

GOD'S PERFECT BOOK

There was a time on this earth when man neither had, nor needed a Bible. The actual written Bible, begun by Moses many centuries later reveals why this was true. God created a perfect world, placed in that world two beautiful people and then regularly visited with them face to face in their Eden home. They witnessed His love for them, listened to His instructions, enjoyed the God-made beauties about them, and thrilled to the natural response that they found within themselves of a returned love and joyous appreciation for all that the Creator had given them.

In this first lesson we want to discover a bit more about this Eden of the past, what happened to it, the "Eden" that God's Perfect Book promises for the future, and how we can become inhabitants of it.

1. Let's open the Bible and read a few words in relation to how God once created this world. As you read the creation account in Genesis 1:1-2:3, what is the repeating thought that you find in verses 12, 18, 21, 25, and 31?

2. In the chapter you read in question 1, verses 26,27 make it clear that the first pair were created in the image of God – thus, we can say that they were perfect. Read some additional details of that beautiful creation in Genesis 2:7, 8, 15, 18. List these added facts in order to remember them more clearly.

It is not difficult to see why there was no Bible needed back then.

3. Turn to the opposite end of your Bible, to the last two chapters of the last book called Revelation. Read Revelation 21:1-5. What are the central points of these verses?

(a) Verses 1,2 _____

(b) Verse 3 _____

(c) Verse 5 _____

It is very clear that this is still in the future. There is no need for a Bible there either, for the Author will again be personally with His redeemed people. We do not need a Book to guide us when God and Christ are present with us.

4. The question that we must now ask is, What happened to God's perfect creation back in the beginning? How did we get into the mess that we find ourselves a part of? Our answer is actually found in the entire Bible story between its first two, and last two chapters. Read Genesis 3:1-6 and then write down a simple statement of what happened "back then."

5. Following what happened in the text above, Adam and Eve faced a problem. There could be no more face-to-face encounters with God--sinners could not endure that. Yet they now needed God in a way that they had not previously known. They needed His guidance in relation to what they could do about their sin, and how to become fit to live with God again. Read Revelation 1:1,2 and 2 Peter 1:21 and then attempt to state in your own words the means by which God solved theirs, and every human being's, need.

6. The whole purpose of God's holy Word, given to us through "holy men," by God and Christ, is to show us how to inherit God's new earth of the future. The actual writing of the Bible involves about forty writers--God's "penmen." The first, Moses, did his writing in the fifteenth century before Christ; the last, the apostle John, wrote Revelation near the close of the first century, AD. (Fill in details relating to the organization of the Bible on the illustration below.)

7. Your summary of the following four passages will help you to see the real focus of (a) the Old Testament, (b) the entire Bible, (c) its ability to prepare us for the future, and (d) its daily guiding qualities.

- (a) 1 Peter 1:10,11 _____
- (b) Acts 4:10-12 _____
- (c) 2 Timothy 3:15-17 _____
- (d) Psalm 119:11,105 _____

(1) _____ _____ _____	(2) _____ _____ _____		(3) _____ _____ _____	(5) _____ _____ _____	(7) _____ _____ _____
(4) _____	(6) <u>OLD TESTAMENT</u> _____ _____ _____	(6) <u>NEW TESTAMENT</u> _____ _____ _____			

Introduction

1. Genesis 1:1 – 2:3

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

⁶Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." ⁷Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so. ⁸And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

⁹Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry *land* appear"; and it was so. ¹⁰And God called the dry *land* Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that *it was good*.

¹¹Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed, *and* the fruit tree *that* yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. ¹²And the earth brought forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed according to its kind, and the tree *that* yields fruit, whose seed *is* in itself according to its kind. And God saw that *it was good*. ¹³So the evening and the morning were the third day.

¹⁴Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; ¹⁵and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. ¹⁶Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. *He made* the stars also. ¹⁷God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that *it was* good. ¹⁹So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

²⁰Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." ²¹So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that *it was good*. ²²And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." ²³So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

²⁴Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, *each* according to its kind"; and it was so. ²⁵And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that *it was good*.

²⁶Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

²⁹And God said, "See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. ³⁰Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is* life, *I have given* every

green herb for food"; and it was so. ³¹Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Genesis 2

¹Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ²And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Answer: Everything God made "was good", it was perfect.

2. Genesis 2: 7, 8, 15, & 18

⁷And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

⁸The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

¹⁵Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

¹⁸And the Lord God said, "*It is* not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Answer: God and man interacted face-to-face, they could talk to each other, no Bible was needed to know and understand who God is and what He wants us to do.

3(a,b,c). Revelation 21:1-5

¹Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

⁵Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

Answer (a): New heaven and a new earth; the old passed away.

Answer (b): God "tabernacled" (lived among) with man; God was with man once again.

Answer (c): No more tears, death, sorrow, crying, pain; All things are new.

4. Genesis 3:1-6

¹Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

²And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³but of the fruit of

the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

⁴Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Answer: God revealed (He didn't leave them ignorant) of His Plan of Salvation – how He was going to rescue them from their condition that would cause them to die eternally.

5. Revelation 1:1, 2

¹The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, ²who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

5. (Additional text) 2 Peter 1:21

²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

6. No texts

7a. 1 Peter 1:10, 11

¹⁰Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, ¹¹searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

Answer (a): Salvation (Being saved from the consequence of sin) is available through Jesus Christ.

7b. Acts 4:10-12

¹⁰let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

¹¹This is the '*stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.*' ¹²Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Answer (b): Jesus Christ is the only One through whom salvation is possible

7c. 2 Timothy 3:15-17

¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Answer (c): All Scripture (the Bible) makes us wise (allows us to know) how God would have us live so His Plan of Salvation can be effectual in our lives.

7d. Psalm 119:11, 105

¹¹Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

¹⁰⁵Your word *is* a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Answer (d): God's Word (the Bible) guides our feet (how we live) and empowers us not to sin.

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Notes for the Instructor

Purposes of Lesson 1:

- (1) To introduce the new Bible student to the beautiful, symmetrical arrangement of the Bible;
- (2) To reveal, at the very beginning of the series, that the central theme (Education, 125) of God's holy Word is clearly the redemption and restoration of mankind; and
- (3) To carefully observe the familiarity or lack of familiarity of the student with the Bible itself.

Beginning instructions to the class: Make sure that every person has either his own, or a supplied, Bible. Insist that every member of the class look up every text as the study progresses. Get each person involved in writing throughout the class period. Concentration is thus greatly increased. Suggest, at the close of the lesson, that each one, at home, underline the texts that have been included in the outline. Help them to see that there is a real advantage in doing this. Supply a good marking pencil (such as Eagle Verithin, No. 745) and a six-inch ruler to inspire them to mark.

During the study itself: You must make sure that each person is finding each text. Move only as fast as they do. Also make sure that each person completes his writing before moving into discussion on the point. If you lose a person, his notes will be incomplete and completeness is vitally necessary in order that the lesson make its intended impact.

Appeal: Use the last question of the lesson as the basic appeal point.

Illustration: The illustration below, is identical to that on page 2 of the lesson, and the overhead transparency. The numbering on each corresponds exactly with the numbers of the questions in the lesson itself. Not all of the questions are necessarily included in the illustration. Complete the illustration as a review of the study. If using the overhead, the use of different colored pens make it alive and interesting. (The 3M Company has a set of excellent pens for overheads.) The basic points for this lesson are as follows:

