

Genesis and Revelation



SABBATH—APRIL 5

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Isaiah 40:7, 8; Genesis 22:1–13; Genesis 22:7, 8; Genesis 2:15–17; Genesis 3:1–5.

MEMORY VERSE: “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him. John said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God. He takes away [removes] the sins of the world [people]!’ ” (John 1:29, ICB).



The book of Genesis helps us understand how sin started on this earth.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS helps us understand the book of Revelation. Many modern Bible thinkers don't understand this important rule. John wrote the book of Revelation. His writings show us that he knew a lot about the Old Testament. John uses ideas from the Old Testament that his readers knew very well.

In the Bible, we can find important verses that help us understand the book of Revelation better than other verses do. Many of these verses are found in the book of Genesis. The book of Genesis helps us understand how sin started on this earth. Almost every important idea in the book of Revelation also appears in the first few chapters of the book of Genesis.

This week, we will study a few big topics from the book of Revelation. The book of Genesis will help us understand these topics from the book of Revelation better. Then we will learn important lessons from the book of Revelation. These lessons can teach us about ourselves, God, and the worldwide war between good and evil.

AN IMPORTANT RULE (Isaiah 40:7, 8)

In the book of Genesis, God introduces ideas that we will read about later in other books of the Bible. The first time the Bible talks about an idea or a symbol, we learn something about it that will help us understand how to use it later.

This teaching helps us understand an important rule in Bible study. God gives His children information a little at a time. First, the Lord gives us a basic idea in the Bible. Then He gives us more information about this idea over the years in different parts of the Bible.

Read Isaiah 40:7, 8; Malachi 3:6; and Hebrews 13:8. What important rule do you learn from these verses? How does this rule help you in your study of the Bible's special messages about the future?

Many modern thinkers believe we can't know the truth about life. These thinkers say that truth is something that can change over time.

But when God teaches us what the truth is, He doesn't change His mind about it. We can trust Jesus when He starts teaching us the truth. New ideas about the truth do not change the first meaning. New ideas help us understand the meaning of the same old Bible truths better. So, we should do our best to understand the book of Genesis. In this book, you will find many important ideas explained for the first time. Then you will get a basic understanding of other ideas that you will read about in the rest of the Bible.

Why is it so important that we not let anyone, or anything, make our faith in the Bible and its teachings become weak? What causes our faith in Bible truth to become weak?



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UNDERSTANDING GOD’S LOVE (Genesis 22:1–13)

When we understand the Bible truth about love, we will better understand God’s special messages about the future. An important topic in the worldwide war between good and evil is God’s love. Many people do not understand Bible truth about God’s love and mercy. Ellen G. White talks about God’s love after the worldwide war between good and evil is finished: “Everything in heaven and on earth is clean. Everything God made is at peace and is happy. God fills everything with life, light, and joy. From the smallest thing God made to the biggest planet, everything announces that God is love.”—*The Great Controversy*, page 678, adapted.



The first time that John writes about love in his gospel helps us to understand God’s love better. John’s verse helps us remember the story about Isaac on the altar (Genesis 22:9).

Read Genesis 22:1–13. The first time we read about “love” in the Bible is in Genesis 22:2. What does this story teach us about God’s love?

Sometimes Bible students look for the first time that different books of the Bible talk about the same topic. If our topic is “love,” we may want to read what the Gospel writers say about it. The Gospel writers are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The first time the Gospel writers talk about “love” is in Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; and John 3:16.

The first time that John writes about love in his Gospel helps us to understand God’s love better. John’s verse helps us remember the story about Isaac on the altar (Genesis 22:9). Abraham’s faith in God was strong. Abraham believed that God could wake up Isaac from the dead if Abraham gave him as a burnt offering to God (Hebrews 11:19). Abraham’s offering showed God’s love for humans. God loves us so much “that he gave his only Son” (John 3:16, ERV; also read Genesis 22:2, 12, 16). Then God woke up His Son from the dead. So, we see, in Genesis 22, an example of God’s love for us.

How do we feel the same love for other people that God feels for us? Why does this love feel too hard for most of us?

**ISAAC'S QUESTION: WHERE IS THE LAMB?
(Genesis 22:7, 8)**

The first time the Bible talks about a “seh” (the Hebrew word for “a lamb”) is in the story in Genesis 22. As we saw yesterday, this story is the same one that talks about love for the first time, too, in the Bible. The lamb is one of the most important symbols or word pictures in the book of Revelation. In this book, Jesus is named “the Lamb” more than twenty times. In one of the most powerful chapters in the book of Revelation, we read about John’s visit to God’s throne room in heaven (Revelation 4 and 5). The Lamb has an important part in chapter 5.

Read Genesis 22:7, 8; Exodus 12:3–13; and Revelation 5:5–10. How does the story about Abraham offering Isaac help us understand how Bible writers use lambs as word pictures? How does Abraham and Isaac’s story help explain what John sees in Revelation 5?

Again, the first time we read about a “seh [lamb]” in the Bible is when Isaac asks, “Where is the lamb?” (Genesis 22:7, ERV). The rest of the Bible answers this question. The other 38 books of the Old Testament answer this question with more and more information. From the Old Testament offerings to the stories about King David, we see Isaac’s question get answered again and again. The Old Testament also has special messages about the future Savior. In the New Testament, Isaac’s question is answered when Jesus comes to the earth to help His people and dies on the cross.

In the meantime, look at the first time John talks about a Lamb in his story about Jesus. In John 1:29–34, John writes about John the Baptist. John the Baptist personally answers Isaac’s question. In this story, sinners confess their sins. They get baptized. Baptism is a word picture for the sinner’s spiritual death and the beginning of a new life in Jesus. Then Jesus, the Lamb of God, comes and the skies open. A voice from heaven announces Jesus: “ ‘This is my Son, the one I love. I am very pleased with him’ ” (Matthew 3:17, ERV). Notice that a voice (the Angel of the Lord) also announces from heaven the answer to Abraham and Isaac’s problem (Genesis 22:11–14).

All these verses show that Jesus, the Lamb of God, is our Substitute. This Bible truth helps us better understand the Lamb in John’s dream (Revelation 5).

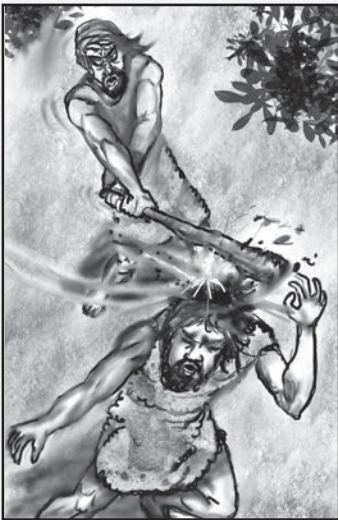


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THE EXPERIENCE OF DEATH (Genesis 2:15–17)

Death is an important topic in the Bible's end-time messages. The first time the Bible talks about death helps us understand the sin problem better. It also helps us better understand how God will solve the sin problem.

The first time the Bible talks about someone dying is in Genesis 4:8–15. The first time the Bible talks about death is in Genesis 2:15–17. Also read 1 Corinthians 15:15–19; and Revelation 1:18. What do all these verses tell us about why people die and what God thinks about death? How will God solve the problem of death?



The first death that we read about in the Bible is the death of Abel.

We often say that “death is just part of life.” That is a lie. Death is completely different from life. Death was not meant to be part of our experience here on earth. We are used to death. But we fight against death strongly when we meet it. We understand, as humans, that there is something very wrong with death. As painful as death is, some deaths can make us feel worse than other deaths. When a child dies, we feel very sad. We expect parents to die before their children. So, when a child dies before his parents do, his death can be very painful to the ones who loved him.

The first death that we read about in the Bible is the death of Abel. His parents, Adam and Eve, feel the pain of losing their holy son after Cain, his evil brother, kills him. Abel's death was not fair.

Think about Jesus. Jesus was holy. Evil people killed Jesus just as Cain killed Abel. Jesus' death was not fair. How does Abel's death help us understand the death of Jesus on the cross? How does Abel's death help us understand what Jesus means when He says, “ ‘I have power over death and hell’ ” (Revelation 1:18, NLV)? What is God offering to us in Jesus?

If the problem with sin isn't solved, why would our lives have no meaning? What does your answer teach us about how thankful we should be for what Jesus did for us on the cross?

THE SNAKE (Genesis 3:1–5)

Worship is an important topic in the book of Revelation. The dragon invented false worship (Revelation 13:2–4). The dragon is a word picture for Satan. Satan also is named Lucifer, a fallen angel. John compares Lucifer to a dragon. This language helps us remember the snake in the Garden of Eden. The snake convinced Adam and Eve to join him in fighting against God.

Compare Genesis 3:1–5 with Revelation 12:1–9. What are some of the same ideas in each story? How does the story about the snake in Genesis help us understand some of the reasons that led to the war in heaven that the book of Revelation talks about?

Two stories in the Bible talk about how Satan lies to all the people on the earth and leads them away from God. The first story happens in Genesis at a time when Adam and Eve are the only two people on earth. The second story is in Revelation 12 and 13, where John says Satan “fools all the people in the world [on the earth]” (Revelation 12:9, WE). Satan gives power to the sea beast (Revelation 13:2). Later, Satan uses the land beast to cause everyone to worship the sea beast (Revelation 13:12). One of the most important end-time topics in the Bible is the worldwide war between God and Satan. The war shows that God’s love and His mercy don’t change. As long as the devil is alive, he won’t change his plans, either. The devil won’t quit his fight against God.

God always will be who He is. So will the devil. Satan may hide who he really is from people. But the book of Revelation and human history show us that Satan uses the same plan he used in the Garden of Eden. God promised us wisdom and understanding (James 1:5). Satan tricked many people in the past. In the future, he will trick many more. But the Bible will protect us from the devil’s lies.

Behavior and ideas that people accepted in the past aren’t accepted now. Behavior and ideas that people didn’t accept before are now accepted. As Christians who believe in the worldwide war between good and evil, how should we live with people who often change their ideas and beliefs? Satan told two lies in Eden: (1) you won’t die, and (2) you will be gods. Where do you find these lies being told today?



John compares Lucifer to a dragon. This language helps us remember the snake in the Garden of Eden.

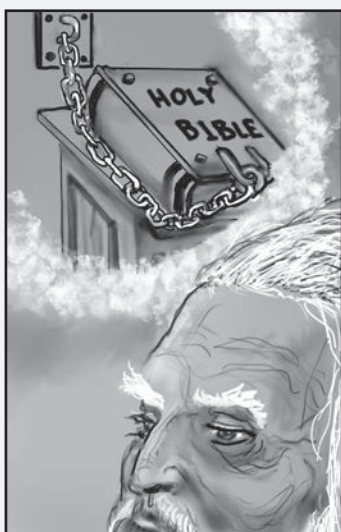
ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Read Ellen G. White, “The Revelation,” pages 578–581, in *The Acts of the Apostles*.

Many religions today started from ideas. But the ideas in the Christian religion come from real experiences that happened in history. The Bible is the story about God’s relationship with people during human history. When we study these relationships, we can learn much about God and His love. God’s love doesn’t change.

Sometimes Christians complain that they are tired of hearing the same things. Sometimes when a pastor is preaching our message, we may think we have nothing new to learn.

While our message doesn’t change, that doesn’t mean that our message isn’t interesting. When you study the information that God gives our church, you learn really fast that you will never get to the end of a topic and know everything there is to know about it.

One of the reasons Ellen G. White says that John wrote the book of Revelation was to help the Christian church know God’s plan for it. But “some of the younger workers [at that time] . . . became tired of the Bible truths they often heard. They wanted to hear something new. So they tried to introduce new teachings.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 580, adapted. As we see, the book of Revelation isn’t just a book about the future. The book of Revelation is also a book about the past. John wrote the book of Revelation to help us understand our church history and the reasons for our faith. When we do, we won’t let a wish for something new control or destroy our faith.



John wrote the book of Revelation to help us understand our church history and the reasons for our faith.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① The Bible always gives us new information and new understanding. Yes, we may want to learn something new. But why is it important to continue to believe in the Bible truth that God already gave us?
- ② What if someone comes up with a new teaching about one of the Bible’s special messages? Yes, there is always more to learn. At the same time, how may we know if the new “light” is Bible truth or another false teaching?
- ③ Why will our lives have no meaning if we never wake up from the dead?

THE MILK MIRACLE

No cow stood in the yard when Mother got home from the market.

Mother looked around the yard. The cow was missing. She knew her two small children waited for her in the house. Mother started to cry. How could she tell her children that their cow was stolen? The milk from the cow helped them earn money. Without the cow, they will die.

Mother decided not to tell the children. She didn't want them to see her tears. Mother walked over to some bushes and knelt down in them. There on her knees, she prayed to God. She asked the Lord to remember her husband, who was a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. He got arrested for keeping the Sabbath and was made to serve for eight years doing hard work far from their home. The family lived in Tajikistan, which at the time of this story used to be under the control of the Soviet Union. Mother thanked God for the stolen cow, whose milk she had traded for flour, potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, tomatoes, and cucumbers at the village market.

Mother cried. "What next, Lord? How can my children and I live now without the cow?"

As Mother cried and prayed, she saw something stuck in the branches of the bushes. Mother looked closer and saw that it was some paper money. Mother prayed, "Thank You, God! You sent money to buy another cow."

Mother dried her tears and went back to the market to look for another cow. But every seller wanted more money than she found in the bushes.

Finally, a man agreed to lower his price.

The man said, "I'll give you my cow for your money." His cow was the smallest, skinniest cow in the market.

Mother gave the man the money and took the cow home.

Mother prayed, "God, this cow is in Your hands."

At home, Mother fed the cow. Her two children played with it. With food and love, the cow grew and grew. Soon, the cow made as much milk as two cows!

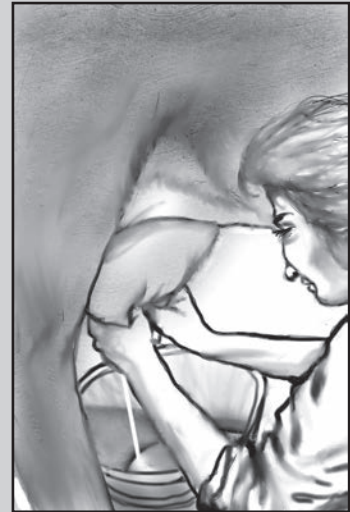
Liubov Brunton is the granddaughter of the Mother in this story. Liubov said, "God saved the lives of our family during this hard time."

Liubov said the miracle with the milk is powerful proof that God protects and cares for His Bible workers everywhere. The story about the cow doesn't end here. Liubov's grandmother was about to see another miracle. Read about it next week.

Thank you for your offerings that support our pastors and Bible workers who share the Good News everywhere on earth.

INSIDE
Story

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**Soon, the cow made
as much milk
as two cows!**



Liubov Brunton