

1 “THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT”

The human mind has an enormous potential for learning if given the proper opportunity. It is a joy to see a student, in the right environment, achieve excellence in their educational experience. It can flourish just like a beautiful garden under the right circumstances. In order to achieve this excellence all successful students need two ingredients. They first need an excellent teacher and secondly a suitable learning environment. Our Father in Heaven fulfilled the first need as the master teacher. The Master Teacher then fulfilled the second need by establishing an environment suitable for proper learning. This learning environment would be the most elaborate classroom experience of all time. The universe would be created and eventually prepared for the future placement of His special students. The initial starting point for these students education would be a very small planet called earth. Once the classroom was totally prepared, man was brought into the special learning environment (Gen. 2:7). We find ourselves today existing on a jewel called earth that is teeming with wondrous life forms. It was created so beautifully that even the angels shouted for joy (Job 38:4-7). Did you ever wonder about the purpose of your life and why you exist here in this unique place called earth? Is it possible that there is an incredible destiny and purpose awaiting you beyond this present life? A loving and all powerful God has a fantastic plan for your existence! It is a plan, designed by the Master Teacher that is more amazing than any science fiction writer could ever imagine producing. We need to understand why we were placed in this incredible learning environment in order to comprehend God’s ultimate purpose in our lives. There are, however, challenges to the learning process in this

classroom! God intentionally placed obstacles in this learning environment for His students to recognize and overcome. He allowed “evil” to be created and exist in this environment of physical beauty and life (Isa. 45:7). He also allowed an aggressive instigator of that evil force, a being called Satan, to dwell upon this earth and to deceive humanity of God’s purpose for our existence. This placement of evil and deceit in the learning environment was vital to His student’s future success in perfecting character that would reflect God’s own perfection.

God began to reveal His marvelous purpose for mankind in the first book of the Bible (Gen. 1:1-31. 2:1-7). He would expand the knowledge of that purpose to anyone who would diligently seek the answers through obedience (I John 3:22). All the necessary answers we need as students are contained in the instruction book called the “Holy Bible.” We are told as students to diligently search the scriptures for God’s will and purpose in our lives (II Tim 2:15). Students who are not diligent in this search for truth will not be able to discover their true destiny (Mat. 13:10-16). We are told that there would be a little bit of information scattered throughout the Bible. We must be willing to search for answers to our questions of purpose (Isa. 28:9-10). God gave us the ability to piece everything together if we would only allow ourselves to be led by His guiding Spirit. If we expect to acquire additional truth, we must respond obediently to what God reveals to us on a constant basis. The first two verses of the Bible begin to lay out the story of God’s plan of salvation for mankind. Between Genesis chapter one, verses one and two, a tremendous amount of time had elapsed. The second event didn’t immediately follow the first event. The first verse depicts a time when the physical creation of our

universe took place. This is when the universe filled with galaxies and glittering stars came into existence for the first time. It was also the birth of the earth as our future temporary home and classroom of learning. The second verse in Genesis depicts a time much later where the earth is described as void and lifeless. It was no longer the glittering jewel that was initially created at verse one. God would once again bring life upon this planet as we know it today. The sequence of events over a period of six days would establish the finished classroom for mankind (Gen. 1:1-31, 2:1-3). This new life would be much different than the life earth knew millions of years earlier.

What happened to change things during that time between verses one and two on this earth? Are there any historic records that predate the first verse? The answer is yes! There are historic and Biblical records of what happened during that time on this earth. Most students of religion believe that all physical life began first at the Garden of Eden about six thousand years ago. What really began at the Garden of Eden was the history of human existence on the earth. The real beginning of physical life and our universe took place millions of years prior to this creation of humans. An event recorded in John 1:1, that predates Genesis 1:1, is a vital clue to the real beginning. We are told in this verse that in the beginning was the “Word”. A better translation for “Word” would be a plan or concept (Strong’s Concordance #3056). The plan and strategy of God’s project of duplicating Himself existed before a physical world ever existed. This event recorded in John 1:1 was before a physical world, which is our learning environment, ever existed. Everything we know as “physical” today was not on the scene at the time of this original concept. The physical realm was created with its own special laws of physics. We find

ourselves today governed by temporary physical laws that were created by God for a very special project. When this project is completed, the physical world along with its laws, will pass away (II Pet. 3:10-11). That special project enacted by the Master Teacher involves you and your future destiny. It should be a consuming desire for every human being to pursue the truth of their true destiny. A physical temporary world was needed and, therefore, created as a classroom for future members of the Family of God! It is extremely hard for humans to look beyond the temporary physical world we have always known. The “real world” can only be seen by those being led by God’s Spirit (I Cor. 13:9-12). God has, however, provided enough evidence for dedicated students to look into the distant past for their background and to look into the distant future for their destiny!

What happened millions of years ago to our universe and especially to our present home of earth? Let’s look a little deeper into the establishment of our classroom. The master plan for mankind’s destiny was established before the physical world ever existed in its present form (John 1:1). The first step of that plan was to bring a physical world into existence for the first time (Gen. 1:1). This temporary physical existence of animal and plant life would serve as a preparation phase for eternal Spirit life for His students. Once the plan was formulated and perfected, a physical world would suddenly come into existence. It was the birth of our universe! Many experts in the scientific field say it was as if the universe suddenly emerged from nowhere. They are exactly right! It did not evolve over eons of time. The universe in all its splendor was created! Scientists sometimes refer to it as the “Big Bang” theory because it seemed to explode on the scene.

It baffles those students of science how such an elaborate and complex universe could come into existence from nowhere. They are reluctant to acknowledge a supreme God with the power to accomplish such a miracle of creation. The universe, including the earth, existed for multiple millions of years before the creation of man at the Garden of Eden. This vast expanse of time took place between those first two verses in Genesis chapter one.

What was the purpose of this magnificent physical creation? The primary basis for that original thought in the first chapter of John could be summed up by God saying, “Let us create man in our image” (Gen. 1:26). This was at the core of His plan from the very beginning (II Sam 14:14). Not primarily in the physical sense of creating us in His “form and shape,” which we get wrapped up in, but in the Spiritual sense of bringing us to the point of thinking like God that leads to eternal life as His children. God was on the threshold of creating physical humans who would have the awesome opportunity to perfect the righteous character that God Himself possessed (Heb. 13:21)!

The physical life forms in prehistoric time were very different on this planet before the creation of Adam and Eve? Scriptural evidence confirms that life existed on this planet before the Garden of Eden (Isa. 14:12-15). We are well aware that spiritual life existed in the form of angelic beings. We also have scientific evidence that pre-dates historic that physical life also existed on this earth. Scientific evidence of past life forms proves there was life on this planet millions of years ago that predates the creation date at the Garden of Eden. Human existence on this planet only goes back a few thousand years, but

physical life forms go back much farther in time. Many animal species, we no longer see today, walked this earth in ancient time. This includes the dinosaurs, as well as, all the other creatures we find in fossil form. There were also beings that walked this earth that resembled the physical form of future humans. These beings in ancient time were not human! Humans with the power of intellect did not exist until much later at the Garden of Eden. Adam was the very first human and student God created. The “human-like beings” we see in ancient times were the prototypes of future man. Scientists in their studies of life forms sometimes refer to them as cave men or prehistoric men. They would cease to exist, along with other life forms, before the creation of man.

These creatures of ancient time came into being by God’s design and purpose. This physical creation of life was laid out and launched by God millions of years ago as a forerunner to the creation of man. Once the physical world with the various forms of animal and plant life was brought into existence the project of God duplicating Himself in the future would begin. He assigned one of His Arch Angels as the supervisor of the plan of eventually creating man on the earth. That Arch Angel’s name was Lucifer. His name meant the “Morning” (Isa. 14:12). It was a very appropriate name for this supervisor because before this project began there were no physical worlds. The word “Morning” associated with Lucifer (Strong’s Concordance # 7837) means the dawn or a beginning. God was launching the beginning stages of His plan by bringing the universe into existence.

Part of Lucifer's job on this earth was to monitor and perfect the interactions of life forms on this planet. A proper balance in nature would also be needed for the world that would be called home for man. It is revealed in scripture that He was put in charge of this world as a "magistrate" (Strong's Concordance #2316) until Jesus' return (II Cor. 4:4). He would, with God's approval, make needed corrections along the way to this new physical world. Sometimes those who believe in the evolutionary process will point to life forms that no longer exist as we know them today as evidence that evolutionary changes have taken place. These changes in life forms observed by scientists had nothing to do with evolution. It is evidence of God perfecting a world that would someday be ready for mankind's existence. The classroom environment was being tweaked millions of years ago in what scientists call prehistoric time. It would be a created learning environment suitable for mankind to reach the incredible future destiny that God envisioned for all of us. When all the adjustments and the final changes were in place for the emergence of man, it was time for the prototype of the world to come to be destroyed (Isa. 14:12). This destruction of life forms also included the prototype of man. Many scientists now believe that life in prehistoric time was most likely destroyed by a giant meteor striking the earth. This theory is very plausible based on biblical evidence of massive destruction of our solar system sometime in the distant past. The information we have in scripture tells us there was a war in heaven that predates Adam and Eve (Isa. 14:12-15 and Ezek. 28:12-17). Satan's system of rebellion will once again suffer a similar defeat in a heavenly war near the end of this age (Rev. 12:7). In this first heavenly battle, not only was physical life eliminated on earth, but many of the heavenly bodies in our solar system also seem to indicate that a destructive force took place millions of years ago. As this old physical

world came to a close, a new physical world that would include humans would emerge at the Garden of Eden! This new world would be much more suitable for mankind's existence and perfection than the violent world of the past when the reptiles roamed the earth.

The classroom environment was now in place for the creation of man at the Garden of Eden. All that was needed was for God to give the green light for its emergence on the scene. When He gave the command to begin, a new day dawned and mankind with the spirit of intellect and choice were placed in this classroom called earth. We were created physically weak and fragile for a purpose. This weak and fragile state would eventually fade away as we reach the end of our educational experience! Humans were suddenly thrust into a hostile environment with a nature designed to reject God's law at birth (Rom. 8:7). It was an environment where Satan was placed as a powerful force for us to contend with on a daily basis. We were literally thrown into a wilderness of mystery and deep deception from the very start. It would, however, be a perfect learning environment for God's purpose of perfecting His future children. God knew exactly what He was doing! The earth would become a giant classroom for the perfection of humanity. God would require every student to master the subject matter presented in this educational endeavor. He will not accept anything short of perfection from us!

It was at this time of mankind's arrival on the scene that Lucifer took on the role of Satan. He would now become the adversary of all mankind. He would also have dominion over a third of the angels which were allowed to remain under his command on

the earth (Rev. 12:4). Why would God allow Satan and his team of fallen angels to inhabit the very space that would be used for the creation and perfecting of man? Did God forget what He was going to do on this earth? No, God had a reason for the placement of evil on this planet. Satan and his team were about to shift gears in their new assignment on the earth. All aspects had now been perfected for the future creation at the Garden of Eden. The old physical life forms of prehistoric time were destroyed, but the classroom for mankind's future perfection process was almost ready. One final element had to be introduced into the world. That final element was the duplication of the evil that Satan possessed. Scripture tells us that God created evil (Isa. 45:7). This evil tendency was to be placed in mankind for the purpose of character development. We know this evil tendency in mankind in the form of human nature. Human nature left unchecked leads to lawlessness. We are told in scripture that the heart of man is desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). So, all those born of man were to be stamped with a pattern of rebellion modeled after Satan himself. All those who would allow this nature to exist in their lives would be stamped with Satan's mark. Individuals would have to willingly go against their physical nature of evil and choose to have the mind of God. This process was created as a safety valve for something that could happen in the future. God will not allow any of His students to become His children without first choosing the "fruit of the Spirit" over the "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-23). The creation of evil is an exact replica of Satan's nature. Every individual who would strive to be a part of God's Family would have to get past Satan's powerful influence on the mind. Mankind would now have the choice and responsibility of choosing the fruit of the God's Spirit over the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-23). Most of humanity has made the wrong choice of being branded with Satan's

“mark” of the works of the flesh. They will be required to eventually make the right decision in a future resurrection (Rev. 20:5).

In this classroom environment two choices were given to humanity that corresponds to the “fruit of the Spirit” and the “works of the flesh” (Gal. 5:19-23). These are the two options we are given that lead to either eternal life or eternal death. The two trees in the Garden of Eden represent those two choices for mankind (Gen. 2:9). It is a simple choice of choosing God’s way or Satan’s way. History has proven that most of mankind has been guilty of making the wrong choice. The advantages and disadvantages of making these choices were revealed to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. God made sure they knew what was at stake. The first two students, unfortunately, made the wrong choice. We can’t blame Adam and Eve’s wrong decision for our sins today. We have the same choice today in which way we will live. Mankind is still making the same wrong choice between life and death. Look at what that wrong choice has done to the world down through the ages. The pages of mankind’s history on this earth are written in the blood of humanity. God knew that most of humanity would at first reject the “fruit of the Spirit” and embrace the “works of the flesh.” He was not shocked by their response. The vast majority of those students who failed will eventually make the right choice in a future resurrection. His plan is perfect and its outcome of salvation to the masses will astound us all!

God expects us to be excellent students in this learning environment. Excellent students master the subject matter. What kind of response does He expect from His students and

future children? He wants us to be ready to learn, to strive for excellence, to complete assignments, to rebound from failures, to be ready at all times, and to never fall asleep in class. If we are willing to apply ourselves the outcome of this experience will be a willing mind to serve God (II Cor. 5:7), a teachable mind ready to learn (Acts 17:11-12), a transformed mind to accept the “fruit of the Spirit” (Rom. 12:2), a powerful mind to think as God thinks (II Cor. 10:5), and a disciplined mind to never waver from God’s way (Neh. 4:1-6). God expects us to roll up our sleeves and go to work. If we yield ourselves to God’s will we will have a solid foundation to build upon. We must be willing to pursue truth and act upon that truth as God reveals it to us.

Students who thrive in this learning environment will graduate with honors at the seventh trumpet at Jesus’ return. All others are destined to repeat the course in a future resurrection until they get it right. Upon graduation at the seventh trumpet those special students will be offered the greatest positions in God’s realm. These special students will be instrumental in helping the masses who have failed as students to eventually succeed in entering into God’s family (Rev.20:5)! They will be allowed to work with Him for an eternity with a benefit package that is unimaginable! How is your resume of service shaping up? Are you taking your educational process serious? Are you really preparing for your awesome future in God’s Kingdom? God put you in this hostile environment for a reason. He has subjected you to this world in hope that you would rise above it (Rom. 8:17-20). His desire for you is to pursue the truth of His plan of salvation. He didn’t leave you in the darkness in regard to your purpose in life. We are told that when we know the truth of His marvelous plan we will be free (John 8:32). The truth of God’s purpose for us will

increase as we continue to walk through doors He opens for us. Many mysteries of life are revealed in the pages of the Old and New Testament books of the Bible. There will be some very special students who will be selected and sealed by the time of the seventh trump. This doesn't mean the rest are lost. These special students will form the basis of His leadership team for the future resurrection of the masses! All of these students will have successfully escaped the "mark of the beast" in their earthly life.