

# Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

## Fourth Quarter 2020: *Education*

### Lesson 1 “Education *in the Garden of Eden*”

#### Read for this week’s study

Genesis 2:7–23; Genesis 3:1–6; 2 Peter 1:3–11; 2 Peter 2:1–17; Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24.

#### Memory Text

“Behold, God is exalted by His power; who teaches like Him?” (Job 36:22, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The First School
- III. Intrusion
- IV. Missing the Message
- V. Regaining What Was Lost
- VI. The Despisers of Authority
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Proverbs 9:10 and John 1:9. What are the implications of these texts for true education? Read 1 John 4:8. Ellen White uses this text, among others, to argue that “Love . . . is the basis of true education” (*Education*, 16). If God, then, is love, what is the purpose of law (rules and more rules) in God’s exercise of that love? (Introduction for the Quarter)
2. Read Job 36:22. If God is the greatest teacher, the Garden of Eden must have been a school. But what went wrong that the first students failed to live out what they had been taught? How can we learn from the greatest teacher when we don’t even have the face to face contact that they did? (Sabbath afternoon)
3. Read Genesis 2:7-23. What can we learn about God’s ways and His purposes from the preparations He made for Adam and Eve’s garden home in these texts? What can we learn about God and human existence from nature and science alone? How does the Bible clarify and expand on what we can learn from nature and science alone? (Sabbath afternoon)

4. Read Genesis 3:1-6. What do these texts imply about human freedom? What do they imply about the quality of Eve's work as a student? What is the serpent's goal in the way he approaches Eve? How does Eve come to regard the tree of knowledge of good and evil after listening to the serpent? How would you contrast the character of the serpent with the character of God as implied in Genesis 1-3? (Monday's Lesson)
5. Read Genesis 3:4-6. Besides directly denying what God had said, what else did the serpent say that succeeded with Eve? What principles did he take advantage of? (Tuesday's Lesson)
6. The lesson speaks about the consequence of Adam and Eve's sin as "banishment from God's classroom" (the Garden of Eden). Do you think "banishment" is the right word to express what the text says in Genesis 3:22-24? Read 2 Peter 1:3-11. In light of all that was lost when human beings left the garden, these verses encourage us that much can be regained. How do these verses describe the process of restoring God's image in our lives? The tree of knowledge of good and evil tells us that not all knowledge is good. How do we know the difference between good and bad knowledge? (Wednesday's Lesson)
7. Read 2 Peter 2:1-17. What kind of context would draw out such language? What hope is promised in the midst of the condemnation? Where did Peter get the authority to talk like that? What is the basis of divine authority? (Thursday's Lesson)
8. In the Garden work was intimately connected with Adam and Eve's relationship with God. How can we become better acquainted with God through our work today? (Friday's Lesson)
9. Adam and Eve were face to face with God and still accepted the serpent's half-truths. How can we, without such close physical proximity to God, resist Satan's deceptions? (Friday's Lesson)
10. How can authority be abused and how should we respond when it is? (Friday's Lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Have you ever watched a hummingbird? What do you think of a God who would make that little creature? And those colors?—they're incredible! Once in awhile, when our children were still small, a bird would build a nest near a window where we could see. That's the most marvelous thing to watch! And then the little eggs. I've always been fascinated by birds' eggs. And the way the mother looks after them. Of course, then like as not a scrub jay would come and steal the eggs or a cat would catch the bird. Well, that's also part of the scene.

But think of a God who would create the hummingbird to come and get nectar from the bird of paradise. We had some that bloomed right outside our breakfast window. And you know how

they open? Absolutely marvelous! Their color, and then the little blue part, and then the next section, and another blue part. Did you ever try to pull one of those open prematurely? They just don't go right, do they? And yet when they're ready, the case opens just enough to let the next section out. Do you see God engineering that? Ah, it speaks marvelously of our God.

The most wonderful thing he ever made on our planet is celebrated in Song of Solomon. You know how religion tends to be so legalistic, so demanding. Is it not true that on this planet we have tended to think of people who withdraw, separate themselves, live lives of total self-denial and denial of everything that's really pleasant, that they are the *truly* spiritual folk? No, that's not the way God designed it. Why make heaven beautiful if there aren't people who enjoy things that are beautiful? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon, recorded January 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/31MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/32MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

I wonder if tonight we could think back in imagination to the very dramatic events of that first week of this earth's history. The war had begun already up in Heaven. Satan had already leveled his charges and his accusations. One-third of the angels had already agreed with him that God is not worthy of our love and our trust.

Right in the middle of that devastating crisis, God invites his family to watch him as he creates yet another world, this time ours. How easily he could have created our world with a snap of his fingers, in just an instant of time. But in the dramatic and significant setting of the Great Controversy, he chose, this time, to do it in six twenty-four hour days. On the first day, all he said was, "Let there be light." That's all. And then day two, three, four, and five, as God in unhurried majesty and drama unfolded his plans for our earth. By the sixth day, what a beautiful place this was. Where now were Satan's charges that God was selfish?

I mean, look at the freedom. He created us in his own image with power to think and to do. And we know from human history that he created us free to either love and trust him or hate him and spit in his face, because it has been done. He created us able to do it. God even allowed Satan to approach our first parents at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. And he didn't hide that tree in some dark corner of the garden; he put it right in the middle near the Tree of Life, so that Adam and Even would see it every time they came to that other tree. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #10, "The Reminder of the Evidence" recorded March, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>

Doesn't Satan make some specific points to Eve? First of all, he says, "Has God said you may not take this fruit?" She said, "Yes, we may not touch it or we die." He said, "That's a lie." Right? He said, "You will not die."

Would you have faith in a liar? It's not very wise. So immediately, he seeks to undermine confidence and trust in God, but then he also suggests that God has selfishly withheld something from them which would be very good. "God knows if you take this you will become like him, and I don't know why he's holding that back from you," he'd say in his deceitful manner. "You know, I don't know why God, being so good, would do this."

You know how you could say those things, seeming to be supportive, and yet actually undermining. So the charges are right there. God is pictured as arbitrary, exacting, and the whole idea that God would say, "If you touch that tree I'll kill you," sounds vengeful, unforgiving and severe. So how are we to read those words? It would look, wouldn't it, if these are the charges in the great controversy, that God, though he did wonderfully during creation week, is not coming off so well in this conversation with Satan. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Genesis*, recorded October 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

[http://pkp.cc/1MMPOGIA66 \(Part 1\)](http://pkp.cc/1MMPOGIA66) [http://pkp.cc/2MMPOGIA66 \(Part 2\)](http://pkp.cc/2MMPOGIA66)

And then, as to the charges that God is selfish and an untrustworthy liar, Satan wasted no time in sharing the accusations that he presented to the angels with our first parents. And that's recorded in the next verse on the Bible Reference Sheet, Genesis 3:1-5:

Now the serpent was more subtle [some versions have cunning, crafty] than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, [which God *didn't* say] lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die [that's not true—"you will not die?"]. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (RSV)

And Eve, don't you want to be like God; isn't that your prayer? And so he deceived her into thinking there was this miraculous shortcut to becoming like God. Well, we know how God bore long and patiently as he watched this insurrection developing in his family. And he watched until one-third of his brilliant, intelligent angels agreed with Satan that God was not worthy of their trust. And this means that even God, though infinite in power, even he could not persuade one-third of the brilliant angels that Satan's charges were false. Finally, as John describes, war

broke out in heaven. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #1, "The Conflict in God's Family" recorded January 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMCAG>

Surely it's clear in the epistle to Rome that all that God asks of us is that we trust him, because if we trust him, without reservation, with no cheating, with a complete willingness to listen, he can heal and save and restore us. But if I'm forever violating that trust, that relationship with him, if sometimes I'll listen and sometimes I don't, sometimes I'm honest with him and sometimes I'm not, will he condemn me? Do you doctors condemn your patients who are foolish enough not to take their medicine and so become more and more seriously ill? Now you might correct them; that's for sure. You might show great concern. You might, if need be, sound very stern and severe. You might read them the medical equivalent of the Third Angel's Message. If you persist in this you're going to die. You might well do that. But you wouldn't condemn them, would you? What good would it do to send them home, corrected to be sure, but condemned and humiliated?

Whenever we violate our relationship of trust in God he can't trust us. Sometimes we're with him, sometimes we're not, it's a very irregular relationship. Sometimes we're so honest and sometimes we cheat, we're looking for alibis, we're always rationalizing. He cannot heal us and we lose. This is a rebellious, untrusting, untrustworthy relationship. And that's why sin is so dangerous. That's why sin results in death, not because our heavenly Father and physician will kill us, but the man who doesn't trust God, the man who's cheating will reap the consequences. He will die, for God cannot heal this person who doesn't trust him.

And I think this is such a correction to the definition so often used, sin is just breaking this or that rule and you know what God does to sinners. This suggests that breaking our trusting relationship with God is the most dangerous thing we can do. The consequences are very disastrous both in this life and in the end, but not at the hands of our gracious God. If we persist in cheating he will let us go and reap the consequences. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 14, recorded January 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/27MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/28MMROMANS66> (Part 2)

Remember the warnings we've had in the Bible before about false prophets. Jesus talks about false prophets. Paul does. John does. We've been told to beware of people who speak to us with authority in God's name (Jeremiah 23:25-32):

I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name [so they were prophesying in God's name, but they were not telling the truth. And what they say is], "I have dreamed, I have dreamed" [you see, I had a vision. The Lord has spoken to me.]! How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart [how many times today do you hear people claim that God has spoken to them? If you listen to programs on television, how many of them claim, "God has spoken to me and told me, this is what you are to do"? Are we to believe this because a person makes that claim? Jeremiah says these prophets were lying], who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams which they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal? Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word faithfully [an interesting contrast there]. What has straw in common with wheat? says the LORD. Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who steal my words from one another. Behold, I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who use their tongues and say, "Says the LORD." Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, says the LORD, and who tell them and lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness, when I did not send them or charge them. So they do not profit this people at all, says the LORD.

Think of it, they're lying in God's name. But you remember 1 Kings 13? You remember the younger prophet and the older prophet, and the older prophet said, "I am a prophet of the Lord, and the angel of the Lord has told me" thus and so. "But he lied to him." We've been warned of this repeatedly.

Or Deuteronomy 13, remember? The man who gives a sign or a wonder, and the miracle comes to pass, but if at the same time he's not telling the truth, Moses says, "Then don't believe him." But how susceptible people are to miracles and claims of authority. You remember Ahab's whole company of prophets? Remember Micaiah? The whole company was lying. Now what kinds of lies were they telling? The children of Israel in the Promised Land were men like Jeremiah and Micah and Hosea and the others. Amos and Isaiah had been warning them of what would befall them if they went on ignoring God and preferring to go in their reckless, disorderly way. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Ezekiel, recorded February 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/37MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/38MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

## Further Study with Ellen White

Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences (MS 78, 1901). {1BC 1081.2}

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}

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. {MH 415.1}

Next to the angelic beings, the human family, formed in the image of God, are the noblest of His created works. God desires them to become all that He has made it possible for them to be, and to do their very best with the powers He has given them. {MH 397.1}

When Adam came from the Creator’s hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. . . . 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. {FLB 29.7}

“God is love” is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green—all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy. {SC 10.1}

Our first parents chose to believe the words, as they thought, of a serpent; yet he had given them no tokens of his love. He had done nothing for their happiness and benefit; while God had given them everything that was good for food, and pleasant to the sight. Everywhere the eye might rest was abundance and beauty; yet Eve was deceived by the serpent, to think that there was something withheld which would make them wise, even as God. Instead of believing and confiding in God, she basely distrusted his goodness, and cherished the words of Satan. {1SP 40.3}

It was not the will of God that this sinless pair should have any knowledge of evil. He had freely given them the good but withheld the evil. Eve thought the words of the serpent wise, and she received the broad assertion, “Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” —

making God a liar. Satan boldly insinuated that God had deceived them to keep them from being exalted in knowledge equal with Himself. God said: If ye eat ye shall surely die. The serpent said, If ye eat, “ye shall not surely die.” {SR 34.1}

The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty it is left with us to decide our course. {RH, July 17, 1888 par. 4} {FE 124.1}

Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. {MB 142.1}

God does not force the will or judgment of any. He takes no pleasure in a slavish obedience. He desires that the creatures of His hands shall love Him because He is worthy of love. He would have them obey Him because they have an intelligent appreciation of His wisdom, justice, and benevolence. And all who have a just conception of these qualities will love Him because they are drawn toward Him in admiration of His attributes. {GC 541.3}

The government of God is not, as Satan would make it appear, founded upon a blind submission, an unreasoning control. It appeals to the intellect and the conscience.”Come now, and let us reason together” is the Creator’s invitation to the beings He has made. Isaiah 1:18. God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton. Such is not the purpose of the Creator. He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. {SC 43.4}

In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan’s control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God. {DA 466.4}

The only condition upon which the freedom of man is possible is that of becoming one with Christ. “The truth shall make you free;” and Christ is the truth. Sin can triumph only by enfeebling the mind, and destroying the liberty of the soul. Subjection to God is restoration to

one's self,—to the true glory and dignity of man. The divine law, to which we are brought into subjection, is “the law of liberty.” James 2:12. {DA 466.5}

God never compels the obedience of man. He leaves all free to choose whom they will serve. {PK 510.4}

In calling them to His service, God offers them freedom. Obedience to God is liberty from the thralldom of sin, deliverance from human passion and impulse. {TM 247.1}

Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity. Sweeping away the exactions which had encumbered the law of God, He showed that the law is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the happiness of mankind, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society. {Ed 76.3}

The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man's experience. There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist. To withstand this force, to attain that ideal which in his inmost soul he accepts as alone worthy, he can find help in but one power. That power is Christ. Co-operation with that power is man's greatest need. {Ed 29.1}

Through the gospel, souls that are degraded and enslaved by Satan are to be redeemed to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. God's purpose is not merely to deliver from the suffering that is the inevitable result of sin, but to save from sin itself. The soul, corrupted and deformed, is to be purified, transformed, that it may be clothed in “the beauty of the Lord our God,” “conformed to the image of His Son.” “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” Psalm 90:17; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 2:9. Eternity alone can reveal the glorious destiny to which man, restored to God's image, may attain. {MB 60.3}

The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous one. Day by day God labors for man's sanctification, and man is to cooperate with Him, putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. He is to add grace to grace; and as he thus works on the plan of addition, God works for him on the plan of multiplication. Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them. {RC 315.2}

No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan. The tempter has no power to control the will or to force the soul to sin. He may distress, but he cannot contaminate. He can cause agony, but not defilement. The fact that Christ has conquered should inspire His followers with courage to fight manfully the battle against sin and Satan. {GC 510.3}

In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantage of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent. "Be of good cheer," He says; "I have overcome the world." John 16:33. {DA 122.3}

In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ. {COL 157.3}