

International Sunday School Lesson Study Notes

Lesson Text: Psalm 104:5-9, 24-30

Lesson Title: God Created All

Introduction

Many brilliant men and women have devoted their lives to the study of how the world began and all that makes up this vast universe. Countless hours and billions of dollars of research and exploration have been spent in order that man might better understand this magnificent world in which he lives. The mysteries of the universe are too numerous to ever be mastered and each discovery leads to another. Creation is indeed a marvelous and miraculous thing.

It is hard to believe that many of these brilliant people who have studied and explored God's creative work still will not admit that God (Jehovah God) created everything out of nothing. What exists, exists not because it evolved but because God created it. Evolution is not reasonable. It is impossible and irrational. Some of the people who have studied how the world began give God partial credit by confessing the possibility of intelligent design. But God is worthy of more than a "tip of the hat" when it comes to Creation. Those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior confess that God created all things (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16). How thankful believers in Christ should be that they can know for certain that Jehovah God is the Creator of the world!

Why do Christians believe in divine Creation? First, because the Bible says, "*In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth*" (Genesis 1:1). To believe in divine Creation rests upon the infallible word of God. When man's theories question or contradict the Bible, you should always believe the Bible. The Apostle Paul said, "*...let God be true, but every man a liar*" (Romans 3:4). Second, Jesus Christ validated the reality of the Creation account in Genesis when He said, "*For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be*" (Mark 13:19). Christ should know the facts about how the world began because He was there (Colossians 1:16). Third, believers accept divine Creation by faith. The Hebrew writer put it this way: "*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). The world exists, the universe exists, by faith we understand that God created it by His Word. Where do we place our faith? In the

revelation of God written in Genesis chapter 1 and 2 which tells us that God created the universe by His Word.

God's people have always celebrated His creative acts. Psalm 104 is one of many psalms that emphasize God's creative power. Psalm 104 begins the same way Psalm 103 begins, with the words, "*Bless the LORD, O my soul*" (Psalm 103:1; 104:1). While Psalm 103 magnifies the Lord's compassion with His people in history, Psalm 104 magnifies the Lord's power and wisdom to all Creation. "*The psalmist spoke of God's stretching out the heavens in light, His sovereign control of the deep, His adorning the earth as a dwelling place for man, His arranging night and day for life, and His preparing the sea for its life. He then praised God who gloriously reigns over Creation and renews it by His Spirit. In view of this the psalmist prayed that God would purge sinners, who are out of harmony with Creation.*" (*The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.*)

Creative Control (Psalm 104:5-9)

Verse 5

"Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever."

When the psalmist says, "Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever," he is not asking a question but rather declaring "Who" the "LORD" is. This is the flow of thought from Psalm 104:1 as the psalmist says, "*Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.*"

In the opening verses of Psalm 104 the psalmist's thoughts are directed toward the heavens. Now, his thoughts move to God's creative activity on planet "earth." God "laid the foundations of the earth." God Almighty was the divine architect and the "foundations of the earth" He laid will "not be removed for ever." This does not mean that the "earth" is eternal because we know from 2 Peter 3:13 that there will be "*new heavens and a new earth*" in the future. "Should not be removed for ever" means the foundations God has laid will never "totter, slip, or fall." God made this "earth" and He upholds it (Job 38:4-6).

Commenting on this verse, Matthew Henry writes, "*God has built the earth upon her basis, so that though it has received a dangerous shock by the sin of man, and the malice of hell strikes at it, yet it shall not be removed for ever, that is, not till*

the end of time, when it must give way to the new earth." (Psalm 104:5, Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible).

God created all and part of the all is the "foundations of the earth."

Verse 6

"Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains."

"It" is a reference to the earth. Once God created the earth He "covered it with the deep as with a garment" (Genesis 1:2). At first, the earth was covered with "the deep" or water. The "waters" were "above the mountains" which meant that at first the earth was not a suitable place for man to dwell. It was on the third day of creation that God said, *"Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so"* (Genesis 1:9).

God created all and part of the all is that He originally "covered" it all with "water."

Verse 7-8

"At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them."

The wording of this verse seems to indicate that "they" (a reference to the waters) had to be "rebuked" before they would "flee" to their assigned place. When God spoke the waters recognized that they were out of place and should immediately move to their newly assigned place. It was only when God's "voice" commanded the waters to "flee" that "they hasted away." God's "voice" in scripture is often described as "thunderous" (2 Samuel 22:14; Job 37:4, 5; Psalm 18:13).

"They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them" means that as the waters rushed to their assigned places that the mountains and the valleys began to appear. Every time you walk through a valley or look at a mountain you should remember that God created it all.

God created all and part of the all is that He sent the "waters" to their assigned places and now we have "mountains" and "valleys."

Verse 9

"Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth."

Our Creator not only made the earth, the water, the mountains and the valleys, but He sent the waters to their assigned place and "hast set a bound that they may not pass over." He spoke to the water and it went and laid down where He placed it and it can never again "pass over" or return where it was originally. The waters are forbidden to "pass over" the limits God has set for them (Jeremiah 5:22). The waters can never again "cover the earth" in the manner they covered it at God's original creation.

God created all and part of the all is that He has placed "boundaries" on the "waters" so we need never worry about the "earth" being "covered" with water.

Creative Care (Psalm 104:24-30)

While the first part of our lesson text focuses on God's creative control over the earth and the water, our last section focuses on God's creative care for all He has created. Perhaps the psalmist had stood on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and looked out across this vast body of water when he wrote these words. If that were the case, the following verses are certainly a proper response.

Verse 24

"O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

"O LORD, how manifold are thy works..." are words of praise from the psalmist about the greatness of God's creation. Sometimes we say things like, "It's a beautiful day isn't it?" While that is certainly appropriate as we speak to one another it is also appropriate to speak to our heavenly Father and say, "O LORD, what a wonderful world You have made!" And then, magnify His "wisdom" in what He has created and how He made it. With "wisdom" at God's side He created everything that is. Proverbs 3:19 reads, "*The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.*" God's "wisdom" is seen in the way in which all of His Creation works together under His sovereign will.

The psalmist continues to praise the Lord with the words "...the earth is full of thy riches." Since the earth was created by the wisdom of God it is only natural that it

would be filled with all types of "riches" for us to enjoy. The earth is not lacking for anything. As an old country preacher once said, "For every persimmon tree God created, He created a possum to climb up it!"

Notice that the "riches" are His. Everything in this mighty universe is stamped with His trademark. His name is the only name on the architect plaque at the front of the building! Speaking about God, Job wrote, "whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine" (Job 41:11)

Question: Are you able to worship when you look at God's creation? Is the creative work of God just a conclusion of how the world began or is it a basis for your faith, trust, and worship?

Verse 25

"So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts."

The "great and wide sea" is one of the most fascinating areas of God's creation. Still today there are unexplored areas and untapped resources that lay in the darkness and obscurity of the great deep. How did the psalmist know about "things creeping innumerable, both small and great beast?" He never had sonar or depth finders. He never had the National Geographic Channel to watch or books to read. However, he had seen enough come out of "this great and wide sea" to believe there was more where that came from. But the main reason he said what he said was that he knew the Creator God! He acknowledged God without ever having plunged the depths of the oceans or discovered all the "creeping beasts" in the sea.

Verse 26

"There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein."

The "great and wide sea" mentioned in verse 26 not only has "innumerable" things within it, it also has "ships" that sail upon it. By mentioning the "ships" that "go" upon the sea the psalmist seems to be saying that those who sail in those ships have a great opportunity to see a portion of God's Creation others on shore may not see. As an example, he mentions "that leviathan, whom" the Lord has "made to play" in the oceans and seas.

What is a "leviathan?" The simple answer is that a "leviathan" is some type of large sea animal. In the book of Job the "leviathan" is described as a powerful sea animal

that can be caught although it has powerful jaws, a tongue and a nose (Job 41:1-2). Most Bible scholars believe the "leviathan" to be in the whale family of sea creatures.

This massive sea creature is under the control of Almighty God because the psalmist says, "whom thou hast made to play therein." The thought here is that the "leviathan" is given permission to "play" in God's vast seas like a fish in a swimming pool or pond. This entire scene conveys the thought of a powerful God overlooking and controlling His great and exciting creation.

God created all and part of the all He created is large sea animals that play in His oceans and seas.

Verse 27

"These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season."

"These" are a reference to all the life forms that are found on land and in the seas. They "wait" upon the Lord for Him to "give them their meat in due season." It is God who cares and provides for them all.

Question: Have you ever paused and just thanked the Lord for His provision for His creatures? Jesus said, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they" (Matthew 6:6).

Verse 28

"That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good."

All of God's living creatures are given what they need to survive. God gives and "they gather." When you see birds flying back and forth from the field to their nest they are usually "gathering" what their Creator has provided. When you see squirrels scurry across the ground and then quickly climb up a tree they are usually "gathering" what the Creator has provided.

This process of God's provision is described by the psalmist as God "opening His hand" and His creatures "are filled with good." Doctor Vance Havner often said, "I live from hand to mouth, God's hand to my mouth." Our Creator is our Provider (Deuteronomy 8:17).

Verse 29-30

"Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."

If Almighty God "hides His face" or removes His presence and provision from anything He has created, immediately "they are troubled." If God withdrew His hand or His favor from any of us we would die in a heartbeat. The word "troubled" means "alarmed, terrified, anxious and afraid."

The psalmist's word should cause us to ask ourselves if we truly realize just how dependent we are upon the Lord. Do we take into consideration how fearful and terrifying it would be to think about living a day without His provision and care? Even the mountains are held together by God's power (Psalm 65:6).

If God "takest away their breath," His creation "dies" and "returns to their dust." Death is not just a natural process. God "sendest forth His spirit" and man is "created" or lives. When God "takest away their breath," men die. God rules over death itself. Job said, *"Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord"* (Job 1:21).

God is not only active in the creation and preservation of His world, He also is active in its restoration. "Thou renewest the face of the earth" is praise to God for His ability and power to bring life again where deadness has occurred. God didn't just create everything and then leave it to its own fate. Each season of spring we are privileged to watch God "renew the face of the earth." But the psalmist's words go much deeper than a beautiful season of spring. The message of his words is that every new life that emerges on this earth comes from God. That is true physically and that is true spiritually.

God created all and part of the all He created is the breath we have and the life we enjoy. And when anything fresh and new comes to us it is from His hand.

Conclusion

As a result of knowing and appreciating God's creative power, those of us who profess to be born again by God's grace should willingly submit ourselves under the authority of our Creator and rest in His provision for us. God created all things

and God sustains all things. It is God who will bring all things to an end (Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17).

The psalmist concludes the 104th Psalm with his own words of praise to the Lord. *"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord"* (Psalm 104:33-34).

Amen.