

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Second Quarter 2022: *Genesis*

Lesson 1 “The Creation”

Read for this week’s study

Psalm 100:1–3; Genesis 1–2; Exodus 20:8–11; Exodus 40:33; Matthew 25:14–30; Matthew 19:7–9.

Memory Text

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The God of Creation
- III. The Creation
- IV. The Sabbath
- V. The Creation of Humanity
- VI. The Duty of Humanity
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. An Adventist Christian theologian recently declared: “Genesis is about Jesus”. How would someone come to such a statement? In what ways would you agree that that statement and in what ways would you disagree? (Introduction to the Quarter)
2. Most Christian thinking operates on the basis of three assumptions: 1) God is good, 2) God is infinitely powerful, and 3) the world is a mess. How to reconcile those three is a major task of theology. People often deal with the tensions among those three by minimizing one or the other somewhat. What difference would that make for the way we approach Genesis? For example, theistic evolutionists may accept (1) and (2) but would argue that the long-age approach to creation with much suffering and death along the way is exactly the way a good and powerful God chose to do creation. What are the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach? What would you see as the consequences of minimizing (1) and (2)? (Introduction to the Quarter)

3. Read Genesis 1:1. Does this verse describe the creation of the earth only or of the whole universe? Would ancient readers likely have known the difference between the two? (Sabbath Afternoon's Lesson)
4. According to Psalm 100:1-3, how did the ancient Israelites respond to the God of creation? Why did they respond in those ways? Read chapters one and two of Genesis in their entirety. Ignoring the tradition chapter divisions, where would you divide the text between the seven days of chapter 1 and the Garden of Eden story of chapter 2? What are some of the important differences between the two accounts of creation? What do these differences tell us about God? (Sunday's Lesson)
5. The first creation account makes multiple use of the phrase ". . . it was good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31 and 2:1-3). What is your understanding of the word "good"? What is the function of this multiple repetition? How does this description of the world as beautiful and perfect fit in with current scientific assumptions about how the world began? (Monday's Lesson)
6. Read Genesis 2:2-3 and Exodus 20:8-11. What is the special relationship between creation and the Sabbath? What impact does Genesis 2 have on the way we understand and practice the Sabbath? What impact did knowing the goodness of God's creation have on the rise of science and research? (Tuesday's Lesson)
7. Read Genesis 1:26-29 and 2:7. How do these two accounts of human creation tell the story differently? (Wednesday's Lesson)
8. In Genesis 1 and 2 God offered the human beings He created a number of gifts. Please list as many of these as you can. Read Genesis 2:15-17. What responsibilities does humanity have toward God and toward the creation? How do these two responsibilities relate to each other? What specific gifts has God given you personally? What responsibilities have come along with these gifts? (Thursday's Lesson)
9. When it comes to science and faith, it is often said that sin distorts our view of reality and thus affects how we read the evidence found in creation. Does sin in some way also distort the evidence itself? (Friday's Lesson)
10. How would it affect Christian faith if it turned out the stories of Genesis 1 and 2 were not historical, but just legends designed to teach spiritual lessons? What was Jesus' own testimony about the historicity of these passages? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Now when we read that first angel's message to "worship the Creator of the heaven and earth, the Creator of the sea and springs," perhaps we are reminded that the first mention of the Sabbath comes in the Bible at the end of creation week. 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, 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>*

For example, in the narrow view; now lest that sound disrespectful and unrealistic, by the narrow view I mean the view that is preoccupied with what God has done for you and me. And that might be perfectly understandable in the lives of some of us. We still even have our tents pitched at the foot of Sinai. We have no right to tell anybody where he should have his tent pitched. But in the narrower view that is preoccupied with our own salvation, consistently the seventh-day Sabbath is presented as a mere test of obedience. I've read it again several times of late. But in the larger view, in the setting of the great controversy over the character of God, the Sabbath is God's gift to us, to remind us of the answers in the Great Controversy. To remind us of all the things he revealed about himself, and about freedom, and about his unselfishness in the Garden of Eden. How he even shared his creative power with us, and enabled us to create little people in our own image.

Magnificent was the revelation given during creation week, and the Sabbath was given to remind us of those truths. But then when we lost our freedom, and God gave it back to us again, he says in the other version of the Ten Commandments, which has just as much authority as the Exodus one, the Sabbath was given to remind us of how God rescued us from Egyptian bondage. Sabbath is a monument to freedom. And then at the end of crucifixion week, when

the ultimate questions about God were answered by the way Jesus suffered and died, the next day was seventh-day Sabbath, and the whole universe paused, earth time, to think and to remember and to celebrate the answer that God gave. The Sabbath is even described in the Bible as a type and a foretaste of the final rest to come. Instead of the Sabbath being a mere test of obedience, it becomes a great aid to us, and a time of celebration of the truth that is the basis of our trust, and the basis of our freedom. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Larger View*, #1, recorded October 1982, Monterey, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/1MMLVIEW>

Yet Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for us; Mark 2:27. It was not to be a mere test of obedience, but rather to be a help. I believe that the great purpose of the Sabbath is to remind us of the truth that is the basis of our faith; the very truth that does set us free. In the first place, the Bible tells us in Exodus 20 and Exodus 31, that the Sabbath is designed to serve as a reminder that God created us; that we are his creatures. But to be more specific according to Colossians 1:16, the one who created us was none other than Christ himself. The seventh-day Sabbath reminds us that the one who came to save us is also the one who made us in the beginning. The gentle Jesus who died on Calvary is also the supreme, all powerful creator of the universe. God did not send some subordinate person to die for us. The Creator came himself one who is equal with God, for he is God. By keeping holy the seventh-day Sabbath, we acknowledge our faith in Jesus as not only our Savior, but also our Creator and our God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Faith, Righteousness and Salvation*, #13, "Faith and the seventh-day Sabbath", recorded April 3, 1975, Lynwood, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:* [http://pkp.cc/13MMFRS \(Part 1\)](http://pkp.cc/13MMFRS) [http://pkp.cc/14MMFRS \(Part 2\)](http://pkp.cc/14MMFRS)

Further Study with Ellen White

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}

To all who receive the Sabbath as a sign of Christ's creative and redeeming power, it will be a delight. Seeing Christ in it, they delight themselves in Him. The Sabbath points them to the works of creation as an evidence of His mighty power in redemption. While it calls to mind the lost peace of Eden, it tells of peace restored through the Saviour. And every object in nature repeats His invitation, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. {DA 289.1}

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people. He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amidst the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands. {PK 176.1}

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. {8T 19.1}

Christ has made provision that His church shall be a transformed body, illumined with the light of heaven, possessing the glory of Immanuel. It is His purpose that every Christian shall be surrounded with a spiritual atmosphere of light and peace. There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God. {8T 19.3}

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

To human beings, striving for conformity to the divine image, there is imparted an outlay of heaven's treasure, an excellency of power that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen. {HP 148.5}

The God of heaven is constantly at work. It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms. Every drop of rain or flake of snow, every spire of grass, every leaf and flower and shrub, testifies of God. These little things so common around us teach the lesson that nothing is beneath the notice of the infinite God, nothing is too small for His attention. {FLB 28.4}

God speaks to us in nature. It is His voice we hear as we gaze upon the beauty and richness of the natural world. We view His glory in the beautiful things His hand has made. We stand and behold His works without a veil between. God has given us these things that in beholding the works of His hands, we may learn of Him. {TDG 241.2}

The Sabbath of the fourth commandment was instituted in Eden. After God had made the world and created man upon the earth, He made the Sabbath for man. After Adam's sin and fall nothing was taken from the law of God. The principles of the Ten Commandments existed before the fall and were of a character suited to the condition of a holy order of beings. After the fall the principles of those precepts were not changed, but additional precepts were given to meet man in his fallen state. {SR 145.2}

The Sabbath is a pledge given by God to man—a sign of the relation existing between the Creator and His created beings. {3SM 256.1}

With intense interest the unfallen worlds had watched to see Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth. And if God should do this, Satan was ready to carry out his plan for securing to himself the allegiance of heavenly beings. He had declared that the principles of God's government make forgiveness impossible. Had the world been destroyed, he would have claimed that his accusations were proved true. He was ready to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the worlds above. But instead of destroying the world, God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the alien province, a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace. Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race. Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled. {DA 37.2}

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. {Ed 17.2}

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}

The knowledge which God did not want our first parents to have was a knowledge of guilt. And when they accepted the assertions of Satan, which were false, disobedience and transgression were introduced into our world. This disobedience to God's express command, this belief of Satan's lie, opened the floodgates of woe upon the world.—RH, Apr 5, 1898. {2MCP 562.1}

To Adam and Eve was committed the care of the garden, “to dress it and to keep it.” Genesis 2:15. Though rich in all that the Owner of the universe could supply, they were not to be idle. Useful occupation was appointed them as a blessing, to strengthen the body, to expand the mind, and to develop the character. {Ed 21.2}