

The Everlasting Gospel Bible Study

Introduction

Welcome and thank you for choosing to take this wonderful journey through the Bible in discovery of the plan of salvation. The title for this series is simply called the Everlasting Gospel and is a quote from Revelation 14:6. It is called everlasting because this gospel has always been God's plan to save the human race.

From the first sin committed by our original parents, Adam and Eve, through to the very last moment of earthly time revealed in the book of Revelation, and into the distant times of the eternal future, the gospel of Jesus Christ has been the method of God for reuniting the fallen race of man back to harmony with Himself, and throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity will remain the basis for our existence.

The word gospel means Good News. Therefore, we can accurately say this is a Bible study about the Everlasting Good News of God to save the human race from the results that disobedience and sin have brought to our planet, and to restore us to an everlasting life and relationship with our Creator, God.

Welcome to this journey and process of discovery. May the God of Heaven and Earth give you the courage, strength, and understanding to endure this challenging endeavor.

Lesson One: The Love of God

I would like to begin the study of this lesson with a quote from the book called *Steps to Christ*: “Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God.” (SC 15.2)

1. Here are some thoughts to consider:
 - a. What are we to meditate on?
 - b. What does meditating on this idea do for us?
 - c. What are the implications of such an amazing promise?

In the book of Genesis, the Bible says that “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1) God created all that is in the heavens, which means all that we can see and all that we cannot see. From the furthest reaches into space, all that our most powerful telescopes can see is but a fraction – if not just a speck – of what God has created. Then we consider how small the planet called earth actually is, up against the amazing vast and limitless backdrop of space!

In the children's book by Dr Zeus, called *Horton Hears a Who*, the imaginative writer tells a fanciful tale of an elephant that finds an entire microscopic world that lands on the top of a flower. However, truth can be stranger than fiction! Our world is but a microscopic speck in comparison to the limitless cosmos, yet God came to this tiny planet and created an amazing and vast world. But more than this, God did something even more wonderful; He made an entire new race of beings called mankind.

- d. In the creation of this new human race, what did God particularly do that demonstrates His love for us? Genesis 1:26: Then God said, “let us make man in our _____, according to our _____,”
- e. What did God instruct man to do and not to do after his creation?
Genesis 2:16-17
- i. “And the Lord God _____ the man, saying ‘of every tree of the garden you may _____ eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall _____ eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely _____”

In the garden of Eden, God gave man instructions on how to live forever by obeying His commands. God knew that the happiness of man depended upon him being able to trust God. So long as man obeyed God, He could have lived forever in perfect bliss.

- f. What else did God do for Adam that demonstrated his love?
Read Genesis 2:18: And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him a _____ _____ to him.” God demonstrated His love for Adam by giving him Eve as a wife, and in this way the love that man and woman feel for one another is a picture of God Himself. In fact, love itself, whether it be for a spouse, parent, family member, or friend comes from God. How does this demonstrate God’s love for us?
- g. Read Genesis 3:15: After Adam and Eve sinned against God, He promised to deliver the human race from the serpent. In Genesis 3:24, the Bible says He placed an angel at the entrance of the garden to guard the way of the Tree of Life.

Read this commentary on what is meant by a “flaming sword”:

Light has ever been a symbol of the Divine Presence. As such, the Shekinah glory of God appeared between the two cherubim, one on either side of the mercy seat covering the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies (see Exodus 25:22; Isaiah 37:16; Desire of Ages p464; Patriarch and Prophets p349; The Great Controversy p24).

The phrase “a flaming sword” is a rather inexact translation of the Hebrew, which reads literally “a glittering of the sword.” There was no literal sword guarding the gate of Paradise. There was, rather, what appeared to be the scintillating reflection of light from a sword “turned every way” with great rapidity – flashing shafts of light radiating from an intensely brilliant center. Furthermore, the form of the Hebrew verb *mithhappeketh*, rendered in the KJV “turned every way,” really means “turning itself every way.” This verb form is used exclusively to express intensive, reflexive action, and requires, in this instance, the conclusion that the “sword” appeared to whirl itself about. This radiant, living light was none other than the Shekinah glory, the manifestation of the Divine Presence. Before it, for centuries, those loyal to God gathered there to worship Him.¹ While on the one hand God was preventing humans from eating from the tree of life and being immortal sinners, on the other hand His shining presence was there to remind them that one day the Tree of Life would be restored back to Adam’s race! The story of the creation and fall of man with God’s subsequent dealings with the disobedient race demonstrates just how much God loved our first parents.

¹ Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1978). [*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 236). Review and Herald Publishing Association.

2. The Old Testament is often misunderstood and thought of by many as the loveless part of the Bible. What do these Old Testament texts tell us about God's love for us in the Old Testament?
 - a. Deuteronomy 7:7 "The Lord did not set his _____ upon you, because you were more in number than any people; for you were the fewest of all people."
 - b. Deuteronomy 10:15 "Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to _____ them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day."
 - c. Psalm 91:14 "Because he hath set his _____ upon me, therefore will I deliver him."

In the book of Ezekiel God uses a very touching parable to illustrate His love for His people: They are depicted as a child that has been discarded by its mother. Imagine the horror of seeing a newborn child just lying on the road, but to make matters worse, as people pass by nobody even bothers to stop! But God did something different. Ezekiel 16: 8 says; "When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of _____, so I spread My _____ over you, and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you, and entered into a covenant with you, and you became _____,' says the Lord God."

Discuss: How this makes you feel, and what is the reality of God's love toward us?

3. In the New Testament, how is the love of God demonstrated towards man?
 - a. Romans 5:7-8 "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God _____ His own _____ toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
 - b. John 3:16 "For God so _____ the world that He _____ His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - c. In the Old Testament, the love of God is stated, but in the New Testament, the love of God is demonstrated and given. God takes action and *shows* us that He does love the human race.
 - d. However, God even goes farther than this. Read Romans 5:5: "Now hope does not disappoint, because the _____ of God has been _____ out in our hearts by the _____ who was _____ to us."

Discuss what this means to you. Why was the Holy Spirit given to us? What has been poured in our hearts? What does this say about how much God wants us to know His love for us?

Appeal: Reflect back to our opening quote from the book *Steps to Christ*, "Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God."

Will you spend some time this week reflecting on the great love of God for you?

Exercise: As you meditate on these things would you consider acknowledging to God that you receive His love for you by praying a simple prayer from the heart, that might sound something like this: "Lord, I understand that you love me, and I receive that love, Lord, and desire to know you better. Amen" It is a simple prayer and a small beginning, but if spoken from the heart, it can be the start of an amazing journey with God!