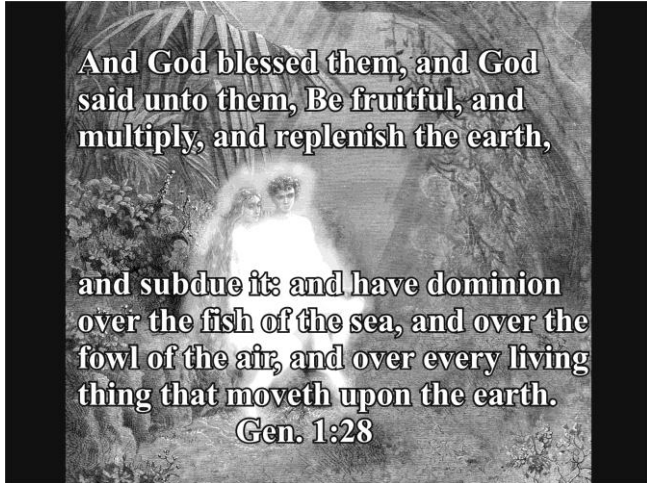


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 1



MAN'S ORIGIN

Scripture Texts: Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7, 21-25

"Who am I? How do I come to be here? Why? Where am I going?" These are questions asked among many people in our day. They are natural and legitimate questions, basic in our very existence. Where are the answers? The answers are in only one place—in the official Book of the Creator Himself. The Bible has true, satisfying answers. Upon them depends how we should order our lives. This quarter we examine some of them. Search the Scriptures, for they are Spirit, and they are life to you.

Man was made by God from dust and the breath of God and made in the image of God and morally good. All mankind came from this one Creation and are responsible to God.

MEMORY VERSE: *And 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 soul.*

—*Genesis 2:7*

Is Origin Important?

Genesis 1:26-27 And God said, Let us make man in our image. First questions to consider are how man originated and what was he originally. (The word "man" is here used to designate the human race as a whole.) Upon true knowledge of our origin depends our present position and our future destiny. **So God created man.** The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit spoke together of Their plan to create man. He was to be different from all other created things. (1) He was to be **in the image of God**, like Him. (2) He was to be given **dominion** or ruling power over the rest of the Creation. God carried out His plan, making male and female.

How much depends upon our origin? Who holds authority over a thing, its creator or another? Who decides its purpose? If we were created for a purpose, we have a responsibility to fulfill that purpose. To whom are we responsible? Our final destiny is determined by the manner in which we fulfill our purpose. The quality of our fulfillment depends upon the ideal held and reached toward, how the ideal is formed, and how one sets his goal. How much is this affected by our belief as to our origin and responsibility?

Who are we? Man is uniquely linked with God. The breath of God is in him (**Acts 17:28**). Therefore, we are spiritual beings. We realize that our possibilities here are unlimited. All men share many characteristics in common. Yet each is an individual, different from all others. No two have the same fingerprints or the same place in life. To fill our unique place, we must be joined with God. Sin separates man from this position. We need life from Him that is obtained only through salvation and to be filled with His Spirit.

Man Had Two Projects

Genesis 1:28-31 God blessed them. He put His favor upon them and enabled them to carry out His plan. Being in God's likeness, they had capacity to receive blessing as no plant or beast could.

God gave them something to do. (1) **Be fruitful, and multiply.** The earth was to be populated with individuals, alike, yet each different. (2) **Have dominion.** Man was placed as ruler over animal life (does not this privilege imply the responsibility of kindness in treatment of them?), over plant life, over every fowl of the air, and over everything on the earth. It is only because of this dominion that man can train a horse, sail the ocean, build a house, invent implements, etc.

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Achievement always gives pleasure. Imagine the joy with which God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—viewed Their Creation and judged it **very good**. God **made man upright**. Only later did man bring in sin with its many evil **inventions** (**Ecclesiastes 7:29**).

Two Ingredients

Genesis 2:7 This chapter gives details of the acts briefly stated before. It is NOT of a second or contradictory creation, as skeptics have suggested.

God made man of (1) **dust of the ground**. This was his body, similar to that of beasts (**Genesis 1:24**). (Similar, but not as the evolution theory claims.) **All flesh is not the same flesh . . . (1 Corinthians 15:39)**. (2) **The breath of life**. This was God's breath, God's life. It made man a **living soul**, a spiritual being (a twofold being—flesh and spirit) as no beast ever is. It made him **the image of God**.

The Creation account and the evolution theory cannot both be true. Some try to connect them by saying God used evolution as His method of creation. But He says He did it differently. He says men, beasts, fish, and birds are not related. They did not evolve one from the other. Rather, we are the offspring of God. Man came from the hand of God, and he is responsible to God.

Creation of Woman

Genesis 2:21-24 After making the man, God formed the woman to complete mankind. He made her of a **rib . . . taken from man**. She was from the same identical substance as the man, a part of him. He called her **bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh**. Since all humanity issued from this pair, the human race is one unit. She was made for a **help meet** (**verse 18**) to the man, to work with him in unity and harmony and blessing.

Genesis 2:25 **They were both naked . . . and were not ashamed**. They were innocent, ignorant of evil. We now see innocence in babies, but they soon lose it because they learn right from wrong as they mature.

Eve was **the mother of all living**. We have **all one father**. God **hath made of one blood all nations of men**. (**Genesis 3:20; Malachi 2:10; Acts 17:26**)

JUST A THOUGHT

"Treasures in Heaven are laid up only when treasures on Earth are laid down."