



## Origins Lesson 6 1Q 2013

### Creation and the Fall

#### SABBATH

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Read memory verse: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” Gen 3:15 NIV

Thoughts?

Why did God say he would *put* enmity between fallen humans and Satan?

Would humans have any desire to resist Satan if God did not specifically act to put a desire for good in our hearts?

This text, for those who believe the Bible, is a powerful text against the “natural good” we all have in our hearts. We don’t have natural good. Humans left to themselves, since the fall, cannot advance, evolve to higher levels, develop in positive lines or even be good people. All goodness comes from the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, even in those who don’t believe in God.

What do you think of this perspective from Signs of the Times?

The Lord says, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." The enmity does not exist as a natural fact. As soon as Adam sinned, he was in harmony with the first great apostate, and at war with God; and if God had not interfered in man's behalf, Satan and man would have formed a confederacy against heaven, and carried on united opposition against the God of hosts. There is no natural enmity between evil angels and evil men; both are evil through transgression of the law of God, and evil will always league against good. Fallen men and fallen angels enter into a desperate companionship. {ST, July 11, 1895 par. 5}

Do you agree?

What other implications come from the memory text? Do you think Satan understood the meaning, in general terms, that God was going to contest his claim to earth and send a Savior?

Do you think Satan stood by idly for thousands of years awaiting the arrival of Jesus? Or, did Satan actively seek to obstruct God’s plan?

And what as the key to God’s plan? Jesus coming to earth – so what would be the key to Satan’s opposition? Trying to stop Jesus from coming to earth and partaking of our humanity. How might that have been accomplished? By getting 100% of all humans to permanently close their hearts and minds



to God. Would God force a woman against her will to be the mother of Jesus? Would God want a woman whose heart was hardened against him to be the mother of Jesus?

Does this give us any insight into what we see transpiring in the OT? Does it give any insight into God's actions in the OT? Was God punishing, or was God therapeutically acting to keep open the channel for the Messiah?

Read first two paragraphs, "A comic used to play..." does anyone remember this?

But, can the devil *make* anyone choose evil, choose to sin? No! This is powerful to remember – the devil can lie, twist, distort, coerce, manipulate, misrepresent, trick, pressure, tempt, but he cannot force a person to choose. He can play on our worst fears. He can, at times, orchestrate pain and suffering, but he cannot make us do anything.

Read next paragraph, "For some people..." thoughts? What do you think of this idea that the devil is a "defeated foe"?

Has he surrendered?

Has he been destroyed?

Has he been imprisoned?

If he is defeated, why are we still here? Why is there still pain and suffering? Why do we teach he is coming one day to impersonate Christ and deceive the entire world if he is defeated?

What does "defeated" mean?

I looked it up in the dictionary and there are listed three definitions:

1. listed as an obsolete definition is: Destroy
2. a: Nullify (defeat an estate) b: Frustrate (defeat a hope)
3. to win victory over: beat (defeat an opposing team)

Okay, Satan has not been destroyed, yet. His work has not been nullified, but Jesus did win a victory. So, Satan was defeated in his ability to destroy humanity, to misrepresent God throughout the universe, and to maintain his claim to earth. Because of Jesus the human race is already saved, the beings throughout the universe have already rejected Satan, and Satan knows his hold on earth is lost. However, is the war over?

Would you describe it differently, put it in a different tense?

- Satan and his cause are ultimately defeated and will one day be eliminated?
- Christ won the victory over evil forces at the Cross, but the application of that victory, in order to permanently eradicate evil is ongoing?



## MONDAY

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The lesson points out how the serpent took what God had said and subtly changed it to create a lie. Then asks, “How often do we face the same thing today: someone comes with teachings that, on most points but not all, are in harmony with Scripture? It’s the few points that aren’t that can ruin everything else. Even mixed with truth, error is still error.”

Thoughts?

This is an excellent point; the most effective lies are those that are mostly true. The complete falsehoods are the easiest to recognize and expose, it is the lies that are the closest to the true that are the hardest to spot. Just like any counterfeit currency, the closer to the true, the harder to spot.

So, what would happen if some agency within the federal government started printing counterfeit currency? Wouldn’t this be the most difficult to spot or recognize? In fact, might many people accept it as genuine?

So, what is the source of the most potent counterfeits or lies about God? From the government – and where did the war begin? In heaven, with whom? Lucifer who held high office in God’s government.

2000 years ago from where did Christ experience his greatest opposition? From the Romans who worshipped idols? Or was his greatest opposition from the Jewish religious authorities – from God’s representatives?

What about today? Could there be individuals in church leadership that are actually spreading lies about God?

Is it wrong to ask such questions? Should we believe that anyone who is in leadership in the church is appointed by God, or “God’s anointed” and therefore we should accept their perspectives, ideas, views, beliefs, interpretations of Scripture without studying for ourselves to know the truth?

Read the dark section midway down, “Read Matthew 12:7-9...”

You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: “ ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ ”

Thoughts?

Is the lesson suggesting we are not to think but to take the Bible only as it reads? What about DT 14, take the tithe and buy fermented wine and rejoice before the Lord. Let’s not add any human thinking to it, let’s just take it as it reads, or should we think about it?



Is Jesus reproving them for the addition of “human thinking” to the Word of God? Interestingly, that is not what the Scripture says, it was for adding human rules, human methods, human principles. In other words, they were not adding their understanding and insights about God’s kingdom of love, but adding their selfish worldly ways and claiming it was God’s way.

What other kind of thinking are we supposed to have? Are we not supposed to read the Scripture and examine it with our “human thinking” and clarify or rightly understand it?

When we read prophecy and interpret the meaning of the symbolism, concluding that a particular beast represents a particular nation or political power, arising at a particular time, whose thinking is coming to these conclusions? And are these conclusions obvious in the text or are we adding our thinking to what is written in the text?

Last paragraph, the lesson makes an excellent point, “The problem with sin is not a lack of rules but a reprobate heart. Even in secular society, we often hear calls for more laws against crime when there are already sufficient laws in existence. We do not need more laws so much as we need new hearts.”

This is extremely well said. Have we seen this very phenomenon happen over the past few weeks? Will more gun control laws actually stop evil in our country?

Everyone of the shootings was done by someone who was breaking multiple laws including the law against murder. Does anyone really think that a person willing to commit multiple murders is going to say, “Well I was going to commit murder, but whoa, there is a law against using a gun not registered to me, don’t want to break that law, shucks, guess I won’t kill all those people.”

The lesson is right, the world is getting worse because God is being pushed aside, selfishness is gaining greater hold on more and more hearts, and men respond by piling up more and more laws, which will ultimately avail nothing.

Why do you think the Bible teaches that before Christ comes laws restricting buying and selling, unless you have the mark of the beast, will occur? Because things continue to get worse and worse, and a godless world will pass more and more laws trying to control the hearts of men. Will it work?

Can we control the hearts of men by passing laws? Can God control the hearts of men by passing laws? Do you see the problem with so much of what is taught in religion? All too often God is presented as passing laws, and then enforcing those laws upon pain of death – this is the beast system. We must stop describing God in this way!

In the bottom green section it asks, “How can we be sure that the standards and rules we apply aren’t going to lead us astray?” Thoughts?

How about by not creating concrete rules to apply in all situations, but instead we understanding the principles and live by those?



Any examples of how living by rules, without understanding the principles, results in harm, whereas principled living is healthy?

There was an old movie called Zulu, which documented the Battle of Rorke's Drift, where 156 British soldiers held off 4000 Zulu. In the early part of the film they depicted when the Zulu army attacked a British column. As the soldiers were running out of ammunition they ran to the quartermaster to get resupply, but the quartermaster refused to dispense ammunition without the proper paperwork filled out and submitted, in spite of being in the middle of a battle. He was a stickler for the rules. Needless to say they were wiped out.

Do we ever follow rules in such a way we miss the bigger picture and instead injure and harm?

I heard one health conscience person say, "I am going to following the health message even if it kills me."

## TUESDAY

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What do you think about the title to Tuesday's lesson, *Deceived by the Evidence*?

Is there something wrong with evidence? Is there something wrong with looking for evidence? Utilizing evidence in our decision-making?

Could the title be heard in such a way that one could misconstrue and conclude that evidence is not to be used in our religious beliefs or faith based decisions? What do you think of the relationship between evidence and faith?

I was in Salt Lake last week doing a seminar and one of the things that I have discovered about our Mormon friends is that they approach evidence differently that we do. They often will hear the evidence, but then pray for a feeling of conviction to tell them whether to believe the evidence or not. In other words, the feeling of conviction is accepted as supreme evidence despite whatever other evidence has been presented.

Here is a quote many of you have heard, do you agree with this perspective?

"God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His Word, are all established by testimony that **appeals to our reason**; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. **Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration.** Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth, will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith." *Steps to Christ* 105 (1892); *9MR* 202; compare *Education* 169



Is there a problem with evidence, or is there a problem with how one uses evidence? Is there a difference in appealing to our reason with evidence and appealing to our feelings?

So, is the title correct that Eve was deceived by evidence, or was Eve deceived by Satan, who manipulated and misrepresented the evidence?

For instance, she had the evidence of a talking serpent, who was in the forbidden tree. But was the talking serpent evidence that the tree ennobled and elevated, or that another being was manipulating the serpent? So, Eve wasn't deceived by evidence but by a misconstruing of evidence, by having only partial evidence at her disposal, and by ignoring the other evidences God has given of his generosity, love, goodness and trustworthiness.

Read second paragraph, "Eve uses three lines of evidence..." thoughts?

When did the Lord say the tree wasn't good for food? Did the Lord say don't eat of the tree because it was a bad food choice, because it was high in trans fats, because it was poisonous in some way?

One of the founders of our church had an opinion about the quality of the fruit of the tree:

**The fruit of the tree of knowledge was not in itself injurious.** It was used merely as a test of their obedience to God. Will they be obedient to God's requirements, or not? {9MR 232.2}

So was the problem the nutritional quality of the fruit? When Eve concluded it was good for food, this wasn't a false conclusion any more than you would conclude that the produce in the supermarket is good for food. But, when you conclude that the produce in the supermarket is good for food, does that mean you are free to take what you want and leave the store without paying? Why not? Is the question of leaving the supermarket with the produce one of whether it is good for food, or whether it is yours to take?

In fact, what would have been the point of putting a poisonous tree in the garden? If God would have done this, something that had wart covered, foul smelling fruit, would it have been much of a test for them? Or if it had been laced with cyanide, Eve eats, drops dead and Adam cries, but the sin problem is taken care of right? Wrong, because what would that prove? God poisons his creatures and now we can't trust God, Satan's allegations would be proved true, if that had happened.

What was the issue with the tree of knowledge? Wasn't the purpose to put Adam and Eve in a position that they would have to exercise their own individuality, their own intelligence, their own God-given ability to make choices and choose to remain loyal, thus develop mature character and become so settled into the truth about God and their loyalty to him that they could not be moved?

The tree was put there as a simple tool to help these free beings develop loyalty and maturity, something that could only happen by the free-exercise of their power of choice. From the book Conflict and Courage:



God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; **but in that case man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automation. Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could have been no development of character.** . . . It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule. {CC 13.3}

Read last paragraph, “We are told that Eve...” thoughts?

Why did Adam choose to eat the fruit if he wasn't deceived?

Do we have similar temptations today, being tempted to follow others when we ourselves know a better way? Why do we do it?

- Fear of rejection
- Fear of abandonment
- Fear of loneliness
- Desire to be liked/loved
- Seeking to please others
- Some confused sense of duty or obligation
- Women - believing the lie that as wife you must follow your husband's leadership, even when you are convinced your husband is wrong and going against God's will
- Others?

## WEDNESDAY

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Read top section, “In Genesis 3...” thoughts?

- Was this an interrogation?
- Was it an investigation?
- Or was it a gentle reaching out to reestablish contact with a loved one?

The lesson then points out that God's first declarative statement recorded in Scripture is a condemnation of the serpent not humanity, well said.

Read third and fourth paragraphs, “Notice, too, that only...” thoughts?

Is this what happened? Did God pronounce judgment upon them, or did something else happen?

What did God just promise in verse 15? That the serpent would be defeated and a Savior is coming. So, what would be the next logical thing God would do...



If God is a punishing God like Satan alleges? If God uses arbitrary imposed law like Satan alleges? Then the next most logical thing would be for him to pronounce judgments and punishments – BUT WHAT IF

God is not a punishing God and Satan lied? What if God is a God of love and life emanates from him, and his law is the protocol upon which life is built? Then after pronouncing to the serpent the coming Savior, then what would God do next? Diagnose them, describe for them the symptoms and intervene with therapeutic interventions designed to heal!

- After Adam and Eve sinned, humanity no longer naturally, automatically, sought to love one another, but instead sought to put self first.
- What effect does the infection of selfishness have upon human nature and how we treat each other?
- So, would one expect the strong to dominate the weak if selfishness rules in the heart? So when God pronounced that Eve would be dominated by Adam, i.e. women subjected to the domination of their husbands, was God inflicting this, or diagnosing and describing one of the natural consequences of what sin does to God's creation? It distorts and perverts the equality God designed. Is this God inflicting something?
- What about pain in childbirth? Inflicted by God, or result of being out of harmony with God's design and nature no longer operating as he built it to? Why did God comment on this particular result then?
- The pain of childbirth is a powerful object lesson allowing women to experience greater insight into the heart and mind of God. Knowing labor will be painful, why do women choose to have children? In the aftermath of labor, the pain of it, why do women rejoice? Is it not because of love? Doesn't love for their children overcome their pain and fear of labor to bring forth new life? Likewise the Bible says, "for the joy set before Him" Christ endured the cross (Heb 12:2). It was for our rebirth that Christ labored as a human and suffered through the cross. Thus the birthing process allows women to appreciate in a small way the pain and suffering God went through to rebirth us in newness of life and also the joy in God's heart to see us renewed.
- What about the pronouncement that Adam would have to labor to produce food from the earth? A punishment inflicted or a consequence with blessing?
- In Genesis 3:17 again God looks good as He works to save and heal mankind. In this verse our Savior is pronouncing the natural consequence which impacted nature when God's rule of love was replaced by Satan's rule of survival of the fittest as a result of Adam's abdication of his rule to the devil.
- Paul says in Romans 8:22 that all nature groans under the weight of sin. God is announcing in Genesis 3:17, that, for mankind's sake, He would not intervene to prevent the law of sin and death from impacting the earth, but the earth was now under the curse of sin. Why did God allow this? As a protection for mankind in a world of sin.
- Once Adam and Eve sinned their natural tendency was toward sin and selfishness. Industry, work, is a hedge of protection from the power of the carnal nature. Maybe you have heard the





old saying, “Idle hands are the devil’s workshop.” A powerful truth is espoused in this statement. Idleness allows the carnal mind time to wander away from the right and engage in unhealthy and destructive practices. Therefore, to protect man, to keep his time occupied, to teach self-discipline, self-mastery and diligence, God announced that it was for man’s sake that He would not stop the earth from changing.

- Further, there is a powerful spiritual lesson in allowing the curse of sin the change the earth, which was also for man’s sake. Imagine you have a garden, one you have faithfully tended and is producing a bountiful harvest. What will happen to your garden if you stop tending it? Will it continue to produce good fruit, or will the weeds come up and eventually destroy it? In a similar way, ever since Adam and Eve sinned, our minds naturally bring up weeds, selfish thoughts, ideas, and conceptions. It is Christ who works through the Holy Spirit to plant the seeds of truth in our minds. He then nurtures and protects the seeds of truth to grow into the fruits of a Christ-like character. It is by utilizing the Sword of the Spirit (which is the Word of God, the truth) that we work with Christ to weed our minds; we uproot the lies and false theories that keep us captive, and instead maintain a healthy and productive mental garden.

So, do we find that God pronounced “judgment” and inflicted punishment, or that God diagnosed accurately, then described the symptoms resulting from the natural consequences of deviation from his methods and utilized those results to provide therapeutic tools for our salvation?

We must stop presenting God in the same light as the beast of revelation. Is it not time we stand up and reject these distortions and embrace the truth about God as Jesus revealed?

## **THURSDAY**

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Read second and third paragraphs, “Thus, in Scripture...” thoughts?

What is being suggested is the good news? That we are spared condemnation? If that is the good news, what does it imply? From where does such suggested condemnation come? From God who it is suggested must judge.

So according to this view, from where does the condemnation come? From God, and Christ spares us this condemnation, so what is Christ sparing us from? Not from sin, but from God’s condemnation of sin – do you see the subtle lie built into this theory which has infected Christianity?

Here is from 27 Fundamental Beliefs:

“Christ’s self-sacrifice is *pleasing* to God because this sacrificial offering **took away the barrier between God and sinful man** in that **Christ fully bore God’s wrath on man’s sin**. Through Christ, God’s wrath is not turned into love but is turned away from man and borne by Himself.”<sup>1</sup>

“For a loving God to maintain His justice and righteousness, the atoning death of Jesus Christ became ‘a moral and legal necessity.’ God’s ‘justice requires that sin be carried to judgment.



**God must therefore execute judgment on sin and thus on the sinner. In this execution the Son of God took our place, the sinner's place, according to God's will."**<sup>ii</sup>

Is this the gospel or is this the great lie told in heaven and to Adam and Eve and has been infecting the church since Apostolic times?

Read last paragraph, "In Revelation 14:6..." thoughts?

What is the problem with this paragraph?

It has the focus in the wrong place, this is not a description of God sitting in judgment, this is a description of God being judged by his creatures. Revelation 14 comes after Revelation 13 in which two beasts deceive the entire world, and get the entire world believing lies about God. Then the good news is to enlighten the world and we are to give glory to God because the time has come for us to judge rightly who God really is and throw off the lies of Satan.

Does anyone have any concerns or questions or reasons why they would be uncomfortable with this passage referring to God being judged by us, rather than us being judged by God?

## SUNDAY

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The lesson speaks of the serpent being more crafty or cunning and how Satan is the father of lies. The lesson goes on to say in the last sentence, "We must be vigilant (1Pet 5:8) in order to resist his devices."

Paul, actually goes further and say we are in a war and have divine weapons to "demolish" everything that sets itself up against the knowledge of God.

As we consider Satan's attacks, regardless of the method he uses, what is his goal? What is Satan always trying to achieve no matter what method he uses?

- Severing your connection with God
- Destroying the faculties you have that respond and interact with God

So, what are some of Satan's tools, tricks, tactics, methods to separate you from God and keep you from reconciling to God?

- Lies
  - about God
  - about yourself and your condition
  - about God's law
  - about how God deals with sin
- Antithetical beliefs (getting us to believe two things that are opposites)



- God is love but will inflict pain and suffering to punish sin
- God is love but predetermines who is saved or lost
- Symbolism without meaning
  - Power in the blood, cleansed by the blood, washed in blood
  - Covered by robe
- Faith without evidence, reason, or thinking
- Surrendering your thinking to someone else
- “Sinful Living” that damages the brain/body
- Refusal to forgive
- Others

## FRIDAY

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Read and discuss questions 2-4

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<sup>i</sup> *Seventh-day Adventist Believe* 27, p. 111.

<sup>ii</sup> *ibid.*, p. 111.