

In The Beginning

Part 1

Introduction

One of my favorite accounts in the Bible is the creation story - the drama of our beginnings - both the earth's and ours personally. I love to read the story of how God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together created the world and all that's in it. Genesis shows us, too, how God is always willing to give us a second chance.

Our Study

The Scripture: Genesis 1:1-2

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."

1. Who created the heavens and the earth? _____

The author of this passage immediately tells us what we want to know. Who created the world? Who made everything in it? God, of course.

2. How does the second verse describe the earth? _____

This verse poses a problem. How could God create something that was empty and formless? Some Bible scholars believe that the word translated "created" is more properly translated "recreated."

Others tell us that a vast amount of time passed between verses 1 and 2 and therein lies the story of how God's perfect creation became formless and void.

We need to look at three other biblical books in order to understand this. Ezekiel's prophecy against the king of Tyre gives us a hidden picture of God's arch-enemy - Satan.

The Scripture: Ezekiel 28: 12-16

" 'You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones.' "

3. Describe Satan as he existed before his fall. _____

4. What did God do to him? _____

One interesting note from this scripture reveals that Satan had been in Eden. Some authorities believe that Eden was Satan's particular domain.

The Scripture: Ezekiel 28:17

"Your heart became proud on account of your beauty and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth."

5. Continue Ezekiel's description. _____

Let us turn to Isaiah now.

The Scripture: Isaiah 14: 11 in the NKJ

"Your pomp is brought down..., and the sound of your stringed instruments."

7. What else is mentioned? _____

Some authorities believe that this verse refers to Satan's proficiency in music - still influencing people (particularly our young people) today.

Isaiah continues:

The Scripture: Isaiah 14:13-14

"You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God;...I will make myself like the Most High.'"

8. What more did Satan want? _____

Of course, God could not permit this. There was a terrible war between God's forces and Satan's.

The Scripture: Revelation 12:7-9

"Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Satan), and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down - that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth and his angels with him."

9. Who led the Lord's troops? _____

Satan's pride was so strong, he challenged God. Other verses in the Bible tell us that one third of all the angels sided with him.

10. What does Satan do? _____

11. What eventually happened to Satan? _____

Satan was hurled to the earth, and this is probably the reason we find the earth formless, empty and dark. We hear nothing more of Satan until he tempts Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Let us go back now to the creation story.

The Scripture: Genesis 1:2 in The Amplified bible

"...The earth was without form and an empty waste....The Spirit of God was moving (hovering brooding) over the face of the waters."

12. What was the Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) doing? _____

As Christians, we are inclined to think of the Holy Spirit as essentially belonging to the New Testament era. But we see in this verse that He has been actively involved in the affairs of our world and in man since the beginning.

These two words hovering and brooding are very interesting. Hovering can be defined as "abiding or lingering" - to hang fluttering in the air or upon the wing." Brooding is another word used in relation to fowl. Here we have the idea of the mother bird sitting on her eggs for the purpose of warming, protecting, or hatching them. The word also means "to remain steadfastly settled over something, to sit over, cover and cherish, to nourish, to foster."

So here at the very beginning of our world, we have this beautiful picture of the gentle, bird-like nature of the Holy Spirit, waiting expectantly for the birth of the earth and then ready to cherish, nourish, and foster the development of its dwellers.

The following chapters describe the actual creation of the earth.

The Scripture: Genesis 1:3

"And God said, 'Let there be light....and he separated the day from the darkness.'"

13. What did God create on the first day? _____

The Scripture: Genesis 1:6

"And God said, 'Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water and God called the expanse 'sky.'"

14. What did God create on the second day? _____

God continued the creation process - creating vegetation, lights in the sky, and the stars.

Next He created the living things - birds, the great creatures of the sea, and the wild animals.

The Scripture: Genesis 1:26

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

15. Whose image was man created in? _____

The Scripture: Genesis 2:9

"In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

16. What two trees did God plant in the garden? _____

God placed man in the Garden of Eden and gave him authority over every living thing. Only one thing was forbidden to him.

The Scripture: Genesis 2:16, 17

"You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

17. What must man not do? _____

18. What would happen to him if he did? _____

Let us return now to the encounter between Satan and Eve. Satan, in essence, implied to Eve that God was lying to her and Adam - that if they ate the forbidden fruit, they would not die, but their eyes would be opened and they would be like God, knowing good from evil.

The Scripture: Genesis 3:6

"When the woman (Eve) saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some of it and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it."

19. What did Eve do? _____

The Scripture: Genesis 3:7

"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves."

20. What happened next? _____

When God had His customary meeting with them in the evening, they were afraid of Him. When God questioned them, Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent. God cursed the serpent and condemned Eve to painful childbirth. He condemned Adam to hard labor and both of them to eventually physical death.

The Scripture: Genesis 3:21

"The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them...The Lord God banished [them] from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken."

21. What did God do next? _____

The Scripture: Genesis 3:22

"The Lord God said, 'The man has now become like one of Us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever. So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.'"

22. What had eating the forbidden fruit done to Adam and Eve? _____

23. What must they not be allowed to do? _____

The Scripture: Genesis 3:15

"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."

24. What would Eve's seed do? _____

25. What was God's curse on Satan? _____

26. What did God do to Adam and Eve? _____

God had a plan for undoing the results of the Fall. He was protecting Adam and Eve from living forever in a fallen state.

The Answers

1. God
2. As formless and empty
3. He was a model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, an anointed guardian cherub, blameless in his ways until wickedness was found in him. He was filled with violence and sinned.
4. Expelled him
5. His heart became proud because of his beauty and he corrupted his wisdom.
6. Threw him to earth
7. His stringed instruments
8. He wanted to make himself like God.
9. Michael
10. He leads the whole world astray
11. He was hurled to earth.
12. Moving, hovering, brooding over the face of the waters
13. Light - day and night
14. He separated the waters and separated the earth from the land
15. God's
16. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
17. Eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
18. He would die.
19. She ate some of the fruit and gave some to Adam who also ate it.
20. They both realized they were naked and they made coverings for themselves.
21. He made clothing for Adam and Eve, and then He banished them from the Garden of Eden.
22. Enabled them to know good and evil
23. To eat from the tree of life and live forever
24. Bruise his seed
25. He would crawl on his belly and eat dust. He would put enmity between him and the woman and between his offspring and hers.
26. Banished them from the garden.

All scripture quotations in this publication are from the Holy Bible, New International Version

(unless otherwise indicated)

Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, New International Bible Society

Copyright © 2005 by JoAnne Sekowsky