable with it. It is hard for us to believe that something so universal around us could actually be deadly. Furthermore, the only life we really know is this life that is sustained *in sin* by God because He does not want us to die before we have had a chance to learn the truth about Him. Therefore, we find ourselves in the interesting predicament of not being able to study life as it was originally intended to be, but only in our current form of "living as we die"—on life support as it were.
123. So, how do we find out how deadly sin is? Has the full effect of "sin" ever been demonstrated for humans to see? Not in a form that we fully understand. However, Jesus died the death that is a direct result of sin. In the Bible, that death is called the second death or final death. He did not die of any punishment placed on Him by God, or because of some human disease that suddenly became very serious, or even of the wounds inflicted on Him, or even the crucifixion itself. Jesus died because of the separation that is caused by sin. (See Isaiah 59:2; Romans 3:25-26; 4:25; Matthew 27:46.)
124. When our first parents sinned, God could have stood back and allowed them to reap the perfectly natural consequences of their sin. However, since the entire universe was, no doubt, watching what was going on, they would have assumed that somehow God had executed them. That would have resulted in their becoming afraid of God lest a similar fate overtake them. Fear is contrary to the love and government of our God. (See 1 John 4:18; *DA* 23.) They might have continued to obey Him, but there would have been a quiet distrust

running through every action. This would lead to “sullen submission,” and that would lead eventually to rebellion breaking out in God’s universe.

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. By such a one service is looked upon as drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully, and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. [If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints.] Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. MS 20, 1897 (MR # 970); *Signs of the Times*, July 22, 1897 (3ST 400:2:1). Note that section in [. . .] is omitted in *That I May Know Him* p. 120; 12MR 236.

125. A loving God had to do things the way He did (See the handout: “**Love.**”) because of the goals He has in mind. So, God Himself finally came in human form to die the death about which He had warned Adam and Eve back in the garden. We now have the following choices: 1) Learning from His demonstration, or 2) Refusing to pay attention, or 3) Ignoring the whole thing and finally dying ourselves of the same death. Without a doubt, sin is the worst poison of all. (See Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:5.) Compare the handout: **The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.**
126. What was Eve’s sin? What does her experience with the serpent tell us about our situation and of what we need to be aware? What would you understand is so bad about what she did? Whose sin was worse, Eve’s or Adam’s? (1 Timothy 2:14) Was God being unfairly harsh in this experience? Shouldn’t we desire to be like God as Eve tried to be?
127. Eve’s sin was not in trusting the serpent, but in distrusting God. She had no reason to mistrust anyone up to that point. God had warned them about that tree. In the excitement of the moment, Eve chose to disregard the very clear warnings that God had given them and, instead, chose to trust that “miracle serpent” in the tree as she distrusted God.
128. Think of how many people in our day make the same mistake! Eve had seen that tree on many previous occasions. She could have said to the serpent: “You may be right in what you say; but, I would like to discuss it with my husband and with God. If it is a good idea to accept your offer, I will be back tomorrow or the next day!” Just think of all the problems that could be avoided if we took that same approach when we are tempted.
129. On the other hand, Adam sinned deliberately in the full knowledge of what he was doing. Instead of waiting to discuss the matter with God, Adam also rushed ahead and ate the fruit. When they fully realized what they had done, both of them were ready to blame God!
130. What would you have done if you had been Adam when Eve came to him?
131. What kind of God would expel Adam and Eve on their very first offense? Would you still be alive if your parents had treated you like that? Why is God apparently so arbitrary?

That certainly seems harsh. But, consider the consequences of God’s possible options. If He had decided simply to punish them and let them stay in the garden, then Satan would tour the universe in delight, exclaiming that he had been right that sin does not lead to death as God had said. (Genesis 2:17) If God had simply allowed them to die the natural consequence of choosing to live apart from the Source of life, they would have died right then and there. However, the universe looking on would have concluded that God had somehow killed them, and they would have obeyed God from that time onward not out of complete trust and love, but out of fear, which is totally unacceptable to our loving God. So, the only acceptable, loving thing to do was for God to say, “Wait until I can show you the

truth about My previous statement.” That answer and other answers associated with it did not come until Jesus died. (Romans 3:25-27)

132. Was it a mistake for God to say that sin leads to death? (Genesis 2:17) Does it seem to you that God really needed to expel Adam and Eve on their first offense? Couldn't He have been a little more forgiving? (Matthew 18:21-35)
133. When God came down to talk to them, why did He call out, “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9) Didn't He know? Compare the story of the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:5) and the story of Abraham and Sodom. (Genesis 18:20)

In many places in the Bible, God allowed Himself to be pictured as having the usual limitations of an ordinary human being. That is called *anthropomorphism*—from a Greek word that means “in the likeness or form of a human being.” God did this not because any of these limitations were real for Him, but so that we could relate to Him as a Friend who is easier for us to understand. God chooses to speak to us as if He were a human like us.

If God chose to speak to us using heavenly language or ways of expression, would we be able to comprehend them? Is it a mistake for God to be so willing to reach down to us at our level?

“Dying, thou shalt die” (Genesis 2:17) is a Hebrew idiom for “You will certainly die.”

134. **Adam and Eve's Sin:** In the garden, wasn't the worst problem—the first human sin—the inclination for both of them to open themselves to Satan's deceptions or accusations and not to trust God?

Notice that Satan's first recorded act on this earth was to make some specific accusations against God. When talking about the fruit, he said specifically that God had lied. (Genesis 3:4) Would you trust a liar? He also suggested that God was withholding something from them. In essence, he said: “I don't know why God is holding this back from you. If God is so good, why would He be cheating you out of this?” Right from the very beginning, Satan has pictured God as being arbitrary and exacting. Then, God expelled them from the garden on their very first offense. What if our parents treated us this way? Doesn't it seem that our sinful parents are more forgiving than our loving heavenly Father-God? If God is really loving and gracious, why did He throw them out on the first offense? What did He mean when He said: “On the day that you eat of the fruit, you will die”? Did He mean that He would kill them? Was God clarifying the issues? Or, making things more confusing? Doesn't it seem like God is acting in just the way Satan had claimed He does?

Adam was not willing to trust God with his happiness. He did not see how he could emotionally survive without Eve. It was a very difficult decision for Adam. However, rather than trusting God and letting God make the decision about what he should do, Adam took things into his own hands. Compare Adam's situation with the situation of Abraham, Hagar, and Sarah. (Genesis 16; 21:1-21) Think of the millennia of conflict which have come out of that situation—the Arab-Israeli conflict, etc. Why didn't Adam wait until evening when God would come so they could consult together about the tree and the fruit and what to do? Why didn't Eve consult with her husband and with God on the issue? Think how different things would be if Eve had only said to the talking serpent: “Perhaps you are right about this tree, but it doesn't seem to agree with what God has told us. Let me talk to Adam and God about this; and if it is indeed a good idea to eat this fruit, I will come back tomorrow!”

135. **The Results of Sin:** What do you think went through Adam's head as Eve told him what she had done? Did he think, "God is so gracious; He will forgive us"? The question is, did God forgive them? Certainly, God forgave them; but, forgiveness does not undo the results of the sin. God forgave them and continued to forgive them. Sin is not just a legal problem recorded in a book and stamped forgiven when we ask for it. It is a real problem and leads to real changes. Sin damages people. The consequences are in no way arbitrary. It is very real, and it scars us. Even God cannot undo those scars without violating our freedom.
136. What if Adam and Eve had come forward honestly and asked for forgiveness? Would God have treated them differently? It raises the question, do we have to ask for forgiveness? By contrast with Adam and Eve, can you think of anyone in the Bible besides Jesus who was tested to the ultimate and was given all sorts of misrepresentations of God, etc., and yet, stood firm? What about Job? Is there anything in the Bible that suggests that God is absolutely forgiveness personified? Even before we ask? Consider the story of the prodigal son or the lost son and the forgiving father. (Luke 15:11-31) The father did not even let his son finish his speech. And Jesus forgave the men who were crucifying Him even though they did not ask—or even want—forgiveness. (Luke 23:34)
137. While living in a perfect environment, do you think Adam and Eve fully comprehended death? When was the first time that anyone in the universe had an opportunity to see that death that was the wages of sin? It cannot be the first death that is being referred to because Christ (John 11:11-15), Paul (1 Corinthians 15:51), and others refer to that simply as a sleep. They must have been talking about the second death. (See Revelation 20:6.) No doubt, when the first lamb was killed, the beings of the universe asked God if that was the death that He was talking about? When Abel was killed, again they asked, "Is that the death that You were talking about?" Similar questions were raised at the flood and at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah when fire was poured down from the heavens? The second death is so awful that God decided that He must demonstrate it Himself. Certainly, Adam and Eve did not fully understand it. How many humans understand it today? The angels themselves did not understand. This is why Colossians 1:19-20 and Ephesians 1:9-10 and 3:9-10 say that the death of Christ affects the whole universe—brings harmony and order to heavenly beings as well as us. These loyal angels did not need forgiveness. The cross did not make it possible for them to be forgiven. But, it was to show them something. In order to answer all the questions that had been raised in the universe even before the time of the flood, many things had to be done, especially as demonstrated at the cross.
138. Through all these crises, in effect, God said to the universe:

The most important thing that I have to say to you cannot be said yet. I am waiting for a time when the people who are most apparently my obedient children will actually be ready to crucify My Son. That will demonstrate the hazards of worshiping Me out of fear. They appear to be absolutely dedicated to the 'blueprint.' They believe in Me. They believe in the Bible. They study it. They spend much time memorizing it and reading it out loud. In fact, they believe in all the right things, but they will torture Me to death in the name of God and in the name of the truth and the Scriptures.

So, there is no reason to be afraid of God. He never says, "Love Me or I'll kill you." But, there is certainly plenty of reason to be afraid of sin and its consequences. So, how did it happen that most of the human race is comfortable with sin and afraid of God?

The answer to what God stated in Genesis 3:15 was not fully clarified even for the beings in the rest of the universe until Christ's death—compare Colossians 1:20; Romans 3:24-26 (How did Jesus die on Calvary? Did God execute Him?); compare Romans 4:25 where the word translated *delivered* (KJV) is exactly the same as the word in the original Greek for the results of God's wrath in Romans 1:18,24,26,28 translated "gave them up."

139. Why do you think Satan's first words to Eve were a claim that God had lied? Did Eve have any basis on which to distrust God's word up to that point?
140. Read Genesis 3:6. The fruit looked good. It appealed to her sense of hunger. She thought it would be good to eat, and she wanted to become wise. Were there any inherent problems with those desires? Is it a sin to enjoy good food? Is it a sin for the food to have an appealing look? Is it wrong to want to be wise?
141. How does Satan use God's gifts to us in his appeals of temptation? What is attractive about sin? What would Eve have lost if she had stated simply: "All that you have said may be true. I will discuss it with my husband, and with God. If it is a good idea, I will come back tomorrow"? How many temptations would we avoid if we took that approach?
142. Evil is always a distortion of good. In Satan's temptations, how can we detect where he departs from the truth and slips into subtle errors?
143. Review the curses that were pronounced against the serpent, Eve, and Adam:
 - 1) The snake was to crawl on its belly and eat dust. He was to be an enemy of human beings. (Genesis 3:14-15)
 - 2) Eve was told that her trouble would increase in pregnancy. She would have pain in giving birth. She would have desire for her husband and be subject to him. (Genesis 3:16)
 - 3) Adam was told that the ground would be cursed because of him. He would have to work hard, eat wild plants, earn his living by the sweat of his brow, and finally, go back to the soil from which he came. (Genesis 3:17-19)
144. Compare Genesis 3:15 and Revelation 12:17. What similarities are there between these two texts? What is the historical context for Revelation 12:17? Has Satan's attitude toward us changed in any way? How does this relate to Romans 16:20 and 1 Corinthians 15:25-28?
145. Satan was hoping that after the sin of Adam and Eve, they would go to the tree of life and eat of the fruit and continue to live. Apparently, he thought that he might gain access to the tree of life as well. But, God immediately placed a barrier around the tree of life. (PP 60.3)

The First Sacrifice

146. How do you think Adam felt as he tried to kill that first lamb? Did he use a stone?

It was God's original intent that the process of sacrificing a lamb as a sin offering would be an absolutely horrendous and abhorrent thing each time a human did it. It was to teach us how terrible sin is—it even results in the death of innocent victims. But, very quickly, people became so calloused about death that killing animals was considered a very usual and ordinary thing. In the times of Jesus, it reached the place where the offerings in the court of the temple were carried on like some kind of circus. The priests who carried out the

ceremony often received a portion of the sacrifice. So, it became a kind of competition to see who could attract the most “customers.”

No doubt, Adam was nauseated and horrified by the sight of that first blood. Perhaps, he even exclaimed to God, “This is making me sick!” God may have responded, “I hope it always makes you sick!” We should recognize sin for the terrible thing it is, and fear it. Instead, we have become accustomed to sin and quite comfortable with it. As a result of the many ways in which our thinking has become warped and twisted, we now fear God and love sin! How could we allow Satan to twist things so backwards?

Is sin really deadly serious? How do you know for sure?

Cain and Abel

147. Read Genesis 4:3-7. Why do you think God accepted Abel’s sacrifice and rejected Cain’s? Is it that blood is necessary to take away sin? Is there any mention about being a sacrifice for sin in either Cain’s offering or Abel’s offering? Or, were these simply gifts brought to God in thankfulness? Compare Hebrews 11:4; Leviticus 17:11; and Hebrews 9:22. What happened as a result of God’s curse on Cain? Was Cain forced to eat meat and things that grew wild because God specifically prevented the soil from responding to his efforts? Hadn’t Cain prided himself in being a great gardener?
148. What should we learn about God from His conversation with Cain? (Genesis 4:9-16)

Before the Flood

Scripture: Genesis 5:32-9:29.

149. After the entrance of sin, there was a rapid decline in the moral condition of the world. How do you think that was viewed by the beings in the rest of the universe? Did they think God had made a mistake by creating this world? What kind of interaction do you think there was between the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth? Was God’s Holy Spirit at work to restrain evil? These people could still visit the entrance to the Garden of Eden. They could talk to Adam and Eve. Why did evil become so predominant so quickly?
150. The little bit of information we have about the antediluvian world tells us that men and women lived long lives. Why do you think that was? Heredity? Diet? Environment? Lifestyle?
- It took more than two thousand years of crime and indulgence of base passions to bring bodily disease upon the race to any great extent. If Adam, at his creation, had not been endowed with twenty times as much vital force as men [139] now have, the race, with their present habits of living in violation of natural law, would have become extinct. (3T 138.2 (1872); FE 22.2; LDE 289.4)
151. Between the time of Adam and the time of Noah, one man stands out. What was different about Enoch? In what way did God communicate with people like Enoch?
- See the handout: “***Enoch***.”
152. **If we walked with God in the way Enoch and Noah did, would God bless us in the same ways? Does your faith result in action every day?**
153. Who were the giants living on this earth in Noah’s day? And where did they come from?

There were many giants, men of great stature and strength, renowned for wisdom, skillful in devising the most cunning and wonderful works; but their guilt in giving loose rein to iniquity was in proportion to their skill and mental ability. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 90.2)

God bestowed upon these antediluvians many and rich gifts; but they used His bounties to glorify themselves, and turned them into a curse by fixing their affections upon the gifts instead of the Giver...They [91] sought only to gratify the desires of their own proud hearts, and reveled in scenes of pleasure and wickedness. **Not desiring to retain God in their knowledge, they soon came to deny His existence.** They adored nature in place of the God of nature. They glorified human genius, worshiped the works of their own hands, and taught their children to bow down to graven images. (*PP* 90.3; *BEcho*, July 1, 1887 par. 4; *ST*, November 27, 1884 par. 5) [Bold type is added.]

154. Read Genesis 6:1-13. Who were the “sons of God”? Some translations have *heavenly beings*. Was it true, as many pagan religions teach, that “gods” from the heavens came down and cohabited with human women, producing giants? Ellen White states:

The descendants of Seth were called the sons of God—the descendants of Cain, the sons of men. As the sons of God mingled with the sons of men, they became corrupt, and by intermarriage with them, lost, through the influence of their wives, their peculiar, holy character, and united with the sons of Cain in their idolatry. Many cast aside the fear of God, and trampled upon his commandments. But there were a few that did righteousness, who feared and honored their Creator. Noah and his family were among the righteous few. (*3SG* 60.2 (1864); *1SP* 66.1, 1870; *SR* 62.1; *CC* 36.4)

155. What were the spiritual conditions like in the days of Noah?

When the Lord saw how wicked everyone on earth was and how evil their thoughts were all the time...but everyone else was evil in God’s sight, and violence had spread everywhere... God said to Noah, “I have decided to put an end to all people. I will destroy them completely, because the world is full of their violent deeds.” Genesis 6:5,11,13 (*GNB*)

156. **What does Genesis 6:6-7 mean when it says, “God repented” or God “was sorry” that He had created the earth?** Was this an emotional response on God’s part? Does God have emotions like ours? If so, are His emotions always under full control? Or, is that an expression in human terms so that we might understand God better? Is that another example of anthropomorphism?

157. God knew in advance exactly what would happen just before the flood. But, He allowed it to take place to demonstrate the challenges of dealing with people who had freedom of choice. Nevertheless, God was sorry to see so many of His children destroy themselves.

158. Like Enoch, Noah was faithful. Genesis 6:9-10 says:

This is the story of Noah. He had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Noah had ***no faults*** [perfect, blameless] and was ***the only good man*** [just, righteous] of his time. He lived in fellowship with God.” (*GNB*) [Bold type, italics, and content in brackets are added.]

159. Noah was described as righteous (just) and blameless (perfect). Does this mean that he was not a sinner? (Genesis 6:22; 7:5. Compare Genesis 6:9; Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5.)

We know that everyone who has lived on this earth except Jesus has been a sinner. (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8) Wouldn't that include Noah? We are told that Noah also walked with God. Review the experience of Enoch as discussed above. Could we have that kind of experience with God in our day?

160. Read Genesis 6:8: "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." (KJV) "But the Lord was pleased with Noah." (GNB) (Compare Matthew 24:37; Luke 17:26; 1 Peter 3:20.) Is this a legal expression (Compare Genesis 15:6.) telling us that God had placed Noah's name in the book of life? Or, is this just a description of how things were?
161. **In light of the conditions on this earth and the rapid decline that took place in the moral condition of humankind, what do you think would have happened if God had not sent the flood?**
162. **If you had been appointed as a counselor to God, what would you have advised Him to do at that point? What do you think the angels and the beings from the rest of the universe were advising God to do? When we think it is necessary to punish our children for some "evil deed" they have done, do we expect them to straighten up their lives immediately? Did the beings in the rest of the universe expect that this disastrous flood would cleanse the earth of evil?**
163. **As we all know, there is a great deal of doubt in the scientific community and the news media in our day about whether a worldwide flood ever took place. What scientific evidence could you cite for a worldwide flood?** Scriptures suggest that water covered the highest mountains more than 25 feet! From where did all that water come? Where did it go after the flood? Should we have some secret doubts about the worldwide flood? What biblical evidence is there for a worldwide flood? (Genesis 7:19-20; Job 22:15-16; Isaiah 54:9; Matthew 24:38-39; Luke 17:27; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:6)
164. What happened as a result of Noah's faith and his walk with God? (Hebrews 11:7) Noah's faith led directly to action. Did God especially bless him financially so he could afford to build such a boat?
165. There are no comments in the book of Genesis about Noah's preaching. Why do you think that is? Do we have evidence that Noah sought to convince others? Furthermore, it looks as if Noah built the ark to a size just for himself, his family, and the animals! Does the rest of Scripture teach a different picture? (Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5) Of course, Ellen White paints a different picture.

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Hebrews 11:7. While Noah was giving his warning message to the world, his works testified of his sincerity. It was thus that his faith was perfected and made evident. He gave the world an example of believing just what God says. **All that he possessed, he invested in the ark.** As he began to construct that immense boat on dry ground, multitudes came from every direction to see the strange sight and to hear the earnest, fervent words of the singular preacher. Every blow struck upon the ark was a witness to the people. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 95.1)

Many at first appeared to receive the warning; yet they did not turn to God with true repentance. They were unwilling to renounce their sins.

During the time that elapsed before the coming of the Flood, their faith was tested, and they failed to endure the trial. Overcome by the prevailing unbelief, they finally joined their former associates in rejecting the solemn message. Some were deeply convicted, and would have heeded the words of warning; but there were so many to jest and ridicule, that they partook of the same spirit, resisted the invitations of mercy, and were soon among the boldest and most defiant scoffers; for none are so reckless and go to such lengths in sin as do those who have once had light, but have resisted the convicting Spirit of God. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 95.2)

The men of that generation were not all, in the fullest acceptance of the term, idolaters. Many professed to be worshipers of [96] God. They claimed that their idols were representations of the Deity, and that through them the people could obtain a clearer conception of the divine Being. This class were foremost in rejecting the preaching of Noah. As they endeavored to represent God by material objects, their minds were blinded to His majesty and power; they ceased to realize the holiness of His character, or the sacred, unchanging nature of His requirements. As sin became general, it appeared less and less sinful, and they finally declared that the divine law was no longer in force; that it was contrary to the character of God to punish transgression; and they denied that His judgments were to be visited upon the earth. **Had the men of that generation obeyed the divine law, they would have recognized the voice of God in the warning of His servant; but their minds had become so blinded by rejection of light that they really believed Noah's message to be a delusion.** (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 95.3) [Bold type is added.]

166. What factors kept the antediluvians from accepting Noah's message? 1) They would have had to humbly face the scorn of the majority of their fellow men. 2) They would have been ridiculed and have become very unpopular. 3) They would have had to place their trust in God rather than in all the scientific and philosophical claims in the world around them. 4) They would have had to trust in God to save them and not to depend upon themselves.
167. What factors keep people from accepting the gospel call today? What can we do to help people overcome these factors and this resistance?
168. It is very sad to note in the words of Ellen White that many who had at first accepted Noah's preaching later rejected it with vehemence. "...Their minds had become so blinded by rejection of light that they really believed Noah's message to be a delusion." (*PP* 96.0) How many people in our day are deluded and believe that the truth about God is false? How can we make certain that this is not describing us?

The Flood

169. Did God actually drown all but eight in a flood? If so, why? Is there any other possible, rational explanation for a worldwide flood?

See the handout: "***Why Did God Send the Flood?***"

170. What kind of a God would destroy all but eight in a flood? Could you have destroyed all the women, children, babies, and animals? What do you think would have happened if God had

not stepped in? Would He have completely lost contact with humanity? Why didn't He just let everything go bad and self-destruct at the time of the flood? Why didn't God just send His Son at that point? Don't you think the Pharisees in the time of Christ prayed for a flood to destroy all the "wicked people" (especially the Romans) so they could control the world?

How do you suppose Satan felt as the time of the flood approached and it seemed that the whole world was on his side? Don't you think that Satan thought that he was about to win the great controversy here on planet earth just before the flood? Don't you suspect that he accused God of playing unfairly? There must have been an enormous amount of gloating in Satan's camp as they thought that they were just about to win the war here on planet earth—after losing in heaven! But, God realized that there were still some very important things to be said that could not yet be explained adequately to human beings or even to the beings in the rest of the universe.

So, God did something that surprised and angered even the Devil. God "rescued" the one family that was still paying some attention to Him by taking them into the ark along with a representative group of animals. Then, God drowned all the rest. God was not being unfair in this action because all the facts were not yet on the table. No doubt, Satan toured the universe and accused God of being totally unfair and arbitrary, even severe and unforgiving. But, the Devil consistently uses all the force that God will allow him to exercise in persuading humans to join his side. On this occasion, God was simply trying to level the playing field. God did not remove anyone's freedom by drowning him or her. God will raise every one of those who died in the flood to see the judgment and face God at the time of the second or third coming. (See John 5:28-29.) Each one of them will be judged fairly just as every other person who has ever lived will be. No doubt, there were some savable young children who drowned in the flood; but, only God knows who they were. They will be in heaven, and we can ask them how they feel about the events that ended their lives.

A million years into eternity, do you think we will view the flood differently from the way we do now? Why?

171. Will everyone who drowned in the flood be lost? Was everyone who entered the ark a saint? (Genesis 9:25-27)
172. Does the flood tell us that God is not forgiving? Was it God the Father who sent the flood? Who was the God of the Old Testament? (Luke 24:44; John 5:39-40; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4) In what way was God pleased by the odor of Noah's sacrifice? (See Genesis 8:21. Compare Leviticus 1:9,13,17, etc.) What was the final result of the flood? (See the tower of Babel, Genesis 11:1-9.) What had the people learned from this experience? What had God demonstrated? What did the on-looking universe learn from this? Why has God apparently done almost nothing for so many millennia since then? (Compare 2 Peter 3:8-9.)

First Corinthians 10:4 makes it very clear that the God of the Old Testament was Jesus Christ Himself. Many Christians want to solve the problem of the Old Testament simply by ignoring it because they do not know what to do with many of the stories that are included there. They suggest that God was pleased by the "odor" of sacrifices because that was the only way they could think of that God could perceive that a sacrifice had been offered. They knew how they felt when a lovely aroma filled the room, and they believed that was how God felt when they sacrificed to Him. As suggested above, the flood was God's rescue of the human race. He could not allow Satan to cut off all communication between God and planet earth.

But, although the outcome of the flood at first appeared to be good (God was able to start over with Noah and his family), it was only a relatively short time until groups of people began gathering together to form towns and cities. They decided to protect themselves against this God who they did not trust. No one apparently appreciated what God had done for them. They were determined to build a tower high enough so they could find out what was in the clouds—and thus, why it rains—or, perhaps, even high enough to protect themselves in case of another flood. The response of the people after the flood was one of the first good demonstrations that the use of force can never accomplish what God wants most—freedom, love, and trust.

God and the Use of Force: What God wants most—freedom, love, and trust—can never be produced by force. This should be obvious from a little reflection, but there is more. Clearly, God is the most powerful Being in the universe. If He could win the great controversy and establish the trust and love of His children by exercising that force, He should have done so long ago! In the Bible, we find that the use of overwhelming force gets peoples’ attention for a while (Consider the flood in Genesis 6-11; the ten plagues in Exodus 12; Mount Sinai in Exodus 19,20.); but, it **never** succeeds in really producing lasting love and trust. (See Genesis 11:1-9; Exodus 32.) The flood was a powerful demonstration; but, as soon as people could gather in groups after the flood, they were building a tower to escape this God that they did not trust! The Devil admits that God has plenty of power; but, it only makes him tremble with fear. (James 2:19)

One of the main issues in the great controversy is the use of force. God ordinarily refuses to use force, but Satan loves it. Can you imagine Satan touring the universe after the flood and saying, “I told you so”? Would God allow such a thing to take place unless there was a very important reason? This was probably God’s greatest exercise of force in the entire Bible; and what kind of people did He manage to save? They certainly were convinced about His power and His existence—they built a tower to protect themselves—however, it did not lead them to love and trust Him. It demonstrates that one does not win people by a show of power or force.

We have no evidence that everyone who drowned in the flood will be lost. But, if you measure success in terms of numbers, God has never done very well. God would be a failure going by the standards in the advertising industry based on Madison Avenue. The most common question that children ask regarding these books is: “Why would God destroy all the children—in the flood, in Sodom, etc?” We must recognize that there were some good and righteous people who were laid to rest before the flood began. Was it God’s choice to save only eight? Or, did He save anyone who would go into the ark? Is the flood a demonstration of what God’s destruction is like?

173. It is interesting to note that the description of the events of the flood follows a course which is in reverse order from those of creation week.

Genesis 1	World created	Genesis 7	World destroyed
Gen. 1:6-8	God separates the waters above and below	Gen. 7:11	God mingles the waters again
Gen. 1:9-10	Dry land emerges	Gen. 7:19-20	Dry land vanishes

Gen. 1:20-26	All creatures created	Gen. 7:21-23	Almost all creatures destroyed
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174. Just as it says in Genesis 6:7 that God was sorry He had created this earth, it also says in Genesis 8:1 that God “remembered” or “had not forgotten” Noah and all the animals with him in the boat. Once again, God is pictured in human terms (anthropomorphism). Biblical history and numerous stories seem to suggest that when God remembers, He intervenes in human lives and history. (Genesis 19:29; 30:22; Exodus 2:24; 6:5-6)
175. The Bible does not mention dinosaurs. How do they fit into this story? Did they inhabit the earth before the flood? Did they live after the flood? Where did they come from? Were there any water dwelling dinosaurs that survived the flood? Or, did God specifically make certain that none of those creatures of such enormous size and strength survived the flood?
176. Does the fact that we find fossils of sea dwelling creatures worldwide prove that there was a worldwide flood? How do we explain the legends about floods in primitive tribes throughout the world?
177. **How do you think God really felt about sending a flood? Was it truly necessary? How did Satan respond to the sending of the flood and the events that followed?**
- Satan himself, who was compelled to remain in the midst of the warring elements, feared for his own existence...He now uttered imprecations against God, [100] charging Him with injustice and cruelty. Many of the people, like Satan, blasphemed God, and had they been able, they would have torn Him from the throne of power. (PP 99.3; 1SP 74.2; 3SG 70.1) [Bold type is added.]**
178. What do you think Satan had to say when the rain was over? Did he try to speak to the beings in the rest of the universe about what kind of God they were worshipping?
179. What groups of people in our day are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure? Why do you think that is? Can we help children, teenagers, and our associates see the importance of resisting that peer pressure?
180. Almost as soon as Noah left the ark, he set up an altar and offered a sacrifice to God. Genesis 8:20-22 suggest that there was “an odor pleasing to the Lord.” Through the giving of a rainbow, God promised never again to destroy the earth with a flood. What does *an odor pleasing to the Lord* mean? (Compare Exodus 29:18,25,41; Leviticus 1:9,13,17; 2:2,9,12; 3:5,16, etc.)
181. Look at the covenant promise given by God to Noah. (Genesis 9:8-19; 17:7; Psalms 105:10; Hebrews 13:20) Compare this covenant with the ones later given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Genesis 12:3) What similarities and what differences do you see?
182. If you were speaking with an associate or a friend who is not a Bible-believer and who does not know much about Scripture, what would you say to him about the flood? Could you give a cogent, believable explanation?
183. Were the members of Noah’s family saved because of Noah’s faith? Or, because of their own faith? Or, just because they got on the boat? Compare Rahab. (Joshua 6:17,23,25)

After the Flood

Scripture: Genesis 9-11.

184. What did the human race learn from the flood? Why is it so hard for human beings to learn from the mistakes of others? What ***should mankind have learned*** from the flood?
185. How different was the earth after the flood as compared to before the flood?

The entire surface of the earth was changed at the Flood. A third dreadful curse rested upon it in consequence of sin. As the water began to subside, the hills and mountains were surrounded by a vast, turbid sea. Everywhere were strewn the dead bodies of men and beasts. The Lord would not permit these to remain to decompose and pollute the air, therefore He made of the earth a vast burial ground. A violent wind which was caused to blow for the purpose of drying up the waters, moved them with great force, in some instances even carrying away the tops of mountains and heaping up trees, rocks, and earth above the bodies of the dead. *Patriarchs and Prophets* 107.4-108.0.

Diet Changes

186. What did God expect Noah and his family to eat when they first came out of the ark? Did they have enough food stowed on the ark to supply their needs and the needs of the animals up to that point?
187. Why do you think God allowed them to eat meat at that point? Man was first given fruits, nuts, and grains; (Genesis 1:29-30) and then, after sin, they were given vegetables. (Genesis 3:18) After the flood, they were given everything except blood; (Genesis 9:3-4) and later, they were asked not to eat fat. (Leviticus 3:17)
188. What is the basic difference between the “clean” and “unclean” animals that were taken into the ark? Is there a scientifically verifiable difference between those types of creatures?
189. What change took place in the relationship between human beings and animals at that time? (Genesis 9:2) Why?
190. Read Genesis 9:4-6. What do you think is the meaning of *life is in the blood*? What does God intend for us to learn?
191. Why do you think God allowed human beings to eat meat following the flood? Was it because there was nothing else to eat? Or, was that an intentional plan by God to shorten the individual life-spans of human beings?
192. Why do you think God specifically forbade the eating of blood? Are there substances in the blood that should not be eaten? Today, what evidence do we have that God’s original diet is still the best?
193. Do you think there was a ceremonial reason why God forbade eating the blood? Or, was there a health reason? Or, both? (Look at Leviticus 17:11; Acts 15:20,29; 1 Peter 1:17-19.) Why do you suppose that common theme of not eating blood is mentioned throughout Scripture from just after the flood to the end of New Testament times? (Acts 15:28-29)
194. Why did God say: (Genesis 9:5-6, *GNB*) “⁵If anyone takes human life, he will be punished. I will punish with death any animal that takes a human life. ⁶Human beings were made like God, so whoever murders one of them will be killed by someone else.” Is that the earliest recitation of the law of retribution? (Exodus 21:4; Leviticus 24:7; Deuteronomy 19:21) Does

Genesis 9:5-6 impress you that God was trying to point out the sacredness of life? Who only can give life?

The First Covenant

195. Why do you think that people before the flood were not acquainted with the rainbow? What did God do to place a rainbow in the sky after the flood? It is interesting to note that in the Old Testament, there are three different symbols and only three that were used to represent a covenant: 1) The Sabbath (See, for example, Exodus 31:16.), 2) The rainbow (Genesis 9:13), and 3) Circumcision (Genesis 17:11).
196. What similarities do you see between the circumstances of giving the Sabbath covenant and the rainbow covenant?

The rainbow covenant not only points back to Creation week; it directs our attention forward to God's call of Abraham and the covenant that God makes with him. It ties the first 11 chapters of Genesis (often called the Primeval History) with the rest of the book. In both covenants God "establishes" them (*Genesis 9:9,11,17; compare Genesis 17:7,19,21*). The two covenants are eternal (*Genesis 9:16; compare Genesis 17:13,19*) and, as we have already seen, both have a sign (*Genesis 9:12,13,17; compare Genesis 17:11*). Also the Lord wants those with whom He made it to "remember" (*Genesis 9:15,16*) and to "keep" the covenant (*Genesis 17:9,10*). *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide for Genesis*, 2006, p. 69.

197. We see repeatedly in these stories that God has sought to communicate with human beings; but, we have had a hard time getting the message! Why do you think that is?

Sin Grows Again

198. Read Genesis 9:18-29. What are we supposed to learn from the story about Noah and his sons? What do you think actually happened to Noah in that story? Did he intentionally prepare alcoholic wine? What did Ham do? How do you understand Genesis 9:22?
199. Did Ham's behavior really result in the destruction of his descendants, the Canaanites? Was that fair? (See Exodus 20:4-6; 34:6-7; Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 2:33-34; 5:9-10; 7:9-10; 20:16-20; Joshua 10:40; contrast Ezekiel 18:20.)

Ham's descendants, especially the Canaanites, lived in the land which God had promised to Abraham. It was not God's goal to just wipe out one group of people so He could find a place for another group to live. The Canaanites had actually been very privileged in earlier years. God had sent His first missionary, Abraham, to them. Some of them were convinced and joined themselves to the household of Abraham. (Genesis 14:14) They were given 430 years to consider their relationship to *Yahweh*, and evidence suggests that their conduct just became more and more debased. *Yahweh* recognized that if He allowed the Israelites to live among such a people, they would very quickly destroy whatever good influence that He had been able to have on the Israelites.

If Israel had been truly converted as God had hoped, God Himself would have pushed back the Canaanites with the use of "hornets"; (Exodus 23:20-33) and as the Israelites settled into the land, they could have gradually won those "pagans" to the service of *Yahweh*. Of

course, that was out of the question after Israel demonstrated at Peor how quickly they could be perverted. (Numbers 25) So, God was left with the only possibility that had any chance of succeeding, and that was to give the Canaanites a fair trial and opportunity to learn of the truth. When the Canaanites had clearly rejected the truth, God asked the Israelites to annihilate them.

200. Why did Noah's curse fall on Canaan rather than on Ham? Does that teach us anything about heredity? Ham had a lot of other descendants besides Canaan. Does that mean that the curse that should have fallen on Ham did not affect them all but only affected Canaan? What do we know about the descendants of Canaan? Where were they, and what were they doing in the days of Moses? As Moses was writing the book of Genesis in the wilderness of Sinai or Midian, did he know any of those descendants of Canaan? What did he know about their religious practices?
201. Do you think the example of Noah corrupted his son Ham?
- The sin of Ham was not an unintentional transgression. He may have seen his father's shameful condition accidentally, but instead of being filled with sorrow over his father's folly, he rejoiced in what he saw and found delight in publishing it. *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 266.
202. Do those in responsible positions such as parents and church leaders have special responsibilities because they are examples to others?
203. Was God planning for the Israelites to commit genocide? There is a lot of debate and discussion and differences of opinion about capital punishment. Did God condone capital punishment? Does He today?
204. How long after the flood did it take before human beings had basically returned to the same sins that led to the destruction in the first place? Compare the Jewish exiles who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile! (Nehemiah 10,13)

The Tower of Babel

205. The story of the tower of Babel is the first of many stories in the Bible that suggest that God can get people's attention for a little while by a show of force or power; but, the results **never** last very long. The first inhabitants of Babylon built the tower of Babel not because they did not believe in God, but because they did not trust Him, and they were trying to escape His power! Often, in more modern times, we have suggested that if God would just step in and use His power to take charge of things, people would respect and reverence Him more. The story of the tower of Babel should teach us that the use of force never accomplishes what God wants most—freedom, love, and trust.
206. What are we supposed to learn from the story of Babel? What were the people of Babel trying to accomplish for themselves? Were they trying to make a name for themselves? Were they trying to set up leaders and an organization in opposition to God? Were they trying to protect themselves from another flood? Did they believe God's statement that He would not send another worldwide flood? Or, were they primarily trying to reach the clouds to determine where all that water had come from?
207. Read 2 Peter 3:1-12. Did Peter believe in the stories of Genesis? What was driving those scoffers in their beliefs and claims? How did Peter respond? What was he trying to say? Do you have any questions or doubts about the stories in Genesis 1-11?

208. What lessons do you think we should learn from the story of the flood which might be applicable in our day? Did they seem to learn any long-lasting lessons? What do we know about the tower of Babel from extra-biblical sources?
209. Try to put yourself into these stories. How do you think you would have responded before the flood? After the flood? At the tower of Babel? God is planning to destroy the earth once again; only, this time, it will be with fire. Are we getting ready?
210. Why did God direct that people should scatter throughout the earth and repopulate it? Does that imply that gathering together in one location to form communities and cities naturally promotes sin? Is the world today symbolically building another tower of Babel? Are we attempting to build several of them? What aspects of scientific advancement have led to confusion and misunderstanding and led some to set aside the biblical record?
211. We have now completed review of the period of prehistory. Beginning with the story of Abraham, we will talk about events which can be documented or for which parallels can be found in archaeology, etc. Are you comfortable with the biblical account of prehistory? How would you like it to be different? Why do you think God did not give more detail? Approximately one-half, or perhaps even more, of this earth's history is included in these first 11 chapters of Genesis! How much do you think Moses actually knew about that time period?

Why Does God Wait?

212. In light of the flood, what does it say about God that He continues to wait now? Does it bother us that He continues to wait, especially for the last 170 years since we have been announcing His soon return? (Compare Jonah and Esther.)

See the handout: "**The Reason for the Delay.**" In the emergency crisis just before the flood, God had to do something to avoid complete loss of His contact with this planet. In our day, God is waiting for a group who will take Him seriously enough to prepare themselves and others to stand through the very difficult final events of this world's history. God is not waiting for some distant time that He has set as the right time to come. He is waiting until He can safely allow the Devil to carry out his last attack on God's true people, knowing that they can stand up under that attack. (2 Peter 3:10-12) As soon as God has a people who are so "settled into the truth" or "sealed" with God's seal that they cannot be moved no matter what the Devil does to them, God will allow the final events to happen.

Learning to Think Like God - And Like Satan

God's Arguments

To Adam and Eve, God essentially said:

1. I am your best Friend. I want nothing but the very best for you. Look what I have made for you. Your goal is to become like Me in character.
2. If you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the results will be terrible.
3. If you do eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you will have to leave the Garden of Eden because I cannot allow sin to be perpetuated.

To Noah, God essentially said:

4. People have become so evil that I must destroy them from off the earth; or else, within a few more years, I will lose contact with the human race completely as no one will be listening to Me.

After the angels had suggested that God should just punish or get rid of all those evil people, God essentially said to the onlooking universe:

5. Watch what happens when I destroy almost the whole world. Will people take Me seriously and straighten up their lives from thenceforth? No! Their rebellion just spreads as they build a tower to defy Me. In order to have any chance of influencing people to do what is right because it is right, I must scatter them over the face of the earth, away from each other so they will not be so inclined to follow each other in sin.

Satan's Arguments

To Adam and Eve, Satan essentially said:

1. God is lying to you.
2. If you want to be like God, eat of this tree so you will, like God, know good and evil.

To the onlooking universe, Satan essentially said:

3. Just as I suggested earlier in heaven, God is not loving. He is an exacting, vengeful tyrant. Adam and Eve got thrown out of the Garden of Eden on their first offense.
4. I will prove that I can be like God, not in character but in power and authority. This world is now mine.

To the onlooking universe about Noah and the time of the flood, Satan essentially said:

5. If God would just stay out of things, I would be able to prove what I claimed earlier that given a true choice, everyone would do things my way. (Is that the selfish way?) (DA 37.2)
6. God destroyed all of my followers in the flood. I told you He was a tyrant.
7. I will be able to work just as well with Noah's descendants. We will prove who is "boss," at least here on this earth.

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