



Rebellion and Redemption 1Q 2016 Lesson 3

In last week's lesson we ended right before we got to a point that I think is worthy of our spending a moment to discuss.

In the fourth paragraph of Lesson Two **THURSDAY's** lesson it states: "There had to be another way to ensure the future of the human race. So, God provided an animal sacrifice to point to the Savior. (Gen 3:21)"

Did anything strike you as questionable about this?

This sounds almost reasonable—in fact this is so close to being right that most Christians accept it without question. The authors even cite a Bible text to support this idea that God provided an animal sacrifice. But let's check the Scripture for ourselves to see what it actually says:

The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. Genesis 3:21

Does this text say anything about God sacrificing an animal? Which is harder to do, create a living animal or create a non-living skin of an animal?

If one wants to believe God sacrificed an animal here, one has to project that idea into the text because the Bible doesn't actual say this.

Further, does the Bible even say it was an animal skin? If we want to project things into the text that are not there, we could just as easily project in that God provided a human skin, or an angel skin—I am NOT saying that is what happened, only that if we go down the trail of introducing ideas not in the text we can introduce all kinds of ideas.

Why would the authors, and so many Christians, assume that God killed an animal to provide Adam and Eve skins? What kind of God would kill to do this? Why would they think it would be done in this way?



Because they have the view that God is the source of inflicted death as the just punishment for sin, and the animal would represent Christ and God would have to execute Christ in our place in order to provide us with salvation.

But this is all based on Satan's version of God's law. When one comes back to design law one realizes that God does NOT have to inflict death, God has to introduce life into a system that is already dying! Remember the Scripture says we are dead in trespass and sin.

I do not think the Biblical description of God providing a covering of skin *WITHOUT* God acting to kill is accidental. Jesus did not act to kill in order to provide us with a perfect robe of righteousness, Jesus surrendered Himself in love—Satan acted to kill! I do not think it is an oversight or an accident that the Bible describes God providing them a covering *WITHOUT* God acting to kill!

We must think critically and question the many deeply imbedded assumptions that sound so close to being true, but are yet based on the lie that God's law operates like human laws.

Here is how one of the founders of the SDA church describes the first animal sacrifice:

The sacrificial offerings were ordained by God to be to man a perpetual reminder and a penitential acknowledgment of his sin and a confession of his faith in the promised Redeemer. They were intended to impress upon the fallen race the **solemn truth that it was sin that caused death**. To Adam, the offering of the first sacrifice was a most painful ceremony. **His hand must be raised to take life**, which only God could give. **It was the first time he had ever witnessed death**, and he knew that had he been obedient to God, there would have been no death of man or beast. **As he slew the innocent victim**, he trembled at the thought **that his sin must shed the blood of the spotless Lamb of God**. This scene gave him a deeper and more vivid sense of the greatness of his transgression, which nothing but the death of God's dear Son could expiate. And he marveled at the infinite goodness that would give such a ransom to save the guilty. A star of hope illumined the dark and terrible future and relieved it of its utter desolation. {PP 68.1}

In encourage you, when you hear this idea, that God killed the first animal to provide skins for Adam and Eve, to challenge it. Confront, gently, those who teach this idea. It might seem like something minor, but it isn't because the idea is based on an entire false understanding of God's character, law, government, the problem with sin and its solution.



On to this week's lesson...

Global Rebellion and the Patriarchs

I received this email this week:

Re: The Remedy

I would like to tell you how much I have been enjoying this version! I have been so frustrated with versions that do not talk in our language. I frustratedly say to my husband - how am I supposed to understand this stuff? Then along comes this and I love it.

Have been an Adventist for my life - am 53. Grown kids who we dragged to church all their little lives. "Doing" what we thought was best to appease an angry God (at the time).

Had a life crash - and thought I would never stop crying. Had left God cause he just seemed like another complication I could not deal with.

While crying one night on my living room floor in the wee hours of the morning, either Jesus or an Angel - someone came to me in a sweet, calm voice that was not outward but inward?? Don't know quite how to explain it really? But, I most definitely heard it say, "What about Jesus?" - I stopped my crying and lifted my head off the floor - I said, Lord? Is that You? I don't honestly know how to explain this - but, my whole heart turned away from my troubles and went all out to Him - and I said/prayed - Lord please, show me who You are.

And in short - He did.

I was surprised at the things He was showing me in my armchair at home alone??! I would often say to Him - how could this be? Lord if I am wrong - please show me.

He just kept sweetly, gently - leading me along. He opened up to me His Character - just me and Him. I would keep asking Him - how could this be? How could the Church not know this?? I kept on following - although sometimes weak kneed I must admit.



Then finally - I met someone - a couple of people actually - a family who was teaching what God alone was showing me! I heard them with my ears open - then along comes another and another. I praised God.

Now - I have The Remedy - it is perfectly what God was showing me alone in my armchair at home!

All this to say - Thank you brother - super thank you bunches ~

Your Sister in the Living God,

Then I received another email:

I have listened to the first lesson of the new quarter and find your explanation compelling. Your teaching of the lesson is the first one I listen to every week. I study and make notes of the daily lesson for myself and usually also listen to one or two other teachers who teach the same lesson. At the same time I find your bashing of those who disagree with you within the denomination disturbing. The comments you made about the nearby educational institution in this first lesson I thought were those of airing dirty laundry. It makes me reluctant to share your teaching with non Adventist friends. Thank you for reading my comments and concerns.

I want to thank the person who wrote this because it made me step back and examine myself, prayerfully, and I realized the reason I sometimes have occasional critical comments leak out is because I am no better or different than what I am criticizing. All of us who have accepted Jesus and are cooperating with Him are a mixture of His strength and our weakness, His Remedy and our sickness—the University I was criticizing is the same a mixture of God’s grace, purposed to help promote His message, and filled with human weakness. I hate my own weakness and any remnants of sin left unhealed by God’s grace. I hope you will be patient with me and pray for me as I continue to grow in God’s grace.

SABBATH

The lesson makes a very bold and accurate statement in paragraph three, “Sin not only distorts creation, it destroys it.”



This is a statement based on design law—and it is absolutely right—it is right by our observation and experience, it is right by science, and it is right by Scripture. All three threads of evidence confirm this.

And it stands in contrast to the idea from last week's lesson that God killed the first sacrifice—no God did NOT!

If sin is the source of death, then why do so many Christians teach God is the source of destruction and death?

Because God has been lied about and the lies have been extremely effective and are accepted without thought to be true.

What are the arguments people use to continue to teach that God is the source of inflicted death?

The primary arguments stem around the themes of justice, fairness and sovereignty. Those who hold to the view that God is the enforcer and inflictor of death as punishment for sin, do so because they misunderstand God's law, justice and sovereignty.

They still think through the lens of human laws and falsely believe God operates like we do. Thus, they want to believe God is strong, in control, and fair, so they adamantly teach that God must hold tribunals, keep track of deeds, and inflict pain, suffering and death.

But the lesson is right, just as the Bible teaches, the wages of sin is death, sin when full grown brings forth death—it is sin, which is deviation from how life is built to operate, that damages and destroys. Not God!

SUNDAY

Cain and Abel—what questions or concerns come to your mind when you think of this story?

Why do you think Cain acted like he did? Why was he hardened against God? Is it possible Cain came to the sacrifice with an assumption about God that was wrong?

What did Cain do for a living? Farmer, what had God said about the ground after sin?



“Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” Gen 3:17-19

Did Cain understand this, as many do today, as God inflicting a curse upon the ground and thus Cain blamed God and found God to be untrustworthy? Did Cain have a view of God as a being who had a law that required him to punish those who disobey and thus while Cain believed in God he didn't trust God and it was manifest in how he worshipped? Does this happen today?

Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam, were very unlike in character. Abel feared God. **Cain cherished rebellious feelings, and murmured against God because of the curse pronounced upon Adam, and because the ground was cursed for his sin.** 1SP 54

Who did Cain blame for the curse? And what did choosing to view God as a curser, an inflictor of curses, do to Cain's attitude?

Those who oppose what we teach hold the same view of God. At the GC I spoke to two individuals who are active in their specific work of targeting me and our ministry. They go around claiming I teach heresy. They specifically site examples like this that God did use His power to curse the ground to punish Adam and Eve for sin. This is what Cain thought, and what kind of worship did it result in? Rebellion. This is how rebellion began in heaven, by Satan getting intelligences to believe God's law is a system of arbitrary rules that require God to punish.

But from where did the curse upon earth's harvest and productivity arise – from God inflicting it or from earth deviating from God's design and being infected with Satan's principle of selfishness?

Christ never planted the seeds of death in the system. Satan planted these seeds when he tempted Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge which meant disobedience to God. Not one noxious plant was placed in the Lord's great garden, but after Adam and Eve sinned, poisonous herbs sprang up. In the parable of the sower the question was asked the master, "Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?" The master answered, "An enemy hath done this" (Matthew 13:27, 28). **All tares are sown by the evil one. Every noxious herb is of his sowing, and by his ingenious methods of amalgamation he has corrupted the earth with tares.** {2SM 288.2}

If Cain would have understood the truth about God's law, that it is design law, and that the curse was not inflicted by God, it was announced or diagnosed by God as the natural result of nature deviating from His design, then Cain might have trusted God and not murdered his brother!

How many religious people through history and even today are caught in the same trap?



Here is another quote from one of the founders of our church:

These two brothers, Cain and Abel, represent the whole human family. They were both tested on the point of obedience, and all will be tested as they were. Abel bore the proving of God. **He revealed the gold of a righteous character, the principles of true godliness.** But Cain's religion had not a good foundation; **it rested on human merit. He brought to God something in which he had a personal interest,**--the fruits of the ground, which had been cultivated by his toil; and **he presented his offering as a favor done to God,** through which he expected to secure the divine approval. {ST, December 23, 1886 par. 1 }

Do you notice that Cain had a works oriented religion—why? Because he didn't trust God—why? Because he believed the lie that God is the inflictor of punishment against sin! Continuing the quote...

In the case of Cain and Abel we have a type of two classes that will exist in the world till the close of time; and this type is worthy of close study. There is a marked difference in the characters of these two brothers, and **the same difference is seen in the human family today. Cain represents those who carry out the principles and works of Satan, by worshipping God in a way of their own choosing.** [Notice the author doesn't say by not worshipping God. These followers of Satan are religious and do worship, but they worship a God who operates in the manner Satan has ascribed. In other words they worship a false god!] Like the leader whom they follow, they are willing to render partial obedience, but not entire submission to God. Man, in the pride of his heart, would like to believe that **he can confer some favor upon God; that our heavenly Father may be the receiver, and not always the giver. But God will not be bribed.** [This is exactly what Penal Substitution Theology teaches, that God must be bribed, only the payment is something too expensive for us to procure through our own efforts. The payment required is the blood of His Son—which humans must get to take to God by killing God's Son when He comes to save us. In this false theory God must be paid by the Son's blood or else He will kill us. This is Satan's infection, the lie of imposed law! Oh, they will say God is the giver in that God gave His Son, but they deny the split in the Godhead their theology causes.] He says: "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." Man has nothing to give that he has not first received from God. {ST, December 23, 1886 par. 7 }

The Cain class of worshipers includes by far the largest number; for every false religion that has been invented has been based on the Cain principle, that man can depend upon his own merits and righteousness for salvation. {ST, December 23, 1886 par. 8 }

thoughts?



The classic way this is presented is that Cain represents those who do some work themselves and offer this work to God in order to pay for their sin. What type of system would such a worshipper be operating under?

A system similar to our own, in which the government takes from the people, in which the laws are imposed and in which coercion takes place. Such a government requires lawbreakers to pay their debt to society. Thus, when one holds this type of governmental operation in mind one can fall into the trap of trying to work one's way to heaven.

But, what is another trap of this type of bias? The Penal Substitutionary Theory—that the government does require a debt payment, only it is beyond us to pay and so Jesus, who owes no debt, pays our debt to His Father and we can come to the Father by offering the Father the legal blood payment of His Son.

MONDAY

The Flood—any questions about the Flood? Many questions come to my mind about this event.

Here is a description of the world leading up to the flood, the reason for the flood and the event itself by one Christian author in the book *The Spirit of Prophecy* Volume 1, consider some of these possibilities:

The curse did not change at once the appearance of the earth. It was still rich in the bounty God had provided for it. **There were gold and silver in abundance.** The race of men then living was of very great stature, and possessed wonderful strength. The trees were vastly larger, and far surpassing in beauty and perfect proportions anything mortals can now look upon. **The wood of these trees was of fine grain and hard substance --in this respect more like stone.** It required much more time and labor, even of that powerful race, to prepare the timber for building, than it requires in this degenerate age to prepare trees that are now growing upon the earth, even with the present weaker strength men now possess. These trees were of great durability, and would know nothing of decay for very many years... {1SP 66.3}

The people used the gold, silver, precious stones, and choice wood, in building houses for themselves, each striving to excel the other. They beautified and adorned their houses and lands with the most ingenious works, and provoked God by their wicked deeds. They formed images to worship, and taught their children to regard these pieces of workmanship made with



their own hands, as gods, and to worship them. **They did not choose to think of God**, the creator of the heavens and the earth, and rendered no grateful thanks to him who had provided them all the things which they possessed. **They even denied the existence of the God of Heaven**, and gloried in, and worshiped, the works of their own hands. **They corrupted themselves with those things which God had placed upon the earth for man's benefit.** They prepared for themselves beautiful walks, overhung with fruit trees of every description. Under these majestic and lovely trees, with their wide-spread branches, which were green from the commencement of the year to its close, they placed their idols of worship. Whole groves, because of the shelter of their branches, were dedicated to their idol gods, and made attractive for the people to resort to for their idolatrous worship. {1SP 67.2}

Instead of doing justice to their neighbors, they carried out their own unlawful wishes. They had a plurality of wives, which was contrary to God's wise arrangement. In the beginning, God gave to Adam one wife--showing to all who should live upon the earth, his order and law in that respect. The transgression and fall of Adam and Eve brought sin and wretchedness upon the human race, and man followed his own carnal desires, **and changed God's order. The more men multiplied wives to themselves, the more they increased in wickedness and unhappiness.** If any one chose to take the wives, or cattle, or anything belonging to his neighbor, he did not regard justice or right, but **if he could prevail over his neighbor by reason of strength, or by putting him to death, he did so**, and exulted in his deeds of violence. **They loved to destroy the lives of animals. They used them for food, and this increased their ferocity and violence**, and caused them to look upon the blood of human beings with astonishing indifference. {1SP 68.1}

But if there was one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, [what might it be?] it was the base crime [note what comes next in the context of this use of a legal word "crime" but note what kind of law is being violated in this crime and what the problem was in doing so] of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere. God purposed to destroy by a flood that powerful, long-lived race that had corrupted their ways before him. He would not suffer them to live out the days of their natural life, which would be hundreds of years. [Some argue the flood was an infliction of angry wrath to punish sin. I think it was a therapeutic intervention to reduce pain, suffering, sin, and keep open the channel for Messiah] It was only a few generations back when Adam had access to that tree which was to prolong life. After his disobedience **he was not suffered to eat of the tree of life and perpetuate a life of sin. [Why was man barred from the tree of life? As punishment for sin? No! It was as a mercy, a therapeutic intervention to reduce sin. And this is the same reason for the flood! In addition to**



keeping open the channel for Messiah!] In order for man to possess an endless life he must continue to eat of the fruit of the tree of life. Deprived of that tree, his life would gradually wear out... [Why would humans die? Decay! What did the tree of life prevent? Entropy, decay, wearing out. The tree of life would not have prevented beheading, incineration, nuclear vaporization—i.e. all death, only natural death] {1SP 69.1}

Noah and his family were not alone in fearing and obeying God. But Noah was the most pious and holy of any upon the earth, and was the one whose life God preserved to carry out his will in building the ark and warning the world of its coming doom. Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, lived until the very year of the flood; and there were others who believed the preaching of Noah, and aided him in building the ark, who died before the flood of waters came upon the earth. Noah, by his preaching and example in building the ark, condemned the world. **God gave all who chose an opportunity to repent and turn to him.** [Did God really? Then why didn't He have Noah build more arks? Because God foreknew their choices] But they believed not the preaching of Noah. They mocked at his warnings, and ridiculed the building of that immense vessel on dry land. Noah's efforts to reform his fellow-men did not succeed. But for more than one hundred years he persevered in his efforts to turn men to repentance and to God. Every blow struck upon the ark was preaching to the people. Noah directed, he preached, he worked, while the people looked on in amazement, and regarded him as a fanatic... {1SP 70.1}

The period of their probation was drawing near its close. **The unbelieving, scoffing inhabitants of the world were to have a special sign of God's divine power...** [What sign?] Angels were sent to collect from the forest and field the beasts which God had created. Angels went before these animals and they followed, two and two, male and female, and clean beasts by sevens. These beasts, from the most ferocious, down to the most gentle and harmless, peacefully and solemnly marched into the ark. The sky seemed clouded with birds of every description. They came flying to the ark, two and two, male and female, and the clean birds by sevens. **The world looked on with wonder--some with fear, but they had become so hardened by rebellion that this most signal manifestation of God's power had but a momentary influence upon them.** [Is it credible to believe that people could be so hardened such a manifestation would have no impact on them? What about those who came to arrest Christ and saw divinity flash through humanity and then saw him put the ear back on the High Priest's servant after Peter cut it off?] For seven days these animals were coming into the ark, and Noah was arranging them in the places prepared for them. {1SP 71.3}



And as the doomed race beheld the sun shining in its glory, and the earth clad in almost its Eden beauty, they drove away their rising fears by **boisterous merriment**; [How many people when truth brings conviction drown out the conviction by amusement, partying, intoxication, TV, video games or other distractions?] and by their deeds of violence seemed to be encouraging upon themselves the visitation of the already awakened wrath of God. [What do we understand God's wrath to be? No longer holding back the reaping of the destruction one's actions have chosen] {1SP 72.1}

Everything was now ready for the closing of the ark, which could not have been done by Noah from within. **An angel is seen by the scoffing multitude descending from Heaven, clothed with brightness like the lightning. He closes that massive outer door, and then takes his course upward to Heaven again.** [Thoughts? What would you think if you saw an angel descend from heaven and re-ascend?] Seven days were the family of Noah in the ark before the rain began to descend upon the earth. In this time they were arranging for their long stay while the waters should be upon the earth. **And these were days of blasphemous merriment by the unbelieving multitude.** [why? Were they trying to drown out their fears and misgivings?] They thought because the prophecy of Noah was not fulfilled immediately after he entered the ark, that he was deceived, and that it was impossible that the world could be destroyed by a flood. Previous to this there had been no rain upon the earth. A mist had risen from the waters, which God caused to descend at night like dew, reviving vegetation and causing it to flourish. {1SP 72.2}

Notwithstanding the solemn exhibition they had witnessed of God's power—[which was what?] of the unnatural occurrence of the beasts' leaving the forests and fields, and going into the ark, and the angel of God clothed with brightness, and terrible in majesty, descending from Heaven and closing the door; yet they hardened their hearts, and continued to revel and sport over the signal manifestations of divine power. But upon the eighth day the heavens gathered blackness. The muttering thunders, and vivid lightning flashes, began to terrify man and beast. The rain descended from the clouds above them. This was something they had never witnessed, and their hearts began to faint with fear. The beasts were roving about in the wildest terror, and their discordant voices seemed to moan out their own destiny and the fate of man. **The storm increased in violence until water seemed to come from heaven like mighty cataracts. The boundaries of rivers broke away, and the waters rushed to the valleys. The foundations of the great deep also were broken up. Jets of water would burst up from the earth with indescribable force, throwing massive rocks hundreds of feet into the air, and then they would bury themselves deep in the earth.** {1SP 73.1}



The people first beheld the destruction, of the works of their hands. Their splendid buildings, their beautifully-arranged gardens and groves, where they had placed their idols, were destroyed by lightning from heaven. Their ruins were scattered everywhere. They had erected altars in groves, and consecrated them to their idols, **whereon they offered human sacrifices.** These which God detested were torn down in his wrath before them, and they were made to tremble before the power of the living God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and they were made to know that it was their abominations and horrible, idolatrous sacrifices, which had called for their destruction. {1SP 74.1}

The violence of the storm increased, and there were mingled with the warring of the elements, the wailings of the people who had despised the authority of God. Trees, buildings, rocks, and earth, were hurled in every direction. **The terror of man and beast was beyond description. And even Satan himself, who was compelled to be amid the warring elements, feared for his own existence.** [Why? What was happening? Did Satan fear for his existence because God was acting to destroy? Or, was God releasing His restraining hand over the laws of nature and Satan, who was the god these idolaters worshipped, was incapable of stabilizing nature and sustaining the earth. It would be like a person trying to hold a exploding grenade in their hands. He [Satan] had delighted to control so powerful a race, and wished them to live to practice their abominations, and increase their rebellion against the God of Heaven. **He uttered imprecations against God, charging him with injustice and cruelty.** [who did Satan blame? What was Satan's view of why this was happening? Because God was acting to inflict it as punishment and cruelty] **Many of the people, like Satan, blasphemed God, and if they could have carried out their rebellion, would have torn him from the throne of justice...Angels that excel in strength guided the ark and preserved it from harm. Every moment during that frightful storm of forty days and forty nights the preservation of the ark was a miracle of almighty power.** {1SP 74.2}

The bottom of the lesson states, "Either our life is blotted out, or our sins are. How does this stark reality show just how black-and-white the issues really are?"

Any questions come to mind? Is it black and white? Are there questions?

- What is sin? How do you define it?
 - breaking rules or deviating from God's design?
- Why is the life of the unrepentant sinner blotted out? How is it blotted out?
- How is sin blotted out, and from where is sin blotted out?
- Who does the blotting out?



- What is used to blot out the sin?
 - Sin at its root has two elements—lies and selfishness
 - Sin is blotted out of our characters/minds/hearts by the truth and by the love of God, which are both found in the character of Christ
 - Thus we are to be partakers of the Divine Nature,
 - This is the meaning of partaking the bread and wine or the flesh and blood of the sacrifice, the flesh represents the truth and the blood represents the life (character of love)

TUESDAY

Read fourth paragraph, “It was to impress Abraham’s...” What does this mean? Was the test of Abraham to provide evidence to God that God needed, that God didn’t somehow already know—“I wonder what Abraham will do?” Or to provide Abraham the test Abraham needed to achieve the victory and experience beneficial to Abraham while simultaneously revealing this transforming process to heavenly beings who cannot read hearts and minds and who don’t know the future?

Consider this quotation from *My Life Today*:

A refining, purifying process is going on among the people of God, and **the Lord of hosts has set His hand to this work.** This process is most trying to the soul, but it is necessary in order that defilement may be removed. Trials are essential in order that we may be brought close to our heavenly Father, in submission to His will, that we may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. . . . **The Lord brings His children over the same ground again and again, increasing the pressure until perfect humility fills the mind, and the character is transformed; then they are victorious over self,** and in harmony with Christ and the Spirit of heaven. **The purification of God's people cannot be accomplished without suffering. . . . He passes us from one fire to another, testing our true worth.** True grace is willing to be tried. If we are loath to be searched by the Lord, our condition is one of peril. . . . {ML 92.2}

Why can purification not be accomplished without suffering? Because it is a design law that once there is brokenness of any kind, there are no pain-free options!

We are broken and deformed by sin and the healing process is painful, but it is not harmful! Only those who trust God and will follow Him and His directions in their lives will experience the victory over their own broken selves.



This is because the healing we need *requires our active participation*, because it is healing of our inner selves. If we were not active participants, freely choosing the painful healing road, if God were to use divine power to simply create new characters in us—we, as unique beings, would cease to exist—we would be destroyed and new beings with new identities would be created to take our place.

Therefore, God brings us to places where we can face our own weakness and make choices in harmony with Him to achieve victory over our own weakness and establish firm and healthy character in union with Him. Understand, we CANNOT do this in our own strength—we most yoke up with Christ and only in that love/trust relationship can we then experience the victory over our own weaknesses of character.

Read last paragraph, “The sacrifice required...” Notice—Satan is the legalist, Satan is the one who focuses on behavior, deeds, actions, rules—also notice God didn’t do this so He could discover what Abraham would do, but because He *knew* what Abraham would do and this was for Abraham’s good as well as a witness to the unfallen beings!

WEDNESDAY

Jacob and Esau—any questions about their story?

Many people point to Cain and say things like God is very particular, if you don’t do what God says God will punish or God will condemn—well what about Jacob? Did Jacob do what God instructed?

Look at how the lesson describes it in the third paragraph, “Even though Jacob’s actions seemed to ignore God’s plan. God was still there for him.”

Why the “seemed” Why not say “even though Jacob ignored God’s plan?”

Is it because their model has a hard time describing God as being so particular in one place and not another?

What is the issue? What was the difference between Cain and Jacob? Very little if one focuses on behavior, which is what the legal religions always do. But there is a big difference if one looks past behavior to reality: Cain refused to trust God, Jacob trusted God but still struggled with his own selfishness. In other words, both were infected with selfishness—Jacob had symptoms of the condition but continued to partake the Remedy, Cain had symptoms and refused the Remedy!



THURSDAY

Joseph and his brothers—questions about their story?

Third paragraph states, “Then, when Joseph told his brothers about his dream (Gen 37:5-11), he incited even more hatred and envy against himself.”

Would it have been more helpful to add “inadvertently” before incited? The way this sentence is worded lends itself to be understood as putting blame on Joseph—but the blame is with the selfishness in the hearts of the brothers. What response would have the brothers’ have had for Joseph if they had loved him like Jesus loves us?

As we review all these stories what is the critical point the lesson has completely ignored?:

- Cain/Abel
- Flood
- Abraham’s life
- Jacob/Esau
- Joseph and his brothers

The context of the Great Controversy, with humanity being in a terminal condition and in absolute need of the promised Messiah! God is working to send Jesus to heal and save and Satan is working to oppose God. In every one of these stories you see this issue being played out:

- Cain kills Abel—the righteous brother—to destroy the potential avenue for Messiah
- Flood—the entire world hardened against God except one man
- Abraham—called to be the avenue for Messiah, so targeted to be diverted how?
 - Hagar and distrusting God
 - Lying about his wife
 - Going to war—don’t you think Satan hoped to lure Abraham to war so he could kill Abraham?
 - Yet, despite Abraham’s fallen humanity and shortcomings, he overcomes them in his relationship with God!
- Jacob/Esau—Satan tempts Jacob to cheat Esau in order to incite anger in Esau to kill Jacob and close the avenue for Messiah
- Joseph and his brothers—again to destroy the family of Jacob with a famine and close the avenue for Messiah



FRIDAY

In the middle of the lesson it states, “Of course, Jesus came to earth to die; that was the whole point.”

Was it? Was the whole point for Jesus to die? Or was the point for Jesus to save and heal (Jn 3:17), and His death was the MEANS to achieve His goal?

Read and discuss the questions



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

As we begin 2016 I want to share a little on how the Lord has blessed Come and Reason Ministries in 2015. During 2015 we:

- conducted over 30 seminars, in various denominational and community churches, universities, and health-care organizations in the US, Australia, and New Zealand
- were featured on three television programs and one radio show
- distributed over 40,000 books and 40,000 DVD sets (this doesn't count our Australia and South Africa distribution)
- launched the E-version of *The Remedy*
- launched the print version of *The Journal of the Watcher*
- had exhibits at two conventions (GC and AACC) to distribute our materials
- had over 350 new likes on our facebook page
- produced and broadcast 51 weekly Bible Study classes and had over 180,000 views of our videos watched on YouTube, with weekly averages increasing over the year to now be over 2000 viewers each week
- And despite the massive expense in giving away so much material this year, our finances are stronger than when the year began

We are overwhelmed by God's blessings, give Him all the credit and pray that in 2016 this ministry will fulfill God's purpose for us and we commit ourselves to be available to His direction!

The God-Shaped Brain is now available in Korean and is available at this website:

http://book.naver.com/bookdb/book_detail.nhn?bid=9519886

The Remedy – Dr. Jennings' New Testament Paraphrase—FREE for ios and android systems.

The Journal of the Watcher is now available as a HARD COVER book at Amazon as well as a movie in itunes for everyone without ios or android, you can now get it in itunes. It is also available as an APP for Apple and Android devices.

January 8-9, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Carmichael SDA church in Sacramento, California.

January 29-30, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at The Haven Church in St. Helena, CA.

February 20, 2016: Class will meet at Hamilton Community Church due to the Courthouse being unavailable.

March 11-12, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Village Church, College Place, WA.

April 1-2, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Spring Branch Hispanic SDA church, Houston, TX.