

## Lesson Seven

GOD THE CREATOR

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Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:1-27; Psa. 33:6-17.

Scriptures To Memorize: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:). "By the word of Jehovah 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" (Psa. 33:6, 9). "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God; so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear" (Heb. 11:3).

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61. Q. What truth is indicated by the design in the world around us?

A. That the universe had a Designer.

(1) Example of a watch. Its marks of design, as we have learned, prove that it had a designer, who foresaw not only its structure but its uses as well. (2) Example of the human eye. It must have been designed for the specific purpose for which it is used. It is inconceivable that both the eye itself and its functions are products of chance, or of materialistic evolution. (3) The same reasoning applies with equal force to all the organs of the body and their respective uses. (4) So it is with the world. It must have had a Designer who foresaw it in all its parts and uses, even before He created it. (5) Impossible for a building to build itself; hence the folly of materialistic evolution, which is today rejected by leading scientists.

62. Q. What is the first great truth revealed in the Bible?

A. The truth that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Gen. 1:1.

(1) God is not identical with Nature, but is the Creator and Ruler of Nature. "The first lesson of the Bible is that at the root and origin of this vast material universe, before whom we are crushed as the moth, there abides a living, conscious Spirit, who wills and knows and fashions all things" (Dr. Marcus Dods). John 4:24—"God is a Spirit."

Gen. 1:2—"the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (2) It must be admitted that what we call Substance (Matter) was either created, or it has always been. Either Spirit or Matter, one or the other, is uncreated and eternal. No other assumption is possible. (3) The superiority of Spirit to Matter proves conclusively that Spirit was first. For instance, how could you even know anything about Matter, or formulate any theories of Matter, if you did not have Mind? It is obvious that it is only through the avenue of Mind that we are able to form concepts of Matter and theories respecting it; hence, in knowing Matter and its uses, Mind proves its superiority. But Mind is a function of Spirit; therefore we conclude that Spirit is superior to Matter, and that Spirit must have antedated Matter. Both Reason and Revelation teach us that Spirit was first. (See Lesson Thirteen.)

63. Q. What is the full significance of this statement in the first verse of Genesis?

A. It is most significant, in the fact that it challenges all false theories of God.

(1) It challenges atheism—the notion that there is no God.

(2) It challenges dualism—the theory that both God and Matter are eternal. (3) It challenges materialism—the notion that Matter is eternal and all. (4) It challenges pantheism—the notion that God is "the totality of things."

(5) It challenges polytheism—belief in many Gods. (6) It challenges humanism, the high-sounding name given to that current form of atheism which dethrones God and deifies man. (7) Thus it will be seen that Moses "dipped his pen in the ink of inspiration and, with one mighty sweeping statement, anticipated and challenged all the false notions of God that were to arise in the world throughout all the ages of human history."

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64. Q. What is meant by Creation?

A. By Creation we mean that free act of God by which in the beginning He made, without the use of preexisting materials, the whole visible and invisible universe.

(1) Whether He did this a portion at a time or all at one

time, is inconsequential. The fact remains that He did it; and this is the religious truth with which we are concerned.

(2) It should be noted here that man does little more than tinker with things. For instance, in building a house, man makes use of materials at hand, such as wood, brick, stone, etc. But when God creates, He does so without using pre-existing materials. Heb. 11:3—"By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." That is, the world was not made out of sensible and pre-existent material, but by the direct Fiat of Omnipotence. (3) This primary or absolute creation is indicated in the first chapter of Genesis by the Hebrew word *bara*, which is used in Gen. 1:1, 1:21, and 1:27.

**65. Q. By what method did God create all things?**

**A. He created all things by the exercise of His Almighty Will.**

God is omnipotent, which means, as we have learned, that He has only to will a thing to be done, and it is done. Spirit is all-powerful in relation to things. Spirit can be resisted only by free will. A realization of the Omnipotence of Spirit would awaken the church to higher and holier living.

**66. Q. By what means did God create all things?**

**A. By means of His Word.**

(1) Psa. 33:6, 9—"By the word of Jehovah 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." John 1:1-3—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." Heb. 11:3—"By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God," etc. (2) The medium through which will is revealed and expressed, is word. Law, then, is the expression of will, communicated in words. Hence we read, in the first chapter of Genesis, that at the beginning of each "day" of creation, God said something; and that what God said was done. Gen. 1:3—"and God

said, Light be; and Light was." Psa. 33:9—"He spake, and it was done." (3) Impress upon your pupils the truth that the Word of God is omnipotent and never-failing. Luke 1:37—"for no word from God shall be void of power." God always keeps His promises when we meet the conditions. This is a lesson our generation needs to learn. God's Word for us is embodied in the New Testament Scriptures, our all-sufficient guide in religious faith and practice.

**67. Q. Why did God create the world around us?**

**A. Evidently He created it for man's use and benefit.**

(1) Gen. 1:28-31, "And God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," etc. (2) "God's favor to man is manifested in the fact, that for his special benefit the whole earth, with all its rich treasures of mineral, vegetable, and animal wealth, was provided. For him, all the matter of the Earth was created in the beginning. For him, all the gold, and silver, and copper, and iron, and granite, and marble, and coal, and salt, and other precious minerals and fossils, were treasured up, during the many ages that intervened between the epoch of Creation and the beginning of the Historic Period. For him, the light and the atmosphere were produced. For him, the world was clothed with grass, and fruits, and flowers. For him, the Sun rose and set in the firmament, and the stars performed their apparent daily and yearly revolutions. For him, the sea and land were filled with living creatures, and the air was made vocal with the sweet voices of birds. All these things were provided for the good and happiness of man; and then he himself was created to enjoy them. And thus it happened, that what was first in design was really last in execution" (Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, p. 36).

**68. Q. Why, then, did God create man?**

**A. Probably because God wanted a race of beings whom He could love and by whom He could be loved.**

(1) Spirit is social, i. e., it seeks the fellowship of kindred spirits. God recognized this when He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18). (2) Because God, who is Himself a Spirit (John 4:24), sought the fellowship of kindred spirits, it was necessary that He create man "in his own image" (Gen. 1:27). (3) Parents desire children that they may love them, care for them, protect them, and be loved by them in return. Teach the children the reasons why they should love their parents; and that for the same reasons we should love our heavenly Father. (4) God's ultimate objective in inaugurating and administering His entire moral system, is nothing short of a holy universe, "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13); and, in consequence, His own final and complete vindication from the false charges preferred against Him by Satan on the occasion of the latter's revolt against His authority and government. Eph. 3:9, 10—"God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God," etc. See Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 20:10, etc. (This matter will be fully treated in another lesson). (5) Of course it is folly to speculate too extensively with regard to the "secret things" of the Almighty (Deut. 29:29). Suffice it for us that the world is here, and that we are in it. Therefore it should be our privilege and joy to make the very best of it, and of ourselves, under God's guidance and in harmony with His will and plan for us.

69. Q. In view of all these great truths, what should we do?

A. We should praise God unceasingly for His goodness and loving kindness towards us; and we should love and serve Him always, for in so doing we shall find true happiness both here and hereafter.

#### REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON SEVEN

61. Q. What truth is indicated by the design in the world around us?

62. Q. What is the first great truth revealed in the Bible?
63. Q. What is the full significance of this statement in the first verse of Genesis?
64. Q. What is meant by Creation?
65. Q. By what method did God create all things?
66. Q. By what means did God create all things?
67. Q. Why did God create the world around us?
68. Q. Why, then, did God create man?
69. Q. In view of all these great truths, what should we do?

## Lesson Eight

## GOD THE PRESERVER

Scripture Reading: Psa. 148; Acts 17:22-31.

Scripture To Memorize: "For he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass away" (Psa. 148:5-6).

70. Q. Who is the First Cause of all things?

A. God.

(1) He alone is unoriginated, uncreated, eternal. (2) Spirit precedes, unifies and controls Matter. A magnet, for instance, will attract to itself all the steel filings on a laboratory table. That is, it is not the magnet which does it, but the energy stored up in the magnet. In this sense, this invisible energy may be said to build a body around itself. In like manner, I believe, Spirit gathers around itself particles of Matter. Your spirit, or self—the real you—attracts to itself the particles of which your body is composed, and welds them into a unit. When the spirit leaves the body, the body dissolves into its original elements—calcium, phosphorus, hydrogen, oxygen, etc.—because its unifying entity is gone. This change we call death. But it is only the dissolution of the body; the spirit, unaffected by it, lives on. (3) So, when the Divine Spirit began to "move upon the face of the waters" (literally, to brood, vitalize, cherish incipient life, etc.), He assembled around Himself the sub-