

Allusions, Images, and Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy

The Genesis Foundation

Lesson #2 for April 12, 2025

Scriptures: Isaiah 40:7-8; Genesis 22:1-13; John 1:29; 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:15-19; Revelation 5:5-10; 12:1-9.

1. Is the book of Genesis really the foundation for studying Bible prophecy?

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] Genesis, the first book of the Bible, **contains foundational truths that encompass the core of Scripture's salvific and prophetic message.** From the cosmic story of **Creation** (*Genesis 1 and 2*), in which God turned the chaos and void into life, to the story of **Joseph**, in which God wrought a redemptive outcome from evil actions (*Gen. 50:20*), the book of Genesis testifies to God's plan of salvation. **In the middle of Genesis, the story of the binding of Isaac (*Gen. 22:1–18*) lays down the basic themes of this divine plan.**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 26.†§

2. In this lesson we will see some connections through the language in the Hebrew. This is especially true of early events in the book of Genesis, particularly Genesis 22 and the Day of Atonement as given to them in Egypt and practiced by the children of Israel, and the sacrifice of Christ as a fulfillment of the sacrifice of the typical Lamb. The authors of the Bible study guide repeatedly emphasize that **the binding of Isaac**, described in Genesis 22, and the substitution of the ram in his place as the sacrifice is a central theme in the great controversy, akin to the story of Jesus. Ellen White did say that encounter was the point in history when many of the unfallen angels much more fully understood the plan of salvation. (See *Patriarchs and Prophets* pages 154-155 as quoted in Item #13 below.)
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3. It was common in the days of Jesus for people to memorize large sections of Scripture. This is partly true because written copies were very difficult to reproduce and were very expensive. As a result of the memorization, it was expected that when one spoke to someone else about the Scriptures, s/he would have at least portions if not large portions of what we call *the Old Testament* clearly in mind. It was assumed that from attending the synagogues that virtually everyone would have a fairly good knowledge of the history recorded in the Old Testament as well as the images and symbols used in Scripture. **The religious leaders of Jesus's day thought that they earned salvation by memorizing Scripture.**
4. We also need to keep in mind that the great controversy over God's character and government focuses on three main events in Scripture: (1) The fall in the Garden of Eden; (2) The victory through Christ with His: (a) Suffering and death, (b) Resurrection, and (c) Ascension to heaven; and (3) The final conclusion which includes: (a) The second coming, (b) The millennium, and (c) The third coming resulting in the complete elimination of evil.
5. Living in an age in which almost everyone and everything are controlled by clocks and schedules, we are accustomed to thinking that one thing happens, and then, another thing happens, and then, yet another thing happens with the second and third occurrences being at least somewhat based on the first. This is sometimes called the *law of first mention*. It is really a principle or a pattern that can be seen in many parts of Scripture.

6. God frequently has chosen to give us key pieces of information a little at a time. First some information and then, later, He adds more, and yet later, He adds still more. An excellent example of this is the fact that Adam and Eve were given the Sabbath in the Garden of Eden. It was then repeated to Moses and the Israelites in the Ten Commandments given at Mount Sinai. It was later repeated frequently by prophets, especially Isaiah. Jesus emphasized it by the many miracles that He performed on the Sabbath during His lifetime and with what He taught as a result. Also, Isaiah tells us that the Sabbath will be kept even in the new earth.
7. Through all this time and under widely varying circumstances, God remained/remains unchanging and reliable, yesterday, today, and forever. (See Isaiah 40:7-8; Malachi 3:6; and Hebrews 13:8.)
8. Notice what Ellen White wrote in *The Great Controversy* about the final end of sin and the restoration of all things faithful and true to God.

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean.** One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, **declare that God is love.**—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 678.3.†

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9. Now, let us consider what the authors of the Bible study guide seem to think is a central event in prophecy and the great controversy: The experience of Abraham and Isaac and Isaac's "binding" on the alter for the sacrifice as recorded in Genesis 22.

Genesis 22:1-14: ¹Some time later **God tested Abraham**; he called to him, "Abraham!" And Abraham answered, "Yes, here I am!"

² "Take your son," God said, "your only son, Isaac, whom you **love** so much, and go to the land of Moriah. There on a mountain that I will show you, **offer him as a sacrifice to me.**"...

⁴On the third day Abraham saw the place in the distance. ⁵Then he said to the servants, "Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there and worship, and then **we will come back** to you."

⁶ Abraham made Isaac carry the wood for the sacrifice, and he himself carried a knife and live coals for starting the fire. As they walked along together, ⁷Isaac said, "Father!"

He answered, "Yes, my son?"

Isaac asked, "I see that you have the coals and the wood, but **where is the lamb for the sacrifice?**"

⁸ Abraham answered, "**God himself will provide one.**" And the two of them walked on together.

⁹ When they came to the place which God had told him about, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. **He tied up his son and placed him on the altar**, on top of the wood. ¹⁰Then he picked up the knife to kill him. ¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!"

He answered, “Yes, here I am.”

¹² “Don’t hurt the boy or do anything to him,” he said. “Now I know that you honour [*sic-Br*] and obey God, because you have not kept back your only son from him.”

¹³ Abraham looked round and **saw a ram** caught in a bush by its horns. He went and got it and offered it as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴Abraham named that place “The LORD Provides”. [*sic*] And even today people say, “On the LORD’s mountain he provides.”—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Genesis 22:1-14). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].[†]

10. Ellen White told us that Abraham did not sleep for the three days it took them to reach Mount Moriah. He pleaded with God, trying to understand the reason for this mission. **Abraham finally concluded that God was able either to raise his son back to life or to provide a substitute.** He concluded that partially because he knew that God had already promised that his descendants would be through the line of Isaac.

Hebrews 11:19: Abraham reckoned that God was able to raise Isaac from death — and, so to speak, Abraham did receive Isaac back from death.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

11. Look again at portions of Genesis 22.

Genesis 22:2-16: ² “Take your son,” God said, “your only son, Isaac, whom you love so much, and go to the land of Moriah. There on a mountain that I will show you, offer him as a sacrifice to me.”...

¹² “Don’t hurt the boy or do anything to him,” he said. “Now I know that you honour [*sic-Br*] and obey God, because you have not kept back your only son from him.”...

¹⁶ “I make a vow by my own name — the LORD is speaking — that I will richly bless you. Because you did this and did not keep back your only son from me.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

12. Do you think that Isaac had even the faintest idea that he would be the one to be offered?
13. Ellen White had some very important words to say about this experience of **Abraham and Isaac as well as references to God the Father and Jesus.**

[EGW:] It was to impress Abraham’s mind with the reality of the gospel, as well as to test his faith, that God commanded him to slay his son. The agony which he endured during the dark days of that fearful trial was permitted that he might understand from his own experience something of the greatness of the sacrifice made by the infinite God for man’s redemption. No other test could have caused Abraham such torture of soul as did the offering of his son. God gave His Son to a death of agony and shame. The angels who witnessed the humiliation and soul anguish of the Son of God were not permitted to interpose, as in the case of Isaac. There was no voice to cry, “It is enough.” To save the fallen race, the King of glory yielded up His life. ***What stronger proof can be given of the infinite compassion and love of God?*** “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32.

The sacrifice required of Abraham was not alone for his own good, nor solely for the benefit of succeeding generations; but *it was also for the instruction of the sinless intelligences of heaven and of other worlds*. The field of the controversy between Christ and Satan—the field on which the plan of redemption is wrought out—is the lesson book of the universe. Because Abraham had shown a lack of faith in God’s promises, Satan had accused him before the angels [Satan also accused Job before God and the heavenly beings.] and before God of having failed to comply with the conditions of the covenant, and as unworthy of its blessings. [Like in the experiences of Job,] **God desired to prove the loyalty of His servant before all heaven, to demonstrate that nothing less than perfect obedience can be accepted, and to open more fully before them the plan of salvation.**

Heavenly beings were witnesses of the scene as the faith of Abraham and the submission of Isaac were tested. *The trial was far more severe than that which had been brought upon Adam*. Compliance with the prohibition laid upon our first parents involved no suffering, but the command to Abraham demanded the most agonizing sacrifice. All heaven beheld with wonder and admiration Abraham’s unflinching obedience. All heaven applauded his fidelity. **Satan’s accusations were shown to be false**. God declared to His servant, “Now I know that thou fearest God [notwithstanding Satan’s charges], seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me.” God’s covenant, confirmed to Abraham by an oath before the intelligences of other worlds, testified that obedience will be rewarded.

It had been difficult even for the angels to grasp the mystery of redemption—to comprehend that the Commander of heaven, the Son of God, must die for guilty man. When the command was given to Abraham to offer up his son, the interest of all heavenly beings was enlisted. With intense earnestness they watched each step in the fulfillment of this command. When to Isaac’s question, “Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Abraham made answer, “God will provide Himself a lamb;” and when the father’s hand was stayed as he was about to slay his son, and the ram which God had provided was offered in the place of Isaac—**then light was shed upon the mystery of redemption, and even the angels understood more clearly the wonderful provision that God had made for man’s salvation**. 1 Peter 1:12. *Patriarchs and Prophets** 154.2-155.2. †‡Ω [Italic type is added for emphasis.] †

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14. So, the experience of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah helped the onlooking universe to better understand the great controversy over God’s character and government and the plan of salvation. Do you think either of Abraham or Isaac knew there was symbolism regarding Christ’s death and the great controversy?
15. There are **several “side stories”** to Abraham and Isaac which the Bible study guide pursues including: 1) The word *lamb* and that a ram, not a lamb, was the sacrifice and the connections with the Day of Atonement; 2) Jesus as our substitute *Lamb*; 3) The use of *the Lamb* in Revelation; 4) The word *love* and idea of *love* in the Bible; 5) Death as the result of separation from God; 6) Satan and false worship; and 7) The mention of the story of Joseph.

16. With regards to *lamb*:

[BSG:] Isaac expected a lamb to be provided by God. Yet, a ram appeared instead: “Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there . . . was a ram” (*Gen. 22:13, NKJV*). The appearance of the ram points to the ram of the Day of Atonement (*Lev. 16:3, 6*). There is indeed a unique intertextual connection between this passage of the sacrifice of Isaac and the text of the Day of Atonement. More than any other biblical passage, the text of the binding of Isaac shares common language with the text of the Day of Atonement. We find the same association of the words *’olah*, “burnt offering” (*Gen. 22:13; compare with Lev. 16:3, 5, NKJV*); *ra’ah*, “appear,” in the same passive form *niphal* (*Gen. 22:14; compare with Lev. 16:2, NKJV*); and *yiqqakh*, “he took” (*Gen. 22:13; compare with Lev. 16:5, NKJV*). **This important intertextual connection between the two passages indicates that the writer of the legislation of the Day of Atonement, in Leviticus 16 [Moses wrote Leviticus], had the text of the sacrifice of Isaac in mind.**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 28.^{†‡§} [Is that similarity in words used due to the limited ancient Hebrew vocabulary which is about 1% as large as English?][‡]

17. Can we assume that God inspired Moses to connect these events?

[BSG:] The first mention of a *seh* (lamb) in the Bible comes in the form of Isaac’s question: “Where is the lamb?” (*Gen. 22:7*). Interestingly enough, the rest of the Bible answers that question in great detail. The other 38 books of the Old Testament lead the reader along a path where Isaac’s question is progressively answered with more and more details, from the Passover rituals to David’s early occupation and onward. **The entire story is punctuated with countless Messianic prophecies that anticipate the answer to Isaac’s question. Then in the New Testament, the question is answered when Jesus appears in flesh and blood, ministers among His people, and finally sacrifices His life at the cross.**—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, April 8.^{†‡§} [The Lamb which God provided was His Son.][‡]

18. Dropping down in history to the time of the exodus from Egypt, we read in Exodus 12:

Exodus 12:3-13: [The LORD said:]³ “Give these instructions to the whole community of Israel: on the tenth day of this month each man must choose either a lamb or a young goat for his household. ⁴If his family is too small to eat a whole animal, he and his next-door neighbour [*sic-Br*] may share an animal, in proportion to the number of people and the amount that each person can eat. ⁵You may choose either a sheep or a goat, but it must be a one-year-old male without any defects. ⁶Then, on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, the whole community of Israel will kill the animals. ⁷The people are to take some of the blood and put it on the doorposts and above the doors of the houses in which the animals are to be eaten. ⁸That night the meat is to be roasted, and eaten with bitter herbs and with bread made without yeast. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled, but **eat it roasted whole**, including the head, the legs, and the internal organs. ¹⁰You must not leave any of it until morning; if any is left over, it must be burnt [*sic-Br*]. ¹¹You are to eat it quickly, for you are to be dressed for travel, with your sandals on your feet and your stick in your hand. It is the Passover Festival to honour [*sic-Br*] me, the LORD. [Did Jesus and His

disciples do this?]

¹² “On that night I will go through the land of Egypt, killing every firstborn male, both human and animal, and **punishing all the gods of Egypt**. I am the LORD.

¹³The blood on the doorposts will be a sign to mark the houses in which you live. When I see the blood, I will pass over you and will not harm you when I punish the Egyptians.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*††} [Was God’s purpose for the plagues in Egypt to be “punishing all the gods of Egypt”? Or, to let the “slave-nation” know that their God was powerful? Or, to get Pharaoh to let Israel go? Or, all of these? And more?][†]

19. In the context of the Passover festival, the Lamb roasted eaten with bitter herbs was a symbol of their release from “prison” and gaining their freedom. God had promised to pass over their houses when He struck the firstborn in Egypt.

[BSG:] **God’s promised blessing concerns not only the future descendants of Abraham himself but also concerns the future of the nations. The Lord promises that Abraham’s seed will “possess the gate of their enemies” (NKJV). This promise refers to the victory of Christ over the serpent and the victory of life over death, which is predicted in Genesis 3:15. The story of the binding of Isaac leads, then, to the ultimate atonement for God’s people during the eschatological Day of Atonement (compare with Dan. 8:14).—Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* 29.††§**

20. **Turning to the application of this experience of Abraham and Isaac to the life of Jesus:** One of the first scenes in the ministry of Jesus was when He appeared beside the Jordan River and John the Baptist called Him the *Lamb of God*. Lambs had been used for hundreds of years as the sacrifices required at the temple in Jerusalem.

[BSG:] The fact that the word “lamb” is used by John in his Gospel (*John 1:29, 36*), and especially in his apocalypse [Revelation] (23 times), in the definite sense as “the lamb,” suggests that John is alluding to “the lamb” of Isaac’s question, “ ‘Where is the lamb?’ ” (*Gen. 22:7*). This intertextual relation allows us to surmise that “the lamb” of Isaac refers to the Son of God, as understood by John. This interpretation is, in fact, confirmed in Abraham’s response to Isaac’s question: “ ‘God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering’ ” (*Gen. 22:8, NKJV*).—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* 27-28.†§* [It was not the ram that God provided that was important; it was the Lamb!][†]

21. Notice again this interesting wording in Genesis 22:7-8.

Genesis 22:7-8: ⁷ Isaac said, “Father!”

He answered, “Yes, my son?”

Isaac asked, “I see that you have the coals and the wood, but where is the lamb for the sacrifice?”

⁸ Abraham answered, “**God himself will provide one.**” And the two of them walked on together.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

22. Did either Abraham or Isaac envision that experience as a symbol of Jesus and His death?
23. Let us turn to the New Testament.

John 1:29-34: ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, “There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.’ ³¹I did not know who he would be, but I came baptizing with water in order to make him known to the people of Israel.”

³² And John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. ³³I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, had said to me, ‘You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴I have seen it,” said John, “and I tell you that he is the Son of God.”—*Good News Bible*.*

24. While God provided a ram caught in the thicket to take the place of Isaac, no such substitute was found for Jesus.
25. So, why was it so important for Jesus to die in order to answer the questions that had been raised by Isaac so many years before? The real question was raised in **Genesis 2:17!**
26. Jesus is our Substitute only in the sense that He died so that we do **not** have to die the death that is the result of sin which causes separation from God, the only Source of life.
27. If Jesus died as our Substitute, does He also take our place in the judgment?

Zechariah 3:1-4: ¹ In another vision the LORD showed me the High Priest Joshua standing before the angel of the LORD. And there **beside Joshua stood Satan, ready to bring an accusation against him.** ²The angel of the LORD said to Satan, “May the LORD condemn you, Satan! May the LORD, who loves Jerusalem, condemn you. This man is like a stick snatched from the fire.”

³ Joshua was standing there, wearing filthy clothes. ⁴The angel said to his heavenly attendants, “Take away the filthy clothes this man is wearing.” Then he said to Joshua, “I have taken away your sin and will give you new clothes to wear.”—*Good News Bible*.*† [Who has the authority to “take away sins”?]‡

28. **In the book of Revelation**, we also find Jesus referred to as a *Lamb*.

Revelation 5:5-9: ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, “Don’t cry. Look! The **Lion from Judah’s tribe**, the great descendant of David, has won the victory, and he can break the seven seals and open the scroll.”

⁶ Then I saw a **Lamb** standing in the centre [*sic-Br*] of the throne, surrounded by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb appeared to have been killed [*viciously slaughtered*]. It had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that have been sent throughout the whole earth. ⁷The Lamb went and took the scroll from the right-hand of the one who sits on the throne. ⁸As he did so, the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the Lamb. Each had a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of God’s people. ⁹They sang a new song:

“You are worthy to take the scroll
and to break open its seals.”—*Good News Bible*.*†‡

29. Now we **turn to discuss the word love** and its application to God. Just as God is faithful and reliable and does not change in His basic core aspects, when He speaks, He speaks the

truth. That truth will be reliable as well. Unfortunately, the entrance of sin has resulted in many changes in our perceptions of truth. An excellent example of that is in understanding the word *love*. **To God, love is self-sacrificing service to others. To many humans in our day, love is a way to gratify their self-fulfillment.** This makes it hard for us to understand some things that God has said to us.

30. Let us notice that the very first mention in the Bible of the word or idea of *love* is found in Genesis 22:2, referring to Abraham's love for his son. What could Abraham's love for his unique son teach us about the idea of *love*?

31. Notice the first mention of *love* in each of the Gospels.

Matthew 3:17: Then a voice said from heaven, "This is my own dear [beloved] Son, with whom I am pleased."—*Good News Bible*.*†

Mark 1:11: And a voice came from heaven, "You are my own dear [beloved] Son. I am pleased with you."—*Good News Bible*.*†

Luke 3:22: And the Holy Spirit came down upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my own dear [beloved] Son. I am pleased with you."—*Good News Bible*.*†

John 3:16: "For God **loved** the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life."—*Good News Bible*.*†

32. Reviewing the ministry of Jesus Christ, we know that God's love was demonstrated by His willingness to give His Son (John 3:16) and also the willingness of the Son to be sacrificed in the most horrible, unfair, cruel way. He was willing to do that for us.

33. In our day, how often do we see true, self-sacrificing love manifested by human beings? Are we accustomed to manifesting that kind of love in our own lives?

34. **Turning to sin and the death that results**, we read in Genesis 2:15-17 that God told us what would happen if our ancestors sinned: **They would die.**

Genesis 2:15-17: ¹⁵ Then the LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it. ¹⁶He said to him, "You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, ¹⁷except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day [or, you will certainly die]."—*Good News Bible*.*†

35. Unfortunately, death found its way into the human family when Cain killed Abel. Later, Paul told us how important the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ are to our beliefs.

1 Corinthians 15:15-19: ¹⁵ More than that, we are shown to be lying about God, because we said that he raised Christ from death — but if it is true that the dead are not raised to life, then he did not raise Christ. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is a delusion and you are still lost in your sins. ¹⁸It would also mean that the believers in Christ who have died are lost. ¹⁹If our hope in Christ is good for this life only and no more, then we deserve more pity than anyone else in all the world.—*Good News Bible*.*

36. John picked up that theme in Revelation 1:18.

Revelation 1:18: "I am the living one! I was dead, but now I am alive for ever [sic-Br]

and ever.”—*Good News Bible*.*†

37. Let us note from these two passages that, contrary to what is often stated, **death is not just a part of life. Death is the opposite of life.** However, while we think that life ends with our few years on this earth, God’s plan is for us to live forever. The period of time from the moment when we die until we are raised at the second or third coming is just a brief sleep as far as our consciousness is concerned and as far as God is concerned.
38. Thus, God has solved the problem of death. However, it is important for us to remember that it was God’s plan to have all of us living forever in the expanded Garden of Eden!
39. **Turning to Satan and his desire to be worshiped:** Satan has always wanted to take God’s place. Satan wants to be worshiped.

[BSG:] The issue of worship is a key subject in the book of Revelation. The perpetrator and enabler of false systems of worship is identified as the “dragon” (*Rev. 13:2–4*), and the serpentine description of this fallen cherub is no accident. It clearly points us back to the Garden of Eden, where a serpent entered Paradise and persuaded Adam and Eve to follow him into rebellion against the Creator.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, April 10.†§

Revelation 13:2-4: ² The beast looked like a leopard, with feet like a bear’s feet and a mouth like a lion’s mouth. The **dragon** gave the beast his own power, his throne, and his vast authority. ³One of the heads of the beast seemed to have been fatally wounded, but the wound had healed. The whole earth was amazed and followed the beast. ⁴**Everyone worshipped [sic-Br] the dragon** because he had given his authority to the beast. **They worshipped [sic-Br] the beast also, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who can fight against it?”**—*Good News Bible*.*††

40. What could possibly cause the whole world to worship the dragon (Satan)? Or, his beast-associate? We need to remember that Satan’s *modus operandi* is selfishness; God’s is love. Which is more prevalent in the world today? Selfishness? Or, love?
41. The Bible identifies Satan as the *Devil*, the *dragon*, the *serpent*, and *that ancient snake*!
42. What parallels are there between Genesis 3:1-5 and Revelation 12:1-9?

[BSG:] There are two accounts in the Scriptures in which Satan leads the whole world astray. In Genesis, at a moment when there were only two people in existence; and then in the account given in Revelation 12 and 13, in which Satan is identified as the one who “deceives the whole world” (*Rev. 12:9*) and as the one who enables the sea beast power so that “all the world” marvels and follows it (*Rev. 13:2, 3*). One of the themes found in Bible prophecy is the unchanging nature of the great controversy. God’s character and Word do not change, and neither do the ambitions of the devil.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, April 10.†§

43. In all of this, we can see that Satan is very intelligent. He will try to tempt us when he thinks his chances are best to deceive and destroy. Think of Jesus in the wilderness.
44. God also acts when things are looking bad for His side. Think of the flood when He almost lost contact with humanity as well as the sending of Jesus “at the right time.” (Galatians 4:4)

45. We have seen that God will be reliable, trustworthy, and changeless. Satan uses as many tricks as he can possibly imagine. He will use every deceit and lie. We know what he will do.
46. Remember that the great controversy is a contest between truth and lies!

[BSG:] **Many world religions simply deal with ideas; in powerful contrast, the ideas found in the Christian religion are anchored firmly in historical events. The Bible is the story of God's interacting with humanity throughout history, and by studying thousands of years of such interactions, we can learn much about the consistent character of God....**

The fact that our message is unchanging and consistent, however, does not mean that it is simplistic or unchallenging. Quite the opposite: when you are studying information relayed to us from the mind of an infinite God, you quickly discover that you will never reach the end of a subject.—Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for Friday, April 11.†‡

[EGW:] But after a time the zeal of the believers began to wane, and their love for God and for one another grew less. Coldness crept into the church. Some forgot the wonderful manner in which they had received the truth. One by one the old standard-bearers fell at their post. **Some of the younger workers, who might have shared the burdens of these pioneers, and thus have been prepared for wise leadership, had become weary of oft-repeated truths. In their desire for something novel and startling they attempted to introduce new phases of doctrine, more pleasing to many minds, but not in harmony with the fundamental principles of the gospel.** In their self-confidence and spiritual blindness, they failed to discern that these sophistries would cause many to question the experience of the past, and would thus lead to confusion and unbelief.—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles** 580.1.†‡

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47. We know what happened in the story of Abraham and Isaac on the trip to Mount Moriah. Another amazing story is that of Joseph and his brothers. Considering how it started out and ending with Genesis 50:20, Joseph was a benefit to all people.

Genesis 50:20: “You plotted evil against me, but God turned it into good, in order to preserve the lives of many people who are alive today because of what happened.”—*Good News Bible*.*

48. Scholars have looked at the book of Revelation and believe that there are 600-1,000 references or inferences taken from the Old Testament in those 22 chapters. In this lesson we have studied some major concepts that link Revelation to the Old Testament. We have noticed some special nuances in the text which could lead to important lessons about our human nature, God and His government, and the conflict that we call the great controversy over God's character and government, that is: **Can God really be trusted?**

49. God, in the book of Genesis, introduced many of the most important ideas to be followed and expanded throughout Scripture all the way to the book of Revelation.

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Last Modified: March 16, 2025

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