

Battle of the Firstborns

The Bible tells us God has had five firstborn sons. Ever since God killed the firstborns in Egypt, Satan has sought to kill God's firstborns in the Battle of the Firstborns.

By Gregory Dullum
Part 2

Among human couples, there can be, at most, just one firstborn son! God, on the other hand, has had FIVE firstborn sons! One, of course, was Jesus Christ. Who were the others? Let's examine God's five firstborn sons in the order they are introduced to us in the Bible.

The Israelites

In Ex. 4:22, God told Pharaoh through Moses, "Israel is My son, My firstborn." God considered Israel to be his firstborn son. Why?

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's *Commentary* on this verse says, "the expression indicates a peculiar affection and interest" (vol. 1, p. 289). *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* says the expression "firstborn" figuratively "stands for that which is most excellent" (p. 427).

But there is a greater reason. Last month we discussed what makes a firstborn special. Some of those reasons applied to ancient Israel!

Israel was a special, HOLY people: "You are the children of LORD your God... For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth" (Deut. 14:1-2).

God RESCUED the Israelites from Egypt (a type of sin) and showed them *his way of living* by giving them his LAW. He *baptized* them by bringing them through the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:2). They were called the *church in the wilderness* (Acts 7:38). You could say, they were the "FIRST OF GOD'S STRENGTH"—a term used to describe firstborns. They were given a *wonderful INHERITANCE*—a land flowing with milk and honey. They



Photo by Greg Dullum

Under a full moon, God sent a death angel to kill all the firstborn of Egypt on Passover. This was the first blow in the Battle of the Firstborns.

were to be LEADERS among nations—showing other people how to live (Deut. 4:5-8). These are all part of the reason why God called Israel his firstborn.

Battle of the Firstborns

There is a battle going on between God and Satan which began more than 3,400 years ago in Egypt. Here is God's declaration of war: "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn" ' " (Ex. 4:22-23).

Pharaoh did not give in. Instead, he and his people suffered through nine devastating plagues. Through them all, Pharaoh never let God's firstborn son go free. So on Passover night, around 1428 B.C., God struck the first blow in the Battle of the Firstborns.

"And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead" (Ex. 12:29-30).

After God killed the firstborn of Egypt, Pharaoh finally let God's firstborn go free. God won the first skirmish in the Battle of the Firstborns!

Second Skirmish

What happened next in the Battle of the Firstborns? When the Israelites went south along the Red Sea, they appeared to be trapped (Ex. 14:3). Pharaoh saw his chance to kill some of God's firstborn sons and return others to slavery!

Satan was the spiritual power behind Pharaoh (Eph. 6:12). As Pharaoh raced his army after the Israelites, both Satan and the Pharaoh may have thought, *You killed my firstborn, I will now kill yours* (vv. 10-11)!

Pharaoh did not succeed in killing any of God's firstborn sons. God divided the sea and Israel escaped (Ex. 14:27-30). God SAVED his firstborn son, Israel!

King David

God tells us his second firstborn son was King David: "I have found My servant David; with My holy oil I have anointed him ... He shall cry to Me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.' Also I will make

FIRSTBORN

Continued on Page 2

Firstborn

Continued from Page 1

him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth” (Ps. 89:20, 26-27).

Why was David a firstborn son of God? He wasn't even the FIRST king of Israel! (However, he was the first *after Saul disqualified himself*—and last month we discussed how firstborn blessings could be transferred if one was disqualified.)

One reason God may have called David his firstborn is because David bore a family resemblance to Him. Although he didn't do it perfectly, David strove to be like God! He was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14). He wasn't sinless, but when he realized what he had done, he repented fully and completely. He sought to obey God's laws with all his heart and soul.

Secondly, David was offered an inheritance that included an eternal throne: “His seed also I will make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. ... His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky” (Ps. 89:29, 36-37).

David began a kingly line that did two things: it led to the birth of Christ (Mat. 1:1-17) and it established a royal lineage that exists to this day—the Queen of England can trace her ancestry back to David.

David will be given eternal life and will rule over Israel when Christ returns (Jer. 30:3, 8-9, Ezek. 37:21-22, 24-25).

Christ, who is considered David's descendant, will reign over David—and all others—as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. 19:16, Isa. 9:6-7). Christ will sit on DAVID'S THRONE when He returns (Isa. 9:7).

Attempts to Kill David

Did Satan ever try to kill this firstborn son of God? Yes! He tried to kill him both *spiritually* (eliminating his chance for eternal life) and *physically* (snuffing out his physical existence).

To get David DISQUALIFIED *spiritually*, Satan tempted him to commit murder, adultery, and to number Israel.

Was David killed *spiritually*? Did he lose his opportunity for eternal life? No! David always repented of his sins and was forgiven by God. Jeremiah 30 and Ezekiel 37 tell us David will be resurrected and made king over Israel in the future Kingdom of God.

Did Satan influence men to try to take David's physical life? Many times! The giant Goliath sought to crush him like a bug (1 Sam. 17:42-43). King Saul tried to pin David to a wall with a spear (1 Sam.

18:11). David fled for his life from his son Absalom (2 Sam. 15:14). The Psalms tell of many times David feared for his life.

It's as if Satan said to God, “David is your firstborn? I will kill him as you killed the firstborn of my Egyptians.”

Did Satan ever succeed in taking the physical life of David? 1 Chron. 29:28 says David “died in a good old age, full of days and riches and honor.” David died of old age. God ALWAYS saved his firstborn.

Ephraim

Who was the third of God's firstborns?

God prophesied these words regarding the Millennium after Christ's return: “They shall come with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters, in a straight way in which they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn” (Jer. 31:9).

Was Ephraim firstborn in his family? No, he was born last (Gen. 41:50-52). Yet, God says He is a Father to ALL Israel and specifically singles out Ephraim as his firstborn. How are we to understand this verse?

This is Hebrew POETRY. The second phrase, “Ephraim is my firstborn” *builds upon* the first phrase, “I am a Father to Israel.” This verse is not meant to be taken literally, because Ephraim was NOT a SON of Israel, he was a GRANDSON. He was not the FIRSTBORN, but the SECONDBORN of Joseph.

God tells us that He doesn't look at things the same way we do. According to the way humans look at things, Ephraim had the *least standing* among all the Israelites. But God calls that *least important* person his FIRSTBORN—giving him the most important status!

Using poetic license, God makes the point that ALL ISRAEL is his firstborn! Even though this verse mentions Ephraim by name, it really is SYMBOLIC of *all Israel*.

The third firstborn son of God (Ephraim) is *similar* to the first one (ancient Israel) but is *different*. When God called the Israelites his firstborn son in Egypt, they were an enslaved people, *not yet a nation*. When we read about Ephraim being a firstborn son, we are talking about Israel *after it has been established as two nations*—the House of Israel and House of Judah. “Ephraim” represents the nations of Israel and Judah in HISTORY and in PROPHECY.

Attempts to Kill Ancient Israel

Satan tried to destroy the nations of Israel and Judah *spiritually*. The people continually were tempted to break God's law. It was because of their *spiritual* sins that they lost their *physical* inheritance!

God said through Jeremiah, “And it shall be, when you show this people all these words, and they say to you, ‘Why has the LORD pronounced all this great disaster against us? Or what is our iniquity? Or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?’ Then you shall say to them, ‘Because your fathers have forsaken Me,’ says the LORD; ‘they have walked after other gods and have served them and worshiped them, and have forsaken Me and not kept My law. And you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, each one walks according to the imagination of his own heart, so that no one listens to Me. Therefore I will cast you out of this land into a land you do not know, neither you nor your fathers; and there you shall serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor’ ” (Jer. 16:10-13).

Did Satan succeed in *spiritually* killing off all the Israelites—God's firstborn? Will they be denied eternal life because of their sins? No! God plans to resurrect the Israelites back to human life at a time when Satan is bound. At that time, they will be given God's holy spirit (Ezek. 37:11-14). They will have a chance to live God's way without Satan's influence and be rewarded with eternal life. They are NOT lost *spiritually*!

Did Satan try to destroy the nations of Israel and Judah *physically*? Many times! They fought many wars and eventually both Israel and Judah were taken into captivity—Israel by the Assyrians and Judah by the Babylonians. However, both survived their captivity! They did not disappear completely!

The Israelites left the area of their Assyrian captivity and migrated into northwestern Europe, North America, Australia and South Africa. Judah survives today as the scattered Jews around the

The SABBATH SCOOP

228 O'Connell Drive
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701-3332

Editor

Gregory Dullum

Circulation Managers:

Craig Evans • Raleigh Collins

Ed Crook • Gregory Dullum

© Copyright Gregory Dullum 2016

PRINT CIRCULATION: 78 • COST PER ISSUE: FREE
<http://sabbathcoop.myfreesites.net>

The Sabbath Scoop is an independent publication. Opinions expressed are those of the editor (based upon more than 50 years attending the Church of God and four years of Ambassador College plus additional personal Bible study), not of any church or organization. Donations to cover costs of paper, toner, postage and Web site are gratefully accepted. You may e-mail the editor at: cbjprodept@socket.net. Unless otherwise noted, Bible quotes are from the New King James Version, ©1983, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

world and as the state of Israel.

Satan influenced Adolph Hitler to kill as many Jews as possible during World War II. Today, Satan influences many Muslims—and especially the leadership in Iran—to hate the Jews with a desire to wipe Israel off the map. Much of the world hates the U.S. and Britain—the birthright nations—and would like to see them destroyed. Prophecy indicates that national captivity is coming again, because these nations are sinning as did their ancestors, the ancient Israelites!

Will Satan, through his human instruments, TOTALLY destroy Israel *physically*? No! God will preserve a remnant of his third firstborn son!

“Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is a time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. ‘For it shall come to pass in that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘That I will break his yoke from your neck, and will burst your bonds; foreigners shall no more enslave them. But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

“‘Therefore, do not fear, O My servant Jacob,’ says the LORD, ‘nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from afar, and your seed from the land of captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, and no one shall make him afraid. For I am with you,’ says the LORD, ‘to save you; though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, yet I will not make a complete end of you. But I will correct you in justice, and will not let you go altogether unpunished’ ” (Jer. 30:7-11). God promises He will not make a complete end of the nation of Israel. Although it will be punished through national captivity, it will not be completely destroyed! Satan WILL NOT completely destroy this firstborn of God—Ephraim—symbolic of all Israel in history and prophecy!

Jesus Christ

We are all familiar with the fourth firstborn Son of God mentioned in the Bible.

Jesus Christ called God his Father (Mat.

7:21, 10:32). He was the FIRST to be raised from the dead (John 3:13, 1 Cor. 15:20). He is the FIRSTBORN of many brethren (Rom. 8:29, 1 Cor. 15:21-22). Jesus Christ is truly, *in every sense*, the firstborn Son of God.

Attempts to Kill Jesus

Did Satan ever try to tempt Jesus so He would lose out on *eternal life*? Yes! He tried when Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights (see Matthew 4 and Luke 4). Did Satan win? No! Jesus overcame the temptation and said, “Away with you, Satan!” (Mat. 4:10).

This was not the only time Jesus was tempted to sin. He was “in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). Satan NEVER succeeded in killing Jesus *spiritually*! Jesus withstood all temptation.

Did Satan ever try to kill Jesus *physically*? Many times Satan influenced the Jews to try to kill Jesus (Mat. 26:4, Luke 22:2, John 5:8, 7:1). But Jesus escaped every time—except one.

Just as God killed the firstborn of the Egyptians on PASSOVER in Egypt long ago, Satan FINALLY succeeded in *killing the firstborn of God* on PASSOVER A.D. 31 in Jerusalem (Mat. 26:19-20, 31, 36, 47, 57, 27:1, 32-35, 45-50, 62; John 19:18, 30-31).

Was this a VICTORY for Satan? It could have been—if Christ had remained dead. “And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:17-22).

It was a short-lived victory for Satan! Because three days and three nights later, Jesus Christ *rose from the grave* as a SPIRIT BEING! His resurrection opened the door for ALL humans to be resurrected! What seemed at first to be a victory for Satan became truly a VICTORY FOR GOD!

The Church

Who is the fifth firstborn of God?

We find the answer in a phrase in Heb. 12:22-23: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect.” We find here mentioned “church of the firstborn.”

We, in God’s church, are considered firstborn. We may not be *literally* firstborn of God—Jesus Christ was firstborn in every sense of the word—but we, in the church, are considered a *type* of firstborn. “Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18).

Like ancient Israel, we are the beginning of God’s strength, called out of sin and baptized, commissioned to be a special people, shining lights to the world (1 Peter 2:9). Ancient Israel inherited a special land; we will be given a divine INHERITANCE: we will be KINGS and PRIESTS (Rev. 1:6, 5:10)—both jobs that were given to firstborn sons. We will be joint heirs with Christ, glorified with Him (Rom. 8:17), and ruling with Him for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4).

Attempts to Kill the Church

Does Satan try to kill us *spiritually*? What happened to Christ will happen to us in the church (Mat. 10:24-25, John 15:20). Satan goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). We will be tempted by Satan to sin and to fall away. He will try to deceive us as he did Christ (Mat. 24:4-5, 24). We must not let him succeed! If we stay close to God and resist Satan, he will flee from us (1 Pet. 5:9, James 4:7).

As a last resort, Satan will try to take our *physical* lives through martyrdom. And some will be killed (Mat. 10:21-22, 34-39, John 16:2). Not all will be killed! Part of the church will be protected in a place of safety (Rev. 3:10, 12:13-17), just as the Israelite firstborns were safe in their Goshen homes with the Passover blood spattered on their door posts and lintels.

Satan will not win the battle of the firstborns. In the end we, in God’s church, will win our battle (1 Cor. 15:20-23)!

Conclusion

God has had five firstborns. He told Pharaoh, let my firstborn go, or I’ll kill yours. Pharaoh refused and God killed all the firstborn in Egypt. Ever since then, Satan has tried to kill God’s firstborns *spiritually* and *physically*. He tried to kill the Israelites as they left Egypt, King David, Ephraim (picturing Israel and Judah in history and in prophecy), Jesus Christ, and the Church of God. And although sometimes it seems as if Satan is winning, the Bible tells us that in the end, God wins! He PROTECTS and BLESSES all of his firstborns.

If we persevere to the end, we will become spirit-born sons of God just as Jesus Christ is now. Victory will belong to us—and to our Father! God will win the Battle of the Firstborns!

Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. Whom did David kill with a sling?
2. David was the king of _____?
3. What city is called Zion?
4. What was the inheritance of the Levites?
5. What tribe of Israel settled with Judah (the Jews)?

(Answers on page 4)

Test Your Bible Knowledge

A small feature every month is our "Memory Scripture" on page 5. Do you remember these scriptures?

Each month, we feature a Memory Scripture on page 5 of *The Sabbath Scoop*. This month, we review some of these scriptures. Write the number for the correct answer on the line before each scripture. Match as many as you can before checking your answers with your Bible.

We published a similar review using different scriptures in December 2010 and January 2015.

God

___ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

___ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Satan

___ And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

Truth

___ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

___ "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

The Bible

___ ...and the Scripture cannot be broken.

Man's Need for Repentance

___ Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

___ For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

___ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

___ No man can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

___ Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Our Duty

___ Then Peter and the other apostles

1. Mat. 7:20	14. John 16:33	27. 1 Cor. 5:7
2. Luke 6:31	15. John 17:17	28. 2 Cor. 5:10
3. Luke 10:18	16. John 18:36	29. 2 Cor. 9:6
4. Luke 14:11	17. Acts 2:38	30. Gal. 6:9
5. Luke 21:36	18. Acts 5:29	31. Eph. 5:22
6. John 1:1	19. Acts 20:35	32. Eph. 5:25
7. John 3:13	20. Rom. 3:23	33. Eph. 6:1
8. John 3:16	21. Rom. 6:23	34. Philipp. 2:3
9. John 6:44	22. Rom. 8:7	35. Philipp. 3:20
10. John 8:32	23. Rom. 8:28	36. Col. 3:23
11. John 10:10	24. Rom. 8:31	37. 1 Thes. 5:17
12. John 10:35	25. Rom. 12:21	38. 1 Thes. 5:18
13. John 15:13	26. Rom. 13:10	

answered and said, "We ought to obey God rather than men."

___ For our citizenship is in heaven....

___ "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

___ Pray without ceasing.

___ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we will reap if we do not lose heart.

___ "For whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

___ In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

The Kingdom of God

___ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."

Finances, Tithes & Offerings

___ It is more blessed to give than to receive.

___ But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Success

___ And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men.

___ I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

___ If God is for us, who can be against us?

___ And we know that all things work

together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Dealing With Others

___ Therefore by their fruits you shall know them.

___ And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

___ "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

___ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

___ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

God's Feasts

___ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you are truly unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

Love, Marriage & Family

___ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

___ Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefor love is the fulfilment of the law.

___ Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

___ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it.

___ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Death & Afterlife

___ "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven."

___ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Know Your Bible Answers

1) Goliath. 2) Israel. 3) Jerusalem. 4) Tithes of the Israelites. 5) Benjamin.

The 7-Day Week

There is no scientific reason why a week should have seven days. So why does it?

By Gregory Dullum

Have you ever thought about why a week is seven days long? There does not appear to be a *scientific* reason for it—the origin must come *from the Bible!*

“All calendars recognize two great natural divisions of time, the day and the year. Both the day and the year are based on the earth’s relationship with the sun. The month is based on the changing appearance of the moon in the sky. The week is entirely a man-made division of time, based on no natural event” (“Calendar,” *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1956, vol. 3, p. 1116).

If the seven-day week is based on no natural event, why does it exist?

“Some of the divisions on our calendar are based on careful scientific observation of the moon, the sun, and the other stars. But not all. For example, there is no scientific reason why a week should have seven days.

“Among some ancient peoples, a week was as short as four days; among others it was as long as nine or thirteen days. As recently as two hundred years ago, during the period of the French Revolution, France had a calendar with a ten-day week. And there are peoples in the world today whose weeks are shorter or longer than seven days.

“The word *week* doesn’t even mean ‘seven.’ It is probably related to the German word *Wechsel*, which simply means ‘change.’ Everybody needs a change, a way of dividing up the succession of days into meaningful units of time” (*Blue Monday and Friday the Thirteenth: The Stories Behind the Days of the Week* by Lila Perl, 1986, pp. 7-8).

“A day is the time taken for the earth to rotate once on its own axis. The side which faces the sun is daylight; it gradually spins away until it faces the darkness away from the sun, and continues spinning until it is back facing the sun again, and a new day begins.

“These are natural divisions of time. They would occur even if there was no one on earth to measure them. However, weeks are quite different—they were invented by our ancestors.

“We got the idea for seven days, and the names for those days, from the people who lived thousands of years ago. They were the Babylonians who lived 6,000 years ago; the Jews who lived 3,500 years ago; the Romans of 2,000 years ago; and the Saxons of 1,500 years ago” (*The Days of*

the Week by Paul Hughes, 1989, p. 9).

These sources do err, not knowing the Scriptures. While man named the days after his pagan gods, he did not come up with the idea of a seven-day week. God created the week when He created everything else we see around us.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). Some time in the vast, unrecorded past, God created all the stars, planets, moons, comets, meteors, etc., which make up our universe.

This earth was created perfect, ready to be inhabited. It was NOT made “in vain” (Isa. 45:18). The Hebrew word for “in vain” is “tohuw” and means “to lie waste,” “a worthless thing,” “confusion, empty place, without form.”

However, when we get to Gen. 1:2, the earth was NO LONGER PERFECT! It is the *opposite* of how it was created: “The earth was without form and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). The Hebrew words to describe the earth are *tohuw* and *bohuw*. We already defined *tohuw*. *Bohuw* is “to be empty” and “an indistinguishable ruin.”

God says the earth was not created *tohuw* in Isa. 45:18 but in Gen. 1:2 we read the earth was *tohuw*. What happened?

The verb “was” in Gen. 1:2 can be translated “became” and is so translated in Gen. 19:26. So, the earth was created *perfect for habitation* and then it BECAME an empty, water-covered dark and desolate ruin.

How did that happen? It appears that the earth was knocked out of its orbit and turned into a ruined watery wasteland by a great war between Lucifer and God (Isa. 14:12-15, Luke 10:18, Rev. 12:3-4, 7-9).

As a result of the war, the earth had stopped spinning. The surface was covered completely in water and dark clouds blocked out most of the light.

The remainder of Genesis 1 and the beginning of chapter 2 describe seven days that we often call “creation week” but actually describe a RE-CREATION.

On the first day, God started the earth spinning again, creating night and day. The spot on the earth where God was working had just passed into darkness.

THE WEEK

Continued on Page 6

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

The lens of the eye continues to grow throughout a person's life.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle., Farrar, Straus and Company, 1964, pp. 201-202.

God Uses the Weak

“‘Your father is right,’ Mrs. Who took the spectacles and hid them somewhere in the folds of her robes. ‘The virtue is gone from them. And what I have to give you this time you must try to understand not by word, but in a flash, as you understand the tesseract. Listen, Meg. Listen well. *The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and the things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and the things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.*’ ”

Mat. 11:25, 1 Cor. 1:25-28

Quotable Quotes

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadows.”

—Helen Keller

Memory Scripture

“I and My Father are one.”

—John 10:30

The Week

Continued from Page 5

Hence this first day of creation began with the dark hours and concluded with the daylight portion (Gen. 1:3-5). Beginning with the FIRST day of re-creation, *all days* begin and end at SUNSET!

The first six days of creation all end with the statement: “So evening and morning were the first (second, third, etc.) day.” If these statements were not here, we would not know what happened on each day! They are SEPARATORS *between the days of creation*. If you read through the first six days without these statements, it would appear that everything happened on one day!

These statements also confirm that creation (or re-creation) happened during seven literal 24-hour days. They were not years or millennia or epochs of time. They were 24-hour days that began at sunset and ended at sunset!

On day two, God divided the waters, placing some water in the sky and some in the seas (Gen. 1:6-8).

On day three, God caused dry land to appear, along with the plants that grow in the soil (vv. 9-13).

On day four, God caused the clouds to disappear so the heavenly lights were visible from the earth’s surface (vv. 14-19).

On day five, God created the birds and sea creatures (vv. 20-23).

On day six, God created the animals and two humans—Adam and Eve (vv. 24-31).

On the seventh day, God rested from what He had done, and created the Sabbath (Gen. 2:2-3). The seventh day was the last day of creation; it was the last day of creation week and it established the seven-day week. When the Sabbath ended, a new week started. How do we know? Because after the Sabbath, there is no statement, “So the evening and the morning were the seventh day.” There was no need to mark a separation between the seventh day and the next day, because THE WEEK WAS OVER.

How do we know the Sabbath was ONE DAY long? In Ex. 20:8 it is called the “Sabbath day” and we are commanded to keep it holy. We are given six days to work just as God created for six days. But on the seventh day, we are to rest (vv. 9-11). In Ex. 35:2 we are told to work for six days but the seventh day, the Sabbath, is a holy DAY (24 hours)—not a holy PARTIAL DAY, or holy MULTIPLE DAYS, WEEKS or YEARS.

The seven-day week was not a man-made invention! It was created by God! When the holy seventh day ends, the week ends. The seven-day week has no *scientific* reason to exist, but it does point us to *creation* and to God as our *Creator*!



Climate Summit's Goal Is to End Capitalism

“The U.N.’s many climate meetings and its interest in climate through the years have nothing to do with warming, climate, weather or the environment.

“The goal has always been to wreck capitalism, punish prosperous economies that became rich through free markets, reward poorer nations that are impoverished by policies that starve markets, and reshape the world in the image of left-wing thought.

“Don’t believe it? It’s right in the U.N.’s own documents.

“The ‘Draft conclusions proposed by the Co-Chairs,’ distributed on Dec. 5, confirms that the parties of a climate agreement are united in ‘emphasizing the importance of promoting, protecting and respecting all human rights, the right to development, the right to health, and the rights of indigenous peoples, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable climate situations (and under occupation).’

“The draft also underscores the need to promote ‘gender equality and the empowerment of women, while taking into account the needs of local communities, intergenerational equity concerns, and the integrity of ecosystems and of Mother Earth, when taking action to address climate change.’

“Yes, that’s Mother Earth with an upper-case M and upper-case E. ...

“All of these issues being ‘emphasized’ and ‘taken into account’ are goals the political left has pursued for decades, and all require more government intervention into private affairs. That is what the global warming scare is about. It’s not about rescuing cities from encroaching seas, saving populations from drought, preventing ‘dirty weather’ or protecting polar bears.

“Look at those around the world who are advancing the global warming scare. The movement is led, and followed by, figures from the political left who loathe capitalism, are repulsed by the wealth in advanced economies and want to exercise control over their fellow humans. The talk about climate

change is a smoke screen to cover their true ambitions” (“It’s Not About Warming: Here’s Why the U.N. Holds Climate Summits,” *Investor’s Business Daily* (editorial), Dec. 11, 2015).

One of the greatest strengths of the U.S. is its free-market economy. This strength can be diminished as U.S. leaders such as Pres. Obama sign on to the global warming hoax. This may be one way God will break the pride of our power (Lev. 26:19).

Tornadoes Strike

A tornado ripped through Mississippi Dec. 23, killing 14 people. Officials wondered if the same tornado stayed on the ground for 130 miles (“Tornado Leaves Long Path of Destruction in South” by Lacey Russell, Alan Binder and Cynthia Howle,” *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Dec. 24, 2015, p. 1).

“At least eight people were killed in the Dallas area Saturday night [Dec. 26] when as many as 11 tornadoes swept North Texas, officials said” (“Eight Dead as Tornadoes Strike the Dallas Area” by Daniel E. Slotnik and David Montgomery, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Dec 26, 2015, p. 1).

The Bible warns of “whirlwinds” occurring in the latter days (Jer. 23:19-20, 30:23-24). Expect more such storms as people turn their backs on God!

Iran Tests Missiles

“After two recent Iranian ballistic missile tests made clear that Tehran had no intention of obeying a United Nations prohibition on such launches, Obama administration officials on Wednesday [Dec. 30] handed Congress a draft list of fresh sanctions they are preparing against Tehran—to be imposed even as separate nuclear-related sanctions are lifted in the coming weeks” (“Iran’s Missile Tests Remind the U.S. That Hostilities Have Not Ended” by Helene Cooper and David E. Sanger, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Dec. 30, 2015, p. 1).

The end-time “king of the South” may be a Muslim union of nations including a nuclear-armed Iran (Dan. 11:40).