

Delightful Discoveries in Prayer

Prayer Lessons in Creation

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Name: _____

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Lesson 06: Creation's Second Day

FIRMAMENT

The word firmament is listed seventeen times in the Bible. Nine of these are found in Genesis 1. The next place the word firmament is found is Psalm 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."

"Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power." Psalm 150:1.

It says we are to "praise him [God] in the firmament of his power." There we have God's word brought to view. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made". Psalm 33:6. He is "upholding all things by the word of his power." Hebrews 1:3.

EZEKIEL

In the book of Ezekiel, chapter one, the word firmament is found four more times. In verses 22 to 26 we read about "the likeness of a throne." in verse 28 it says there is a rainbow around the throne. Ezekiel 10:1 seems to connect the firmament with the angels, or cherubims.

DANIEL

Another place the word is used is Daniel 12:3. This text seems to connect the firmament with the gospel, for it says that people who turn others to righteousness will shine like the firmament. So the firmament preaches the gospel, and people who preach it are likened to the bright firmament.

RAIN

"When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens." Jeremiah 10:13.

In Genesis 1:6 to 8; the second day of creation, "God said," and "it was so." God's word sent part of the waters up, and part down! Then He put the firmament between.

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."

Job 26:8 tells how "He [God] bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them." This shows that God's word has such power that it can bind up the water in clouds, and hold all that water in its place. It sounds as if when God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters," there was a mighty rushing of water upward. Maybe it sounded as it went up, something like Niagara Falls sounds coming down! But what is thrilling is that it was done by His voice—His word.

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Jeremiah 10:13 tells us; “He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth.” We call it the sun drawing water; it is actually God’s drawing voice that causes the vapor to rise! God’s word orders the rain. “When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:” Job 28:26. God is in charge of this world even though Satan has messed it up.

God has “made his wonderful works to be remembered.” Psalm 111:4. In remembering how He could, by His voice, force the water up, or down, we can know He can protect us.

Jeremiah 10:12 and 13 tell us: “He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.” Now the next verse shows that it was by His voice that the waters were divided—some going up, and some going down, on the second day of creation. “When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.”

Proverbs 30:4 and 5: “Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? 5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.”

God’s Word is a shield to those who believe; God, who can control the waters—like binding them in a garment—can shield our life from Satan.

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” Isaiah 59:19. When Satan tries to drown us with a flood of temptation, God, whose word controls the waters, will protect us if we but hide in that all-powerful word. In Matthew 4:4, 7 and 10, we have three instances of how quoting the Word of God saved Christ from sinking in the waves of Satan’s temptations.

Jeremiah 14:20 to 22; Here we can see the relation of rain to God’s promises.

“Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.” Verse 22.

Because of God’s power and willingness to send rain, we can look to Him and Verses 20 and 21 shows that God connects forgiveness with His eagerness to give us rain. He also connects the ministry of the Holy Spirit with the rain.

“We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for we have sinned against thee. Do not abhor us, for thy name’s sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us.” God has given us a promise of forgiveness, right in the rain.

There is a promise in the rainbow about the throne, referred to in Ezekiel 1:26 and 28. “And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, . . . 28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.”

God calls the rainbow around His throne “my bow”: “I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.” Genesis 9:13. As the rainbow appears in the storm, God’s presence is in the storms of life. He says, “He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.” Psalm 18:11.

This bow in the clouds stands for God’s mercy to sinners, according to the following Scripture:

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“For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.” Isaiah 54:7-10.

In Isaiah 45:8, the rain which descends by the voice of God represents God’s righteousness. “Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it.”

God, our Creator, promises us to let righteousness fill our lives just as the rain fills the thirsty earth.

This is the gospel of the second day of creation. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” Psalm 19:1.

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” Daniel 12:3.

The power of God’s word is surely revealed in the firmament, the water, and the rain. The text in 1 Peter 1:25 comes to mind: “And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

When the clouds of life gather, and the storms come to the soul, the promise is that our Lord will be especially near to us when days are dark. In Psalm 97:2 we read, “Clouds and darkness are round about him.” We all know of the promise of the rainbow. That bow reveals God’s presence in the storm.

We can know Jesus is near us in the storm. He has promised, “I will never leave thee.” Hebrews 13:5.

“Somebody knows when your heart aches,
And everything seems to go wrong;
Somebody knows when the shadows
Need chasing away with a song;
Somebody knows when you’re lonely,
Tired, discouraged and blue;
Somebody wants you to know Him,
And know that He dearly loves you.

“Somebody cares when you’re tempted,
And your mind grows dizzy and dim;
Somebody cares when you’re weakest,
And farthest away from Him.
Somebody grieves when you’re fallen,
You are not lost from His sight;
Somebody waits for your coming,
And He’ll drive the gloom from your night.

“Somebody loves you when weary;
Somebody loves you when strong;
Always is waiting to help you,
He watches you—one of the throng,
Needing His friendship so holy,

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Needing His watchcare so true.
His name? We call His name Jesus.
He loves every one, He loves you."

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Isaiah 55:10 to 13:

Wonderful Assurance

"But all who will lay hold of God's promises as did Jacob, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." Luke 18:7, 8. Patriarchs and Prophets, page 203.

Review Questions

Note: Kindly fill in the blanks "true," or "false."

1. When God said, "Let there be a firmament," it was not so. True _____. False _____. Gen. 1:6-8.
2. God's word forces water upward, or downward. True _____. False _____. Gen. 1:6, 7.
3. Clouds are never a symbol of God's forgiveness. True _____. False _____. Isa. 44:22.
4. The rainbow has nothing to do with God's promise that He will not again destroy the world by a flood. True _____. False _____. Gen. 9:11-15.
5. There is no rainbow around God's throne. True _____. False _____. Rev. 4:3.
6. When we acknowledge our sins in simple humility, confession and repentance, the throne of God would be disgraced if He did not forgive us. True _____. False _____. Jer. 14:20, 21.
7. A sinner whose sins are like crimson may find forgiveness. True _____. False _____. Isa. 1:18.
8. We cannot claim repentance as a free gift. True _____. False _____. Acts 5:31.
9. A wicked man asked God to be merciful to him a sinner, and went to his house justified, or forgiven. True _____. False _____. Luke 18:13, 14.
10. A new heart is created by our Creator. True _____. False _____. Ps. 51:10.
11. God will forgive even the chiefest of sinners. True _____. False _____. 1 Tim. 1:15.

Answers found on answer sheet.