



2025 Allusions, Images, Symbols - Lesson 2

The Genesis Foundation

SABBATH

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’ ” (*John 1:29, NKJV*).

From the Lesson: “One of the key problems with modern interpretations of Bible prophecy, such as in Revelation, is that they fail to recognize the ancient roots of Revelation. The author assumes a knowledge of the Old Testament and uses concepts that would have been well-known to his audience. While searching the entire Bible for passages that resemble the text you are studying in Revelation is useful, there are also core texts that set the stage for understanding the book better than other texts do. This is particularly true of Genesis, which lays out the path by which our world descended into sinful chaos. Nearly every key concept mentioned in Revelation appears—in some form—in the opening chapters of the Bible.”

- While Lucifer/Satan/The Serpent is present early in Genesis, does the “Cosmic Controversy” concept appear in Genesis, or are more OT books needed to fill in some information?
- Does Satan’s origin as the covering cherub, a once holy angel, appear in Genesis, or do we have to read Job / Ezekiel for that??
- Genesis does show the origin of life on this Earth, but don’t we need more insights from other books for nuanced understanding of God’s government / Laws / Principles??

SUNDAY

The Principle of “First Mention”.

From the Lesson: “Most academic programs begin with a general survey course (often given the number “101”), a course that covers broad and basic principles that will form the basis for further study as you dig deeper into the subject. Likewise, when you read through the entire Bible, you quickly discover that God also has a general survey course in the book of Genesis, where He introduces ideas that will be examined in more detail throughout the rest of the Bible.

Generally speaking, the first time a concept or symbol is mentioned in the Bible—particularly in the opening chapters of Genesis—you will discover that it establishes a general understanding of that concept, which will help you understand how it’s being used later on.

Some Bible students refer to this as the “law of first mention,” although it would more properly be labeled a principle (or a pattern) rather than a law, because it is certainly not ironclad, and there are many exceptions to the rule. The pattern that seems to emerge, both in general Bible study and in Bible prophecy, is that God slowly feeds His children information over time, beginning with a basic concept and then enlarging on it many times over the years, or even the centuries.”

This principle of “first mention” answers my questions in Sabbath’s lesson. It’s also known as “progressive disclosure” — the process of introducing concepts that are easier to comprehend, then adding more difficult ones. Paul alludes to this in 1 Corinthians 3: 1-3, using the imagery of the believers needing to move beyond basic teachings [milk / baby food] to a deeper understanding of expanding truth [solid food].

The lesson asks us to read Isaiah 40:7, 8; Malachi 3:6; and Hebrews 13:8. These texts reveal the consistency / unchanging nature of God [aka always Love], and this is foundational for understanding Scriptural prophecy.

From the Lesson: “When God establishes truth, however, He does not change His mind. Once He begins teaching His people truth, we can count on the fact that repetitions of the same biblical principle or theme do not change its meaning but, in contrast, shed further light on that meaning. It makes great sense in studying prophecy, therefore, to develop a good understanding of the book of Genesis, where you find many key concepts explained for the first time, and then take that foundational understanding with you as you explore the rest of the Bible.”

I would have stated the first sentence differently. God is Truth - eternity past, present, and eternity future. God *reveals* Truth to his intelligent created beings and only reveals as much as we can assimilate.

From the Lesson: Why is it so important that we not allow anyone or anything, no matter how smooth or logical, to weaken our faith in the Bible and the infallible truths it teaches? What are subtle ways that this weakening can happen?

Are we to have faith in the Bible, or the men who wrote it, or the Spirit who inspired it? Is faith in Scripture alone necessary, or are we called, by Scripture [John 1:3 & Psalms 34:8], to integrate different threads of evidence into our understanding?

MONDAY

Understanding God’s Love.

The first paragraph contrasts God’s perfect Love with our imperfect love. I would suggest that any human love is an outgrowth of allowing God’s Love to flow through us.

From the Lesson: “Understanding the nature of love is an important key to understanding Bible prophecy. One of the key themes in the great controversy is the existence of a substantial misunderstanding about God’s character. Ellen G. White, after all, ends her summary of *The Great Controversy* by writing: **“The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.”—Page 678.**”

The lesson references the story of Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac as the first mention of “love” in Scripture and asks what does this teach us about the nature of God’s love. Any thoughts??

Does this passage add any insights?

God had called Abraham to be the father of the faithful, and his life was to stand as an example of faith to succeeding generations. But his faith had not been perfect. He had shown distrust of God in concealing the fact that Sarah was his wife, and again in his marriage with Hagar. That he might reach the highest standard God subjected him to another test, the closest which man was ever called to endure. In a vision of the night he was directed to repair to the land of Moriah, and there offer up his son as a burnt offering upon a mountain that should be shown him. – PP 147

Read the entire chapter - 13 - The Test of Faith, in Patriarchs and Prophets for deeper insights.

From the bottom section in Monday’s lesson: How do we even begin to manifest to others the kind of self- sacrificing love that God has for us? Why, for most of us, is this kind of love not necessarily basic to us? Excellent questions. Any thoughts from the class??

TUESDAY

Isaac’s Question: Where is the Lamb?

I don’t think many [in this class] have any issues with the metaphor of “The Lamb” being Jesus of Nazareth. For a review of biblical metaphors / symbols see last week’s lesson [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIskXEik8Ok>]. The bottom section of Tuesday’s lesson makes the point, twice, that Jesus is our “Substitute”. Many critics of our ministry say we deny the substitutionary nature of Christ’s life / death / resurrection. How would you respond and why??

From the Lesson: “Why is knowing that Jesus is our Substitute so foundational to our salvation? What hope would you have without Him, as that Substitute, especially in the judgment?”

First: Is “knowing” that Jesus is our Substitute enough? Demons “know” this and tremble. Knowledge alone seems inadequate. Any scriptures come to mind?? Like Genesis 4:1 “Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, ‘I have acquired a man from the Lord.’” Or John 17: 3 “Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” The word “knew / know” here implies something more than a superficial or didactic knowledge. It’s an intimate “knowing” of Christ/God — a living knowledge that “is eternal life...”. The contrary is also true. Adam and Eve developed in intimate “knowledge” of evil by taking the forbidden fruit. Humanity now “knows” sin and evil.

Second, does our understanding of how God’s Law functions affect our understanding of “substitution”?? If we hold to the penal “substitution” theology, then we see Jesus “substituting” himself as a legal payment to solve His Father’s anger [with sin] problem. Even in a human justice system, it is anathema to consider putting an innocent person to death for the “crimes” of the guilty, yet many believe this is how God’s government functions.

If we believe God’s Law is the Law of Love and it functions for the benefit of others, to do what’s Right because it’s Right, then we understand that only one equal to God could restore mankind back to its original design that Adam corrupted. Since the the controversy in Heaven was with Michael / Jesus, then He was the one who came and revealed His Father AND eradicated the sinful nature from the human species. The entire Godhead planned this from eternity past. God gave his Only Son [John 3:16], Jesus volunteered [Philippians 2: 6,7], and the Holy Spirit makes the Remedy effective for us [John 14:26].

Jesus is our “substitute” because NO human being [not even Enoch or Elijah] could do what was needed to restore mankind back to its original nobility.

See <https://comeandreason.com/christ-our-substitute/> for further insights.

WEDNESDAY

Dealing With Death.

From the Lesson: “Perhaps the cruelest aspect of living in a world detached from its Creator is the way that death lurks in the background of every life, ready to strike at any moment. It is the “wages of sin,” the penalty that we pay for having been disconnected from the only Source of life in the universe: the Creator.”

Does the author / editor mix two types of death in the above passage?? Seems like it. What of those who die three deaths?? Revelation 1:7.

“They also which pierced him”, those that mocked and derided Christ’s dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient. – GC 637.

With a mature understanding of Scripture, we should regard death [sleep] as a marvelous act of God's grace. It's a powerful metaphor regarding the second death in the end, and it limits the spread of sin [evil ones don't live forever] — see below.

In order to possess an endless existence, man must continue to partake of the tree of life. Deprived of this, his vitality would gradually diminish until life should become extinct. It was Satan's plan that Adam and Eve should by disobedience incur God's displeasure; and then, if they failed to obtain forgiveness, he hoped that they would eat of the tree of life, and thus perpetuate an existence of sin and misery. But after man's fall, holy angels were immediately commissioned to guard the tree of life. Around these angels flashed beams of light having the appearance of a glittering sword. None of the family of Adam were permitted to pass the barrier to partake of the life-giving fruit; hence there is no immortal sinner. — PP 60

How are Christians to “deal with death” [1 Thessalonians 4:1-14]? Are we to develop a cultural understanding of death or a scriptural one? What does scripture tell us about death [Matt. 9: 24, John 11:11, 13, Romans 6:23]? How many deaths are there? [Revelation 2:11, Rev. 20: 6, 14, Rev. 21:8].

THURSDAY

The Serpent.

The lesson references Genesis 3:1-5, and Revelation 12: 1-9 regarding the “serpent / dragon”, but have you ever wondered about the texts Job 41:1 or Isa 27:1. Many translations have “Leviathan” meaning “likely crocodile” in the margin, but what if the authors meant something else?

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

How has Satan [aka The serpent/dragon/leviathan] deceived the “whole world”? Will he deceive the “whole world” at the end of time, or will there be some living on Earth that are so settled in to the Truth about God's government, and Satan's attempts to overthrow that government that they will not be deceived?? See Revelation 12: 11. Also read Ch. 39 — The Time of Trouble and Ch. 40 — God's People Delivered from the Great Controversy for some insights.