

## Preface

This Bible Study came about in answer to a need and in reaction to events beyond my control but within which the Lord placed me in the summer and fall of 1993. At this time I served as vicar of a small group of ELS Lutherans in Northeast Iowa. The neighboring ELCA congregation had just experienced a series of unsettling events that left the members confused and questioning what was going on in their church.

As in many other predominantly Lutheran communities, the events of the neighboring church also affected the people in my care. Whether through marriage or relationships, the members of my congregation were affected by these events and wanted to know why these things were happening and what the differences were between the ELS and the ELCA. Thus the decision was made to proceed with a series of Bible studies with the Leppien/Smith book, *What's Going on Among the Lutherans?*, as a textbook of sorts.

The study series was advertized in the local paper and response to it was soon forthcoming. It seems that many in the neighboring church were themselves reading and studying the book. So it came as no surprise that there were members outside of our congregation present for the first session.

The first session was indeed scary to approach. How should I, as the vicar, proceed? Should we go right into the book, or have a general discussion to see where everyone stood? After speaking at length with Mark DeGarmeaux, my supervising pastor, it was decided to have the general discussion and then go through the points as they were enumerated in chapter two. It was this latter action that prompted this series.

As we looked at the various points and commented on them, it soon became clear that people were not exactly sure why we in the WELS/ELS fellowship hold to the positions that we do. Questions arose as to why we believe the first five books of the Bible were written by Moses, why we believe in the Trinity, why we accept the Bible as the inspired and inerrant Word of God. Thus, rather than let the series become an "us versus them" chest-beating session (which is all too easy a temptation), the focus on the studies were to view from Scripture these points which are addressed in the Leppien/Smith book.

You may find that some chapters are lengthy or that discussion will prevent you from thoroughly looking at all of the passages presented in each chapter. This should not deter you from studying at least some of them and encouraging your members/class to study the rest during the coming week. Discussion can always follow home readings. You may even decide to break up certain chapters if you wish to examine all of the evidence in the classroom.

The purpose of this study is to instruct our members in the doctrines of the Bible so that they may be able to give witness to the hope which they harbor, both in season and out of season. This study will also aid in the study of the differences between the official positions of the various churches without being judgmental. There are many in the ELCA who are not in agreement with what their church officially teaches. Some of them may come to you, or your members, with questions and concerns. With this study your members may be more equipped to answer the questions and address the cares and concerns of their friends and neighbors.

Part of the first session involved a very brief overview of chapter 27 (*Unity and Realignment 1875-1988*). This helped to answer some of the questions which our visitors brought up as to how and why their church came to be what it is today. A very valuable tool in

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illustrating this chapter was Professor Edward Fredrich's paper on Twentieth Century Lutheran mergers, written and presented shortly before the merger into ELCA took place. If you are able to obtain a copy of this paper, it is a great benefit. It is well-researched and contains quotes from many leading individuals involved in the various mergers in this century. Also helpful are the questions and concerns raised by some against these various mergers. Inquire at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (11831 N. Seminary Dr., Mequon, WI 53092; 414/242-7200, fax 414/242-7255) as to its availability.

The ELS, born out of the Norwegian merger of 1917 and affected the most by merger-mania, has three excellent volumes on its history that also shed light on the Lutheran scene of this century. They are *Grace for Grace, A City Set on a Hill* by Theodore Aaberg and *Built on the Rock* by Juul Madson and Herbert Larson. These are also helpful in illustrating what chapter 27 says.

As in all things, To God alone be the Glory!

### 3. The Controversy

#### Historical-Critical Methods of Biblical Interpretation

The historical-critical method, much like its cousin the theory of evolution, is simply a theory. Both are similar in that neither theory is static. The theories change with the times and in the face of valid challenges. Following are examples of the basic changes of how the historical-critical method changes outlooks and beliefs on major sections of Scripture:

Its treatment of the Pentateuch:

1. Originally two documents: "J" and "E" documents.
2. Two documents merged at time of the kings.
3. "D" document added at time of Babylonian Captivity
4. "P" document added after Babylonian Captivity  
(last two allegedly added as part of political struggle in Palestine. "Added" sections to Moses' law seen to give validity to political position(s) of redactor(s))
5. Original "documents" originate from "oral traditions"
6. "Oral traditions" based on tribal legends

Its treatment of Isaiah:

1. Two different people wrote what is today known as Isaiah (called Deutero-Isaiah)
2. Today many feel that three different influences can be found in Isaiah (Trito-Isaiah)

Its treatment of the Gospels:

1. Mark written first
2. Matthew written from Mark and document labeled "Q" ("Q" never found)
3. Luke from Mark, Matthew, "Q" and other documents

Terms to know in Biblical Interpretation:

1. *Historical-grammatical method*: An honest look at the manuscripts that have survived through the ages. This method seeks to come as close to the original manuscripts as is possible through analysis and comparison. Seeks to solve variants in the context of literary and grammatical analysis.

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2. *Historical-critical method*: A method that seeks to solve variants and "contradictions" in an historical context. Sees the Bible as an evolving work of an evolving religion. Seeks to dismiss miracles and prophecy with the use of Reason.

3. *Autograph*: Term used to refer to the original documents written by the Prophets and Apostles. None are known to exist.

4. *Variant Readings*: Refers to the collection of manuscripts that are available to us. Very few from before 300AD (New Testament) and about 100BC (Old Testament) exist today. Variants among the hundreds of manuscripts exist, but affect less than 1% of the text. Many of these are usually spelling, copying or grammatical errors. **No variant reading affects any point of doctrine!**

5. *Redactor*: a fancy term for editor. Historical-critical scholars contend that the Bible was pieced together from various manuscripts by redactors.

What warnings from Scripture do have concerning tampering with God's Word?

1. Deuteronomy 4:2--

2. Deuteronomy 12:32--

3. Proverbs 30:6--

4. Revelation 22:18,19--

Would details, such as the following, have survived centuries of oral traditions and editing?

1. Exodus 16:14,31--

2. Numbers 11:5--

If the Old Testament was the result of political maneuverings or to effect tribal unity, why are the great men of faith displayed with their shortcomings? List the shortcomings and failings of the following men:

1. Noah:

2. Abraham:

3. Isaac

4. Jacob:

5. Judah:

6. Moses:

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7. David:

8. Solomon:

9. Elijah:

10. Hezekiah:

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## **4. Inspiration and Inerrancy**

When one denies that Scripture is inspired and inerrant, when claims are made that the Holy Bible is not totally God's Word but actually what a composite of men throughout the ages has thought God said, then the very veracity of God and His Word has been challenged. Those who deny that Scripture is God's Word and is without error are calling God a liar. This section will look at the natures of God and Satan, what the Bible says about itself and the consequences of denying or altering God's Word.

### **God Does Not Lie**

Relate how the following passages reveal to us that God does not and cannot lie:  
Numbers 23:19--

1 Samuel 15:29--

Titus 1:2--

Hebrews 6:18--

1 John 2:21--

### **The Father Of Lies**

Scripture does reveal to us who the "Father of Lies" is:  
John 8:44--

### **The Bible Was Not Fabricated By The Prophets and The Apostles**

The following passages tell us why the Prophets and the Apostles wrote what they wrote:  
Colossians 4:18--

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1 Peter 1:10-12--

2 Peter 1:12-21--

1 John 1:1-5

### **Results of Denying or Altering the Word of God**

God has strongly forbidden anyone to tamper with what he has said. The following passages serve as warnings to us:

Isaiah 28:15--

Jeremiah 5:31--

Jeremiah 9:3,5--

Jeremiah 14:14--

Jeremiah 23:14--

Romans 1:18-32--

2 Peter 2--

1 John 1:10--

### **Exhortation To All Christians**

What exhortations does the Bible give us regarding itself:  
Deuteronomy 6--

[7===]

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Acts 17:10-15--

Colossians 3:9--

2 Thesssalonians 2--

### **For Discussion...**

1. Is the term "inerrant" found anywhere in Scripture?
2. Can we use that term if it isn't in Scripture?
3. What other terms not found in Scripture has the Church used to define doctrines?
4. How does the Bible use the term "inspired/inspiration?"
5. Compare that with the common usage of the word:



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## 5.

# Creation

This chapter will deal with what Scripture has to say about the origin of the earth and the origin of mankind. We will see that the Creation theme runs throughout Scripture. This chapter will look at creation verses found in all sections of Scripture.

### Moses' Testimony

The account itself in Genesis 1 and 2. Does Scripture here record two creations? Explain your answer. What journalistic, or literary, style is employed in these two chapters?

What aspect of creation is found in Exodus 4:11?

Of what is Moses reminding the Children of Israel in Deuteronomy 4:32?

What special aspect of the creation of man is found in Genesis 1:27?

What does Moses reiterate about creation in Genesis 5:1,2?

Based on Moses' testimony, what must we conclude about creation?

### Psalmists' Testimony

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Briefly explain how the psalmists testified to the fact of creation in the following passages:

Psalms 8--

Psalms 19--

Psalms 22:9

Psalms 24--

Psalms 33--

Psalms 71

Psalms 78:2--

Psalms 90

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Psalm 102:25--

Psalm 104--

Psalm 119:73--

Psalm 121:1,2--

Psalm 136:1-9--

Psalm 139:13-16--

Psalm 146:6--

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What must we conclude about the psalmists' testimony to creation?

### Old Testament Writers' Testimony

Enumerate the various aspects of creation as God himself speaks to Job (Job 38-42):

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How does Job testify to God's activity of creation in Job 10:8-12?

God's testimony to Jonah (Jonah 4:10-11) reflects more than creation. It also reflects his providence and salvation! How are these verses a comfort to us?

Isaiah's testimony about creation in Isaiah 44:24--

God's testimony through Isaiah (Isaiah 48:12,13)--

Why does Isaiah remind his hearers about creation?

What does God say in Jeremiah 1:5 about creation?

How does this passage speak to each one of us?

How involved is God in his creation activity? Refer again to the Job section above and compare to Jeremiah 10:12-16.

### Evangelists' Testimony

What does Jesus say about creation, especially of mankind, in Matthew 19:4?

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Which Psalm does Jesus quote in Matthew 13:35? How is the origin of the earth described here?

Creation according to John (chapter 1):

WHO was involved?

WHAT was created?

WHEN did this occur?

WHAT happened to that creation?

WHO came into that creation?

WHY did he come?

What must we conclude about the origin of all things as we view the Gospels?

#### Peter and Paul's Testimony

1 Peter 1:20--What preceded even the creation of the world?

In Romans 1:20 Paul uses the word...

Paul reports the events surrounding creation in Ephesians 1:3-14. Enumerate what took place:

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What does Paul say is Christ's role in creation in Colossians 1:15? Explain "firstborn of creation."

Paul warns Timothy about false teachings about creation and things created. What are we to remember about creation?

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For Discussion

Based on the above passages discuss whether creation was planned and arranged before it occurred.

Discuss how each person has been created.

At this point, everyone relate what they remember being taught about evolution. Do any of these theories have similarities? What are the inherent weaknesses of these theories?



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With evolution, who is ultimately taken out and what is conveniently omitted?

Is God still active in His creation? Explain.

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## 6.

### Adam and Eve

Modern liberal theologians claim that many people in the Old Testament were not actual, historical people but represented mankind or various groups of mankind. We will focus on selected people in this section. This section will study what various Scriptural writers have had to say about these people. Note any characteristics of the people studied.

Single people

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Romans 5:12--

Jude 14-16--

Luke 3:37--

1 Corinthians 15--

ABRAHAM

Romans 4--

Galatians 3:6--

Galatians 3:15-18--

[18===]

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Galatians 4:21-31--

Acts 3:25--

Luke 3:33--

Luke 16:19-31--

Matthew 1:2--

James 2:20-24--

Hebrews 6:13--

Hebrews 17-22--

Romans 9:7--

NOAH

Luke 3:36--

JONAH

Luke 11:29-32--

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Matthew 12:38-41--

MOSES

Hebrews 3--

Jude 9--

John 6:32--

Groups of people mentioned

Look up the following sections of Scripture. List the people spoken of in each section plus the specific action(s) of each person.

TRANSFIGURATION

Matthew 17/Mark 9:2-13/Luke 9:28-36

STEPHEN'S SPEACH TO THE SANHEDRIN

Acts 7

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Adam and Eve  
CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Hebrews 11

ISRAEL'S EPIC POEM OF SHAME

Psalm 105

Adam and Eve

For Discussion

For what reason would someone not want to believe that Adam and Eve, Abraham, Noah and Moses (and others) were not real, historical people but only representations of mankind?

What comfort, hope and assurance do we have when we read about these people, knowing that they are indeed real?

What two words from Hebrews 11 give us the greatest comfort and assurance? Explain.

What fact of sin is denied in denying that Adam was an actual, historical person? What comfort from the cross is also lost?

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## **7. The Old Testament-- Moses as Author**

In this chapter we will look at quotes from the Pentateuch from the mouth of Christ and the pen of Paul. Notice in each instance both who is attributed authorship of the passage (in the Pentateuch) and where in the Pentateuch it is found.

Witness of Christ

Matthew 19 (Deuteronomy 24:1-4)--

Matthew 22:23-33 (Exodus 3:6)--

Matthew 22:34-40 (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18)--

Mark 7:10 (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9)--

Mark 10:4 (Deuteronomy 21:1-4)--

Mark 10:5 (Genesis 1:27; 2:24)--

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Mark 10:19 (Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20)

Mark 12:26 (Exodus 3:6)--

Mark 12:28-34 (Deuteronomy 6:4,5; Leviticus 19:18)--

Luke 5:14 (Leviticus 14)--

Luke 10: 26 (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18)--

Luke 18:20 (Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20)--

Luke 20:37 (Exodus 3:6)

[24===]



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John 7:19

John 8:5 (Leviticus 18; 20:10-16; Numbers 5:11-31; Deuteronomy 22:20-22)--

#### Paul's Testimony

Romans 9:15 (Exodus 33:19)

Romans 10:5-7 (Leviticus 18:5; Deuteronomy 30:12,13)--

Romans 10:19 (Deuteronomy 32:21)--

1 Corinthians 9:9 (Deuteronomy 32:21)--

#### Other witnesses

[25===]

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Hebrews 3:1-6 (Deuteronomy 18:18)--

Hebrews 7:14 (Leviticus)--

### For Discussion

How does this chapter relate to the previous chapter?

Back in chapter three we traced the "evolution" of the historical-critical method regarding the interpretation of the Pentateuch. How is that theory at odds with the fact that Moses himself penned the first five books of the Bible?

How does the historical-critical method affect Jesus' testimony regarding Mosaic authorship? Would it have been consistent with Jesus' character to make that claim if he knew it was wrong? What activity would Jesus then have been engaged in if he knowingly went along with popular opinion?

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What comfort do we have knowing that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible?

## 8. **The Old Testament-- Prophecy and Authorship**

If, by faith, we accept the Bible for what it is--God's direct, personal message of sin and grace for each member of the human race--then we understand that the Old Testament authors (and speakers) could "see" centuries or even millenia ahead into the future. But if one does not accept this Book as the divinely inspired and inerrant Word of God, then one must create theories and explanations to answer how the Old Testament authors could predict the events of Jesus' life with such startling accuracy.

How did the Prophets know about the coming Messiah and how he would be born and how he would live and how he would die? It is by God's grace that these men were accorded this information. Did they always know what they were speaking or writing about? Look up 1 Peter 1:10-12 for that answer!

In this section we will look at various prophecies as found in the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New Testament. As you look these up, note (1) who spoke the prophecy, (2) how it was fulfilled, (3) who recorded that the prophecy was fulfilled and (4,5) the circumstances surrounding the prophecy and the fulfillment.

As you go through this section, you will notice various passages marked with or \_.  
When you see these marks, they will denote that the New Testament author is letting his reader know who wrote that prophecy in the Old Testament. Discuss, then, how the New Testament authors testify to the authorship of the Old Testament books.

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Fulfillment recorded in the Gospels

Isaiah 7:14 (Matthew 1:22,23):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Micah 5:2 (Matthew 2:6):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Hosea 11:1 (Matthew 2:15):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Jeremiah 31:15 (Matthew 2:18):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 40:3 (Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 9:1,2 (Matthew 4:15,16):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 53:4 (Matthew 8:17):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

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5)

Micah 7:6 (Matthew 10:35,36):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Malachi 3:1 (Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Isaiah 42:1-4 (Matthew 12:18-21):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Isaiah 6:9,10 (Matthew 13:13-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Psalms 78:2 (Matthew 13:35):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Isaiah 29:13 (Matthew 15:8,9; Mark 7:6,7):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Zechariah 9:9 (Matthew 21:5; John 12:13):

1)

2)

3)

4)

[30===]

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5)

Psalm 118:26 (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9,10; Luke 13:35; Luke 19:38; John 12:13):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Isaiah 56:7 (Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Jeremiah 7:11 (Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Psalm 8:2 (Matthew 21:16):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Psalm 118:22,23 (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10-11; Luke 20:17):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

\_Psalm 110:1 (Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42,43):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Daniel 9:27;11:31;12:11 (Matthew 24:15):

1)

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- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 13:10;34:4 (Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24,25):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Zechariah 13:7 (Matthew 26:31; Mark 14:27):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Zechariah 11:12,13 (Matthew 27:10):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Jeremiah 19:1-13; 32:6-9 (Matthew 27:10):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Psalms 22:18 (Matthew 27:35; John 19:24):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Psalms 22:1 (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 61:1,2 (Luke 4:18,19):

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- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 53:12 (Luke 22:37):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Hosea 10:8 (Luke 23:30):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Adam and Eve

Psalm 69:9 (John 2:17):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 54:13 (John 6:45):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 53:1 (John 12:38):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Psalm 41:9 (John 13:18):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Psalm 35:19; 69:4 (John 15:25):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

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Exodus 12:46/Numbers 9:12/Psalm 34:20 (John 19:36):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Zechariah 12:10 (John 19:37):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

### Testimony from Acts and Epistles

Psalm 69:25; Psalm 109:8 (Acts 1:20):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Psalm 16:8-11 (Acts 2:25-28; 13:35):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:16-21):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Psalm 110:1 (Acts 2:34-35)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Genesis 22:18; 26:4; Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19 (Acts 3:17-26):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

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5)

Psalm 118:22 (Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

\_Psalm 2:1,2 (Acts 4:25,26):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Isaiah 53:7,8 (Acts 8:30-35):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

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Psalm 2:7 (Acts 13:33):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 55:3 (Acts 13:34):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 49:6 (Acts 13:47):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Amos 9:11,12 (Acts 15:16-18):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

\_Psalm 32:1,2 (Romans 4:7,8):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

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Exodus 33:19 (Romans 9:15):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Hosea 2:23 (Romans 9:25):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Hosea 1:10 (Romans 9:26):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 10:22:23 (Romans 9:27,28):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 1:9 (Romans 9:29):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

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Isaiah 8:14; 28:16 (Romans 9:30-33; 1 Peter 2:6,8):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 53:1 (Romans 10:16):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 65:1,2 (Romans 10:20-21):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

\_Psalm 69:22,23 (Romans 11:9-10):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Isaiah 11:10 (Romans 15:12):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

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Isaiah 53:9 (1 Peter 2:22):

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Read the Epistle to the Hebrews. How many Old Testament authors are quoted? How many are named as authors? For what purpose did the writer of this letter quote the Old Testament?



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### For Discussion

In a previous chapter the theory was raised about the book of Isaiah having two or three separate authors. Using the passages from Isaiah quoted above, how do the New Testament authors testify to Isaiaic authorship of the entire book?

Read 1 Peter 1:10-12. How much of what the Old Testament authors/speakers wrote and spoke about did they understand?

Read 2 Peter 1:12-21. What does Peter say about the authorship and inspiration of Scripture? How is this a comfort to each of us?

## 9. The Words of Jesus

There is "scientific" study being conducted within Christendom. This specialized study panel (known as the Jesus Seminar) consists mainly of noted "theologians" and linguists. Their sole endeavor is to determine which quotes of Christ recorded in the New Testament are authentic and which ones, allegedly, were created by the Church and added to the book known as the Bible.

How do these men conduct this study? First, they make some assumptions that they feel reasonable in maintaining. These are (1) that Jesus of Nazareth spoke Aramaic, and nothing else; (2) Any quote of his must then be able to be re-translated into Aramaic from Greek (the language of the new Testament writers). If the New Testament quote cannot linguistically be translated into Aramaic, then the quote cannot possibly be "genuine."

This section will look at testimony given by those who were with Jesus to display that what Jesus said is indeed what he said and not fabrications added by the Church over the ages.

2 Peter 1:12-21

Who wrote this epistle?

What do we know about the writer?

Why can we trust his testimony?

What does he say about the testimony of Scripture in these verses?

1 John 1:1-5

Who wrote this epistle?

What do we know about the writer?

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Why can we trust his testimony?

What does he say about the testimony of Scripture in these verses?

John 21:24,25

Who wrote this Gospel?

What do we know about this writer?

Why can we trust his testimony?

What does he say about the testimony of Scripture in these verses?

Acts 1:21,22

This section tells us about the criteria used in selecting a replacement for Judas Iscariot. What comfort can we gain from knowing the criteria?

[43===]

Adam and Eve

Why would this criteria have been important to the first Christians?

What span of time was covered by these criteria?

Discuss why the Holy Spirit would want us to know these details in the selection of Judas Iscariot's replacement.

Galatians 1:11,12

Paul here asserts the validity of his Apostolic office. From whom did he receive his knowledge?

Discuss how this instruction may have been carried out (verses 11-24).

Discuss how it may have been difficult, if not impossible, for Paul to receive training in Jerusalem (v. 23).

[44===]

Adam and Eve

Discuss how this passage can be used as proof of what Jesus actually said.

For Discussion

How does denying any of Christ's words rob us of comfort?

Discuss the hazards of using usage and grammar to attempt to "prove" the authenticity of Christ's words (as the Jesus Seminar does).

## 10. Miracles

How does one explain supernatural events? All too often we find a logical, scientific explanation for everything that happens around us. The weather is not some random, chance event but something that can be tracked by radar so that at times we may know of an approaching storm days in advance. The secret of flight is broken down into geometric and mathematic equations and formulas. We have become so scientific as to be skeptical. Many are even skeptical of miracles which defy and oppose the rules of the universe.

This section will look at the Holy Scriptures' view of miracles. We will see how Jesus' contemporaries viewed his miracles as well as the New Testament testimony of Old Testament miracles.

### Jesus' Miracles

JOHN 2:20-25:

What happens in these verses?

What was Jesus prophesying?

What testimony did he give to demonstrate his power?

Why would his resurrection be considered a miracle?

ACTS 1:22:

What is the context of this verse?

What does this verse tell us about the Apostles?

Why is this important?

2 PETER 1:12-21:

Of what is Peter giving testimony in these verses?

Who gives testimony, according to Peter?

Adam and Eve

Of whom do they testify?

How is the Apostles' testimony more valid?

Knowing Peter, what can we be assured about his testimony?

1 JOHN 1:1-5; JOHN 21:24,25:  
Of what does John testify?

Knowing John, what can we be assured about his testimony?

MATTHEW 27:41-43:  
What do the enemies of Jesus acknowledge about Jesus' miracles?

### Old Testament Miracles (New Testament Testimony)

Jonah (Matthew 12:38-45; 16:1-4; Luke 11:29-32)  
Which miracle is referred to in these Gospels?

Is this miracle treated as historical fact or simply as a tool for teaching a value? Explain.

Numbers 21:4-9 (John 3:14)  
Which miracle is referred to by John?

[47===]

Adam and Eve

Is this miracle treated as historical fact or simply as a tool for teaching a lesson? Explain.

Exodus 16 (John 6:30-33)

Which miracle is referred to by John?

Is this miracle treated as historical fact or simply as a tool for teaching a lesson? Explain.

Acts 7--Which miracles are listed by Stephen?

Romans 4:19-21; Hebrews 6:13-15 (Genesis 15, 21)

What miracle is referred to by these New Testament writers?

Do they regard it as fact or fiction? Explain.

Hebrews 11--Which miracles does this writer list?

1 Kings 17:7-24 (Luke 4:27)

Which miracle is recorded here?



Adam and Eve

Is it treated as fact or fiction? Explain.

2 Kings 5 (Luke 4:25,26)

Which miracle does Luke record here?

Does he consider it fact or use it to illustrate a point? Explain.

Psalm 105--What miracles does the psalmist testify to?

Adam and Eve

For Discussion

Why is it important to believe that the miracles are historical fact?

How does denying the existence of miracles rob us of comfort?

How does denying the existence of miracles affect our faith in God?

Do miracles still happen today?

Adam and Eve

## **11.**

# **The Virgin Birth**

The Virgin Birth is a miracle that receives heavy attack. It is only by a virgin birth can we have one person who is true man and true God. If the human mother is not a virgin, can we ever be sure that Jesus is true God and not an illegitimate son? This is the manner in which God chose to carry out His plan of salvation.

ISAIAH 7:14

The Hebrew word "almah" can mean virgin or a married woman who has not yet borne children. Liberal theologians contend that Isaiah is not speaking of Christ but of his own wife. Reading through Isaiah 7, explain how it cannot be Isaiah's wife that he is speaking of.

MATTHEW 1:18-25

How does Matthew, by inspiration, interpret Isaiah's words?

LUKE 1:26-38

What fact does the physician Luke acknowledge about Jesus' birth?

Is it possible that Jesus' contemporaries recognized something different about Jesus' birth? Read John 8:19,41 and explain your answer.

GALATIANS 4:4

What does Paul stress in this passage?

Why does he not use the term "became human" or "made man"?

Adam and Eve

What is Paul emphasizing when he uses the phrase "born of a woman"?

For Discussion

Why is the Virgin Birth fundamental to our faith?

What comfort and assurance is taken away when the Virgin Birth is denied?

Adam and Eve

## **12.**

# **The Deity of Christ**

Once the Virgin Birth is denied, the next logical step is denying the divinity of our Lord. He becomes just another person, like you and me. He can no longer be our Savior but an upright person whose example we can follow. We are left to work out our own salvation, just as Christ worked out his "salvation."

In the following passages, briefly explain how the writers of Holy Scripture tell us of Christ's deity.

Matthew 1:18,20--

Matthew 4:1-11/Luke 4:1-13--

Matthew 8:23-27/Mark 4:35-41--

Matthew 16:16--

Matthew 22:41-45/Mark 12:35-37/Luke 20:41-44--

Mark 10:17,18--

Luke 1:30-33--

Luke 2:49--

Luke 3:22,38--

[53===]

Adam and Eve

Luke 4:34--

Luke 5:8,21-26--

Luke 7:20-23--

Luke 7:16--

Luke 8:25,28--

John 1:1-18--

John 1:49-51--

John 5:16-30--

John 10:30--

[54===]

Adam and Eve  
John 20:28--

Galatians 4:4--

Revelation 1:1-8,17-18; 22:13--

Adam and Eve

For Discussion

How does denying the deity of Christ rob us of comfort and assurance?

Why did Jesus have to be true God?

What is our salvation if we deny the deity of Christ?



Adam and Eve

## 13. The Trinity

The debate over the Trinity spans the centuries. The Council at Nicea convened to discuss this particular matter (as well as the divinity of Christ). The Athanasian Creed addressed the doctrine in more depth. **Though the word "Trinity" does not appear in the Bible, the doctrine does exist there.** The Church is free to use words to express Biblical concepts (as we have seen in the word "inerrant" in regard to the veracity of Scripture).

Today we have the Watchtower Society (Jehovah's Witnesses) which denies the Trinity as well as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons). This historic and biblical doctrine is now being denied by so-called Lutheran theologians.

In the following passages, explain how the Trinity is expressed in Scripture.

Genesis 1:26--

Numbers 6:22-27--

Isaiah 6:3--

Matthew 28:19--

Romans 1:1-4--

1 Corinthians 1:2,3--

2 Corinthians 13:14--

1 Thessalonians 1:4-6--

[57===]

Adam and Eve

1 Peter 1:1,2--

Jude 1--

Adam and Eve

For Discussion

How is the doctrine of the Trinity related to the doctrine of the Deity of Christ?

How is the Trinity explained in the Apostles' Creed?

How is it explained in the Nicene Creed?

How is it explained in the Athanasian Creed?

Why is the doctrine of the Trinity important?

Adam and Eve

## 14. The Atonement

Throughout the history of mankind there has always been a sense and understanding of right and wrong. There has also been a strong desire to appease a higher power with sacrifices, whether animal or human. Sin needs to be atoned for, as natural man has proven throughout time. The Bible reveals to us the only true and perfect atonement--the death of the God-man, Jesus Christ, on the cross.

*Why we need atonement:*  
Romans 5:19--

*God's wrath against sin:*  
Romans 5:8,9--

*The only payment possible:*  
Hebrews 9:22--

*How Jesus' sacrifice pays the full price:*  
Romans 3:25--

Hebrews 10--

Review Paul's letter to the Romans. For each chapter, list some points that Paul makes regarding our atonement.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

[60===]

Adam and Eve

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

Chapter 6:

Chapter 7:

Chapter 8:

Chapter 9:

Chapter 10:

Chapter 11:

Chapter 12:

Chapter 13:

[61===]

Adam and Eve

Chapter 14:

Chapter 15:

Chapter 16:

Likewise the Epistle to the Hebrews instructs us about the atonement with insight into the Old Testament prophecies. List some salient points from each chapter.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

Chapter 6:

Chapter 7:

[62===]

Adam and Eve

Chapter 8:

Chapter 9:

Chapter 10:

Chapter 11:

Chapter 12:

Chapter 13:

Adam and Eve

For Discussion

Did the Old Testament believers benefit from the same atonement that we benefit from? Explain your answer.

Are all people eligible for this atonement? Explain.

How will our understanding of the atonement affect our daily lives? our evangelism efforts? how we raise our children?

Look up the word "atonement" in the dictionary. How is it divided by syllables? How can this help us understand the word and its meaning in our faith-lives?



Adam and Eve

## 15. The Resurrection

The focal point of our faith is the Resurrection. Easter is the second of the three great feast days in the Church year (between Christmas and Pentecost). The earliest Christians celebrated Easter with more fervor than we celebrate Christmas. Without the Resurrection our faith is in vain and the reason for the existence of our church no longer exists.

The following passages will show us that Jesus knew he would rise again, report his resurrection or explain to us what Christ's resurrection means.

### Jesus predicts his resurrection

John 2:19,21

What is the context of this passage?

What did the Jews ask?

What was Jesus' answer?

Why did this anger the Jews?

Describe the disciples reaction to Jesus' words.

Read Matthew 27:62-66. How did the Pharisees regard the words of Jesus?

Matthew 16:21

What is the context of this passage?

Who strongly objected to Jesus' plan?

Why did Jesus address Satan in his rebuke?

### The Resurrection

[65===]

Adam and Eve

Describe how the various Evangelists describe the resurrection. Discuss how their accounts differ and what these differences mean (do they invalidate the testimony or strengthen the testimony).

Matthew 28:1-10--

Mark 16--

Adam and Eve  
Luke 24:1-49--

John 20--

Matthew reports the first denial of the resurrection (Matthew 28:11-15). How is this first denial just like every other denial of the resurrection?

1 Corinthians 15--Paul relates the historicity of the resurrection, affirms the witnesses to the event and what it means to each one of us personally. Relate what each verse speaks to us about the following three subjects:

verses 1-11: the resurrection of Christ

- 1-
- 2-
- 3-
- 4-
- 5-
- 6-
- 7-
- 8-
- 9
- 10-
- 11-

verses 12-34: the resurrection of the dead

- 12-
- 13-

[67===]

Adam and Eve

14-  
15-  
16-  
17-  
18-  
19-  
20-  
21-  
22-  
23-  
24-  
25-  
26-  
27-  
28-  
29-  
30-  
31-  
32-  
33-  
34-

verses 35-58: the resurrection body

35-  
36-  
37-  
38-  
39-  
40-  
41-  
42-  
43-  
44-  
45-  
46-  
47-  
48-  
49-  
50-  
51-  
52-  
53-  
54-

[68===]

Adam and Eve

55-

56-

57-

58-

Galatians 1:1--How does Paul here affirm the veracity of the resurrection accounts?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11--What are some of the same themes that Paul addresses here that he also addressed with the Corinthian congregation?

### For Discussion

How did Job understand resurrection in Job 19:25-27?

Was the resurrection an abstract idea to Job or did it have substantive meaning? Explain your answer.

Can you recall any people who did not die? What connection do they have with the resurrection?

How does Christ's Transfiguration underscore the resurrection?

[69===]

Adam and Eve

On this page list some resurrections that are recorded in the Bible. What are some of the characteristics? How are they different? How are they similar?

## **16.**

# **The Immortality of the Soul**

Perhaps no other subject intrigues us as much as speculation on what lies beyond the grave. Does our soul live on? Do we return in a different form? Do we make a long journey to some distant paradise? Each culture and each age has had its own beliefs regarding life or existence beyond the grave.

The Bible gives us definite answers to the questions we have regarding life after death. It specifically states that the evil will be banished to hell eternally while the good will enjoy eternal life with God. But can we ever be sure that we are good, or that we are good enough? It is through the blood of Christ that God can see us as good. By Christ's blood we have a sure hope of eternal life.

The denial of the resurrection naturally leads to a denial of an immortal soul. And to deny that the soul is immortal lets one believe that he or she will not have to worry about an hereafter or an accounting to a "god." Thus this chapter serves as an excellent bridge between the last chapter and the one to follow.

What does the Bible have to say about the soul in the following selections:

Ecclesiastes 12:7--

Luke 23:43--

Luke 23:46--

Acts 7:59--

2 Corinthians 5:8--

Matthew 17:1-13--

Adam and Eve  
Mark 9:2-13--

Luke 9:28-36--

Philippians 1:12-30

Genesis 2:7--

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18--

What does the Transfiguration reveal to us about the immortality of the soul?

Read Genesis 3:6. What insight does Jesus give us about this passage? (Matthew 22:31-32; Mark 12:26,27; Luke 16:19-31; Luke 20:37,38)

What was unique about Enoch and Elijah? How do they demonstrate to us that our soul is immortal?



Adam and Eve

For Discussion

If you were to die tonight, where would you go? Explain.

If God asked you why he should let you into heaven, what would your response be?

What are some beliefs (ancient or present) about the "hereafter"? Are they scriptural or not?  
What do these beliefs lead to?

Finish the sentence: If my soul is not immortal, then it would mean...

Adam and Eve

## 17.

### The New Morality

What is right and what is wrong? What codes of conduct are acceptable today that weren't acceptable 20 years ago? Today many in society seek to re-write codes of conduct, permissiveness and even the Ten Commandments. In this endeavor they even recast Paul's words into a different light--by saying that Paul addressed an entirely different audience! Yet the Bible insists on morality. Though we are not saved by the Law, but only through the blood shed on Calvary, yet Jesus admonished even the adulterous woman to "go and sin no more." (John 8:11) Fruits of our faith are evident in the lives we lead. The Ten Commandments give us God's guide for living lives of thankfulness for his great mercy.

*1 Corinthians 10:1-13--*

What historical event(s) was Paul referring to?

Why did these things happen?

Against what activities does Paul warn against?

What final admonition does Paul give?

What promise does he also state?

*Galatians 5:16-26--*

[74===]

Adam and Eve

What two camps does Paul speak of?

List the acts of the sinful nature:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.

The warning to those who live like this...

List the fruits of the Spirit:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

What does Paul say about such things?

What does he mean when he says "against such things there is no law"?

What then is the action and attitude of our New Man in Christ?

*Ephesians 5 & 6--*

[75===]

Adam and Eve

Whom does Paul say we should imitate?

What general principles does Paul give to all people?

Are these principles still valid today? Explain.

What principles does he give to husbands and to wives?

Are these principles still valid today? Explain.

What principles are given to parents and children?

Are these still valid today? Explain.

What principles are given to slaves and masters?

Are these still valid today? Explain.

How does the armor of God affect our morality?

Read Judges 19 and 20. What crimes were committed? What were the consequences? What does this incident show us about human nature? What does it illustrate about morality even among those who are of the Promise?

List and discuss the curses found in Deuteronomy 27:16-26.

[76===]

Adam and Eve

List and discuss the prohibitions in Leviticus 18:1-30. How similar are these sins to today's sins?

Read Romans 1:18-2:16. What is Paul addressing, to whom and why? Discuss.

Adam and Eve

For Discussion

Was Paul speaking only to a people and a culture of his time when he wrote his letters? Explain your answer.

Why do we, as a Church, stress morality when we are saved by faith and not by the deeds of the Law?

Why is it an act of love for the Church to uphold moral standards?

Adam and Eve

## 18. The Way to Heaven

There are six major religions in the world (Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Confucianism). There are over 150 sects, cults, "isms" and "religious" philosophies throughout the world. No doubt this variety causes many to shake their heads and question whether any one faith has the right answers or the truth.

True Christianity, however, is truly different. True Christianity stresses what God, through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, has already done for us and our salvation. Other religions stress what man must do himself for his salvation. Other religions are the "do" religions; Christianity is the "done" religion.

The purpose of Scripture is to show mankind its sin, a person's inability to do good or to atone for his/her sin, what God has graciously and mercifully done to secure for us our salvation and our response as gratefully redeemed to share this wonderful news. Without this focus, we lose focus on Scripture's message, the Church's mission, mankind's role in God's creation and, ultimately, the denial of God's truth and God's will.

*Read John 14:5-14.*

When does this account take place?

Describe what such an event may be like (emotions, thoughts, feelings).

What claim does Jesus make about himself?

Describe the unity of the Father and Son as expressed in these verses.

Explain how Jesus is the "way, truth, life."

What are some false ideas associated with Jesus being "the way?"

[79===]

Adam and Eve

*2 Corinthians 5:11-21*

How does Paul contrast Christianity with the religion of natural man?

How does verse 15 set Christianity apart from other religions?

Contrast the Old Adam and the New Man in regard to their views on spirituality in verses 16 and 17.

Paul again stresses the "done" aspect of Christianity in verses 18 and 19. How does he express it here?

Knowing our previous lost condition and our status as redeemed children of God, what does Paul say our joy will compel us to do in verses 20 and 21?

*Ephesians 2:1-10*

verse 1: our previous condition--

verse 2: who we followed--

verse 3: who this condition includes--

verse 4: God's reason for action--

verse 5: God's action--

verse 6: how he carried this out--

verse 7: why he did this--

verse 8: how we are saved--

[80===]



Adam and Eve

verse 9: what we can do--

verse 10: the ultimate reason for our existence--

### For Discussion

The Watchtower Society (Jehovah's Witnesses) regards Jesus as a man who led an exemplary life to earn status as a "demigod." Explain how this teaching is wrong.

Examine precepts of the major world religions. What similarities do we see? What differences?

Do all Christians view Christ the same way? Do they view salvation the same? Explain your answers.