

Sabbath Lesson #8 – Creation: Genesis as Foundation — Part 1 – 16-22 May 2020

Christ would have us understand what He inspired John to write of the creation and of Him as through whom God created everything. Thus John wrote: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men” (Genesis 1:1-4).

The Lesson writer claims that in the Bible “we find the nature of the Godhead working in harmony as the Father, Son (..), and the Spirit (..) to create the world and all that is in it, culminating in humanity (..)” – but this false teaching implies two unbiblical assumptions: (1) the word “Godhead” means three-in-one: Father, Son, the Spirit; (2) the world was created by the three-in-one. First, the word “Godhead” is found in three texts: Acts 17:29, Romans 1:20, and Colossians 2:9 – in each of these texts the word “Godhead” refers to the heavenly Father only. Second, only two Beings were involved in creation, Father and Son. It is “God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9). Who created all things? God. How? “by Jesus Christ.” God made the world, by His Son: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds” (Hebrews 1:1-2). Source of creation is the Father; the means of creation is His Son. “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him” (1 Corinthians 8:6).

Genesis 1:2 says “the Spirit of God,” that is, ‘God’s Spirit’ – false brethren teach that this Spirit is a separate Entity from God; a teaching “through which Satan is working to make a nonentity of God and of Christ” {9T 68.1}. God and His Son are omnipresent and omniscient by their Spirit, and could not themselves be everywhere if their Spirit were a separate Entity. Of spirits, there is only “one Spirit” (Ephesians 4:4) that is holy; that one Spirit is “the Spirit of your Father” (Matthew 10:20); God is everywhere by and in that one Spirit, as the psalmist tells us that God’s own Spirit is His presence, “Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?” (Psalm 139:7); that one Spirit is an integral part of God just as the spirit of man is an integral part of man, for we are told, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11); that one Spirit is which God gave to His Son, Christ, “for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him” (John 3:34); hence that one Spirit is shared by the Father and His Son as their Spirit, that is why Paul interchanges this by saying, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Romans 8:9); that one Spirit the Father gives us as the Spirit of His Son, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6); it is that one Spirit, as an integral inner part of Christ, that He breathed out to His disciples, “And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (John 20:22); that one Spirit of Christ, as an integral part of Christ, when in us, is Christ Himself, for “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17); and as the Father and Son share that one Spirit, when that one Spirit is in us, Father and Son are in us, for Christ said: “If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him” (John 14:23).

Sunday: “In the Beginning ...” – Let us use Q&A here: 1. What did God do in the beginning? “In the beginning God created the heaven and earth” (Genesis 1:1). 2. By what means was this accomplished? “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth;” “For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:6, 9). 3. Are we to understand from these words that the matter of the earth was not in existence before He spake? “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Hebrews 11:3). 4. Who was the active agent in creation? “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir

of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1-2). 5. Is there anything that the Son did not make? "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16-17). 6. Since it was by the Son that the Father created all things, what is His rightful title? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word God;" "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1, 3). 7. How has the Father addressed the Son? "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom;" "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands" (Hebrews 1:8, 10). 8. Then how should Christ be regarded by all creatures? "And again, when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Hebrews 1:6).

Monday: The Days of Creation – When does the day begin? At evening, according to the record in Genesis 1; and we read in Leviticus 23:32 that the Jews were directed to celebrate their Sabbaths "from even unto even," and this could not be unless they regarded other days as beginning at the same time. But why is this? Is it an arbitrary requirement? or is there a fixed reason why the day begins at evening? It is not an arbitrary matter, but the natural day begins at evening because it cannot by any possibility begin at any other time. When the earth was created "darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Genesis 1:2). The phrase, "in the beginning" marks the beginning of time, as distinguished from God's eternity. The speaking of the matter of the earth into existence, marked the beginning of the first day of time. But darkness covered the formless mass, and consequently the first day of time began in darkness. Before the earth had completed its first revolution, however, light was created. "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening [the darkness] and the morning [the light] were the first day" (Genesis 1:3-5). The first revolution of the earth was completed just at the dividing line between light and darkness; and so, just as the first day began in the unbroken darkness, the second day began with the darkness that had been separated, and put within bounds. To make the day actually begin at any other time than evening, would involve a change in the earth's revolution; and in order to count the day as beginning at midnight, a portion of time had to be ignored. Counting a day from midnight is not of God's arrangement.

Tuesday: The Sabbath and Creation – The Sabbath commandment points us back to creation and the Creator. The Father created through His Son; spoke His commandments at Sinai through His Son. The Sabbath points to the Creator, whom we should worship. All honour given to Jesus goes to the Father. All the worship that goes to the Father is through Jesus. "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11). The One God, the Father, who created all things by His Son, says, "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which sent Him" (John 5:23). The Sabbath is sign of sanctification (Exodus 31:13). "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (John 17:17); Christ the Divine Word says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). The Father sanctifies us by giving us His Son; and the Sabbath is a sign of sanctification.

Wednesday: Creation and Marriage – "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mark 10:9). Marriage was instituted by the Creator Himself in the Garden of Eden before the fall of man. Marriage and the Sabbath are both honourable institutions. Of the Lord's Sabbath, we read: "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words" (Isaiah 58:13). Of marriage, we read: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

Thursday: Creation, the Fall, and the Cross – The cross saves us from the fall: "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Romans 5:18).