

Beginnings and Belongings

The Early Earth

Lesson #3 for October 21, 2006

Scriptures: Genesis 2.

1. Why do you think Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 are so different? Are these two different creation accounts from different authors? What do we learn from Genesis 2 that we did not get from Genesis 1?
2. Could we understand the events portrayed in Genesis 3 without Genesis 2?
3. There are two very important but controversial verses in Genesis 2: Genesis 2:7 and Genesis 2:17. What do you learn from these verses? What do they mean to you?
4. How do you picture the Garden of Eden in your mind? We have very little information about the garden but sometimes we refer to it as paradise. Why do you suppose God chose to place our first parents in such a garden?
5. 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? Did God create us here on earth, at least partially, in response to Satan’s accusations in the war? What aspects of creation do you see helping to answer some of Satan’s accusations?
6. Read Genesis 1 and 2. What institutions or customs do we have remaining that were established before the entry of sin into this planet?
7. 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; 1BC 1082.3; compare DA 421.4)

8. Review Genesis 1-2:3. Notice the progression in God’s work. Why did God “rest” after creating our earth? Was he tired from expending an enormous amount of energy in creating? Or did he rest because he was so happy with the results? The Hebrew word means “finished” or “completed” such as we might say a lawyer “rests his case.”
9. **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 it, each time we celebrate the Sabbath?**
10. Try to describe in your own words the work, duties and privileges that Adam and Eve enjoyed in the garden. Was there anything unpleasant about their activities?
11. 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? (Genesis 3:18; 9:3,4) Why were these additions made?
12. 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.

What do you think was different about these 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 for the tree of life? The Bible seems to imply that if a person can eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and continue to do so, he/she can live forever. What quality about this 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? Or did it merely represent a change in relationship?

13. Ellen White repeatedly suggests 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? (*RH* Feb. 24, 1874; *TA* 62.3; *2Red* 13.1)
14. 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)
15. 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.
16. 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 this is? What subsequent, very important events helped to bring additional meaning to the seventh-day Sabbath?
17. Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15. Did Moses forget the reasons for the Sabbath? Do the events of the exodus and the giving of the 10 commandments at that time add anything of importance to your understanding of the Sabbath?
18. What do the events of crucifixion week and crucifixion weekend, 1400 years later, add to our understanding of the importance and significance of the Sabbath?
19. What other interesting events are mentioned as occurring specifically on the Sabbath down through the Old and New Testament? Read Joshua 6:1-5. Is the seventh day mentioned in Joshua 6:4 the Sabbath?
20. After Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel of Israel, usurped control of Judah when her son died, she exercised the right of Queen for some 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 this sound like a Sabbath-day's activity?
21. 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) 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)
22. Eighty or ninety years after returning to Jerusalem, the Jews had fallen into doing ordinary business on the Sabbath day and Nehemiah took some very brisk and determined steps to stop the breaking of the Sabbath by merchants wanting to do business! (Nehemiah 13:15-22)
23. Jesus warned his disciples about the difficulties of fleeing on the Sabbath day when Jerusalem would be surrounded by Roman armies. (Matthew 24:20)

24. Jesus himself apparently kept the Sabbath throughout his life. (Luke 4:16) Why do you think that virtually all of the 10 Commandments are repeated in the New Testament except the commandment to observe the Sabbath?
25. Read Genesis 2:7. Compare some more traditional translations, like the *King James* or the *RSV*, 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 this 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”?
26. **Can a “soul” sin? (Ezekiel 18:4). Is the “soul” immortal in any sense? (Matthew 10:28; 1 Timothy 6:16)**
27. 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? *The Great Controversy* 536 (1888); *4SP* 356 (1884)
28. Read Genesis 2:10-14. Do these verses imply that Adam and Eve ventured outside the garden to some of these other locations? How long do you think Adam and Eve lived in the garden?
29. 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?
30. 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?
31. Did Adam and Eve ever need sleep? If so, what did they sleep on?
32. Genesis 2 goes to some length in describing the creation of Adam, and later the creation of Eve. Why do you think this is? Why do you think Eve was made from a rib while Adam was made from the clay of the ground?
33. Were Adam and Eve originally created to be equal? What is implied by the expression “a companion suitable to him”?
34. Apparently, at the time of the fall, Adam was given authority over Eve. (Genesis 3:16) Why do you think this was? What has been the result of this change down through the generations? 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 from Adam, every person from that day until this has been taken out of women. Does the fact that Eve was taken out of Adam make her in any way inferior?
35. **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?**
36. 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?

37. 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?

© 2006 Kenneth Hart M. D. ***Permission is hereby granted for any non-commercial use of these materials. Free distribution is encouraged. It is our goal to see them spread as widely and freely as possible. If you would like to use them for your class or even make copies of portions of them, feel free to do so. We always enjoy hearing about how you might be using the materials and we might even want to share good ideas with others, so let us know.*** Info@theox.org

Last modified: September 2, 2006

C:\My Documents\WP\SSSTG-Hart\Genesis\SS-Genesis-3-2006-10-21.wpd

“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.” {GC 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 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. {GC 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 briars 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}