

Christian Study

Lesson 250

Be Light

Focusing on Church beyond Sunday

Some people get lost reading the Bible. The Bible has a point of reference around which one must move. Learn to keep your eyes on Jesus Christ and you will find that as your spiritual eyesight improves and allows you to penetrate the gloom and darkness of this world, you will be able to extend your radius of faith further and further, exploring more and more of the exciting and adventurous life in Christ Jesus.

As I looked up and read passages for this week's lesson, I had to print a few of the same verses from a variety of translations. Reading the print out I had in my hands was a little hard because of the particular translation I printed unintentionally. This made me realized that, if the language in the translation of the Bible we read regularly is hard to understanding, it becomes an uninteresting journey and growth in the goodness and the unconditional love of God is going to be missed. Let me give you an example of one passage in several versions and you decide which one gives you the best understanding of what is being told.

King James Version (KJV)

Hebrews 1:1-3

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, **2** 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; **3** Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

New King James Version (NKJV)

Hebrews 1:1-3

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets **2** has in this last days spoken to us by His son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds. **3** who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person and upholding all things by the word of His power when by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Good News Bible (GNB)

Hebrews 1:1-3

In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophets, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son. He is the one through whom God

created the universe, the one whom God has chosen to possess all things at the end. **3** He reflects the brightness of God's glory and is the exact likeness of God's own being, sustaining the universe with his powerful word. After achieving forgiveness for the sins of all human beings, he sat down in heaven at the right side of God, the Supreme Power.

American Standard Version (ASV)

Hebrews 1:1-3

God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, **2** hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in *his* Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; **3** who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

English Standard Version (ESV)

Hebrews 1:1-3

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. **3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

I am not trying to promote or denounce any of the versions out there. What I want you to know is, it will be much more exciting and alive if you find a translation that you can understand better. Some of us like the old English while others prefer the simple English without losing the story it is telling. One thing I will want you to know is that, no translation gets holier than the others; it is the Holy Spirit that teaches the full understanding of all scripture.

A Closer Look at "The Word of God" (continued)

The Old Testament: Myth or Truth

A Moment of Reflection

Before beginning your study, pray and ask God to show you the truth about the Old Testament. Have your bibles open and a dictionary for new word meaning.

Key Verse: Isaiah 40:8

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

Christ's Confirmation of Old Testament Events

Noah and the Flood

There have been volumes of literature written about the flood and its implications upon mankind. The doubters and skeptics have discounted this story as a myth. The biblical student has held closely the view point that the flood was an actual historical event, which gives evidence to man of the power and judgment and salvation of God. We hope the following study will help you to establish your own convictions concerning this important account. Read the words of Christ and the apostles in the following passages.

Matthew 24:37-39, Luke 17:26-27, 2 Peter 2:5, 1 Peter 3:20

During the flood all but eight people were destroyed. If this account in the Old Testament had been wrong, do you believe Jesus who is God would have corrected it? He did not correct them, He established it as a fact during His ministry with Peter. In Matthew 24:37-39, Jesus compared the days of Noah to the future event of His return. It would not have made any sense to compare such an important event as the second coming of Christ to a mythical story. If the story was false, we can conclude that Christ was not the savior of the world and has no authority in what He said and did and told us the Holy Spirit will do when we believe

In **Hebrews 11:7** "By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. "Noah was warned of the coming disaster. The writer of this epistle believed the flood was an actual event in history, because God would not warn someone of something that was not going to happen. What would you say if someone came to you and said, "I believe in Jesus, but I don't believe all that stuff about the flood"?

Logically, if Christ is God and He said that there was a flood—there was a flood. If He is not God, then we are still in our sins, and whether or not there was a flood is completely irrelevant to our lives. The validity and significance of the flood and other Old Testament events rests entirely upon the testimony of Jesus and the apostles. If you are wrong about Jesus Christ, it doesn't matter what you are right about

The Creation

In most of our educational systems today, the theory of evolution is taught as fact. Its proponents have ignored the biblical revelation and discounted it as nonscientific. They seldom admit that evolutionary theory is just as much a statement of faith as biblical beliefs, since it cannot be observed, tested, or verified through experiment. The real issue remains in the person of Jesus Christ. The biblical record stands or falls together, and ultimately rests on His identity and authority.

In **Genesis 1:26-27** man came to being Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens

and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE

Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Jesus was referring to the Word of God in Matthew when He said "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female?" **Matthew 19:4**. This statement by Jesus tells us that the account of creation is to be found in no other place but in the Word of God, the Bible.

The Apostle Peter told us that the earth was formed by God's command out of water and was destroyed by the water of the flood. It will not be consistent to believe in the flood and not in the creation according to this passage **2 Peter 3:5-6** "They purposely ignore the fact that long ago God gave a command, and the heavens and earth were created. The earth was formed out of water and by water, **6** and it was also by water, the water of the flood, that the old world was destroyed."

In the following passages, Christ is presented as the creator, therefore, to claim that we evolved from animals or a lower form of life is to deny Christ **John 1:1-3** "In the beginning the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** From the very beginning the Word was with God. **3** Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him."

Colossians 1:13-17 "He rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us safe into the kingdom of his dear Son, **14** by whom we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven. **15** Christ is the visible likeness of the invisible God. He is the first-born Son, superior to all created things. **16** For through him God created everything in heaven and on earth, the seen and the unseen things, including spiritual powers, lords, rulers, and authorities. God created the whole universe through him and for him. **17** Christ existed before all things, and in union with him all things have their proper place" **Hebrews 1:1-3** "In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophets, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son. He is the one through whom God created the universe, the one whom God has chosen to possess all things at the end. **3** He reflects the brightness of God's glory and is the exact likeness of God's own being, sustaining the universe with his powerful word. After achieving forgiveness for the sins of all human beings, he sat down in heaven at the right side of God, the Supreme Power."

Hebrews 11:3 brings us back to in my opinion the most important word of all scripture. The word "faith" which as we understanding the biblical meaning of this word, our walk becomes more fruitful each time we study the scriptures. This is hoe we must understanding of God's creation of the earth. "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."

By definition, science is the field of observing and analyzing existing data. On the other hand, Jesus Christ and His apostles claimed to speak with authority on the subject of creation. Why should you choose to accept the Bible's testimony?

Jonah

Much skepticism has been expressed concerning Jonah and the big fish. This story is cited by many unbelievers as a reason to discount the truth of the Bible. The real relevance of the story of Jonah can be discovered by studying it in conjunction with the words of Jesus Christ who spoke of it directly

Read these passages and answer the following questions. See how much the Word of God

- 1 In Luke 11:29-30 and 32, could Jesus (the "Son of Man") use this analogy about His being, a sign to the generation to whom He was speaking if Jonah was not real?
- 2 What did Jonah's preaching cause the men of Nineveh to do?
- 3 What then can you conclude Jesus believed about the person of Jonah?
- 4 Would it be logical to claim to be greater than someone who did not exist?
- 5 In Matthew 12:39-41, what was the sig from God to the Ninevites, and to what future events did Christ equates this?
- 6 Was the resurrection an actual event?
- 7 What can you conclude about Jonah and the big fish?

For information regarding the truthfulness of the account of Jonah in the big fish, the Liberty Research Society of Encyclopedia Britannica was consulted:

Their reply stated first, that from the standpoint of the biologist, as well as the professional seaman, there is no question whatever that the sperm whale is physiologically capable of swallowing the largest of men: its mouth, throat and stomach handle much larger food without the least inconvenience.

Further, the Research Society class two instances of men in modern times being swallowed alive and living to tell the story. One of these cases was subjected to careful scientific investigation by one British and two French scientists. A whaler disappeared after his small boat was upset by a harpooned whale; two days later, he was found in a dissected whale's stomach. Except for a two-week period of stock and a permanent bleaching of his skin from the gastric juices, the man lived a normal life.

Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

We can go back and read the detailed story of Sodom and Gomorrah in the book of Genesis, starting form chapter ten all the way to chapter nineteen, but at this time let us pick it up from the New Testament gospel of Luke that describes the lifestyle of the people in that day.. **Luke 17:28-30** "So also as it was in the days of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold,

they planted, they built; **29** but the day Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from the heaven and destroyed *them* all. **30** Even so it shall be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

- 1 How was the city destroyed?
- 2 According to Peter's account in **2 Peter 2:6-8**, to whom were Sodom and Gomorrah made an example, and how were they made an example?
- 3 Did Jesus and Peter refer to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as an actual historical record or as a fictional story?
- 4 What therefore is your conclusion about the existence and destruction of these two cities?

Note: The remains of these cities have never been found, though many believe they are at the foot of the Dead Sea.

It is no secret, what God can do. What He's done for others, He'll do for you.

Our mission is to help people find strength and security on the foundation that can never be shaken, cracked or shattered. This foundation is the remarkable truth of God's unconditional love and His indisputable grace experienced in a relationship with Jesus Christ. The critics of Christianity have launched a full attack to discredit the person and works of Jesus Christ and the reliability of His word. We cannot be silent anymore. Let us as children of light, stand firm in the faith, because He who has taken us this far will never forsake us. You are called Christians, be careful of that name. Let not our Lord Jesus Christ be blasphemed on your account

Believe this, "Jesus did not come to make bad people good, He came to make dead people live."

Keep It Simple

Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

If you have any questions, comments or you know anybody else who will benefit from this study please feel free to give us their email address and they will be added to our mailing list to receive weekly lessons. The email address is santigiemando1@yahoo.com,

Remember: A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle (Ephesians 5:8)

Let's go light another candle!