

Good News Daily

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Sunday, January 7

Genesis 1:1—2:3 *By the seventh day God finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. (2:2-3 NIV)*

During the previous six days God created the heavens and earth and everything in them. That does not sound like the Big Bang Theory to me. How many of us actually rest on the seventh day, the day of the Sabbath? “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). I must confess I have not always rested. But when I do, the week begins much better.

Notice that God the Creator merely spoke and things began to happen. “He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—he remains faithful forever” (Psalm 146:6). A little boy was once asked, “What came first, the chicken or the egg?” He replied, “That’s easy, the chicken. God does not lay eggs.” Only Almighty God can make something out of nothing. Ponder that.

Psalms 146, 147; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:29-34

Monday, January 8

Genesis 2:4-25 *But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. (vv.20b-22)*

God had just finished bringing all the animals and livestock and birds to Adam to have him name them. But there was no suitable helper among them for Adam. So God put Adam in a deep sleep and created Eve from his rib, close to his heart. Not from his head to be above him, nor off his feet to be beneath him and be trampled upon. But from his side, under his arm, close to his heart, to be loved, honored, cherished, and protected. What would the world be like if we only practiced those few words?

The two became one flesh. No matter how amicable it seems, when a couple divorces there is always pain. It is like taking a gaff hook, putting it in your forearm at the wrist and pulling it up to the elbow, tearing that one flesh. If there are children involved, it is even more painful. I have personal experience, twice. Ponder that.

Psalms 1, 2, 3; Hebrews 1:1-14; John 1:1-18

Tuesday, January 9

Genesis 3:1-24 Now *the serpent was craftier than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"* (v.1)

The Bible is either entirely true or entirely false. Only nonbelievers question its authenticity. The first three chapters of Genesis are a Reader's Digest version of the entire Bible. God created everything including man. There is deception in the form of a serpent. There is disobedience when Adam and Eve ate from the tree in the center of the garden. There is works salvation when Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together to try and hide their sin. But no secret is hidden from God. So, what they did is called the original sin or the Fall. We all have it because we are all descendants of theirs. I call it "sin the noun." The sins we commit on a daily basis I call "sin the verb." But, God knows there is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood. So, He shed the blood of two animals and used the skins to clothe them. This points to the cross and man's need of a Savior.

In today's world, people march to justify their sin. But that will not work either. I believe the Bible to be entirely true. Just because I do not understand it all does not mean it's not true. Besides, it is not the parts I do not understand that concern me. It's the parts I do understand that concern me. Ponder that.

Psalms 5, 6; Hebrews 2:1-10; John 1:19-28

Wednesday, January 10

John 1:29-42 *"This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'"* (v.30)

I paused when I read verse 30. How can someone come after you, but surpass you, because he was before you? The only way that is possible is if that person existed before you. He had to be the incarnate Jesus Christ. John the Baptist had been born of Elizabeth, the sister of Mary, about six months before Jesus. So, John the Baptist and Jesus were cousins. Jesus existed before the eternity past, became incarnate of the virgin Mary, and was born about six months after John the Baptist. Only an eternal God, a suffering Savior, and a powerful Holy Spirit could have pulled this off.

John baptized with water, but Jesus was to baptize with the Holy Spirit. I cannot imagine where I would be if it had not happened that way. There would have been no miracle worker, teacher, nor Savior, no cross, no death and shedding of blood, no burial, no resurrection, no ascension, and no promise of coming again. But it did happen that way because we have a loving Father who gave his only Son, Jesus Christ, the sinless one, to die on the cross for our sins. Then he overcame death through his resurrection proving the power of God is greater than the power of the evil one.

If you visit the grave site of any founder of any other world religion you will find their remains in the grave. But not so in the case of Jesus—there are no bones in the box. He’s alive. Ponder that.

Genesis 4:1-16; Psalm 119:1-24; Hebrews 2:11-18

Thursday January 11

Psalm 18:1-20 *The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.* (v.2)

Where do you go when trouble strikes? We all have physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, financial, or personal issues from time to time. But we don’t have to carry any troubles, not since what happened at the cross. That is why Jesus came. He is our rock waiting for us to stand on him. He is our fortress protecting us from the enemy. On the cross in atonement he bore all our sins as the sinless lamb of God. He is our refuge; we can take shelter in him when times are tough. He is our shield, protecting us from the fiery darts of the evil one. For all who believe, trust, and obey him, he becomes the horn of our salvation. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking, all other ground is sinking sand. How about you? Ponder that.

Genesis 4:17-26; Hebrews 3:1-11; John 1:43-51

Friday January 12

Hebrews 3:12-19 *See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.* (vv.12-13)

Yesterday is a canceled check. There is nothing you can do to get it back. Tomorrow never comes, so why be concerned about it? It is always today, the present. It is a gift from God. Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as the Israelites did in the rebellion (when they left Egypt).

What was the end result? The Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the desert. It makes no difference, Jew or Gentile; we are all to be obedient today. You cannot share in Christ if you have a hard heart. So, what do you do with the gift of today? Ponder that.

Genesis 6:1-8; Psalms 16, 17; John 2:1-12

Saturday, January 13

Hebrews 4:1-13 *“On the seventh day God rested from all his works.”* (v.4b)

The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. I cannot tell you how many Sunday afternoons I have spent trying to catch up on work. Somehow, I never caught up. When I worked harder—when I should

have—I didn't have to spend Sunday afternoons trying to catch up. Life was easier and I never felt as much pressure to get something done. It is somewhat ironic how we spend 80% of our healthy young lives to accumulate enough for retirement. Then we spend 80% of our retirement trying to regain that health. Do you know anyone who, on his deathbed, said, "I wish I had spent more time at the office?" What will it take for you and I finally realize the Father knows best. We just need to learn to trust and obey Him. I bet we would find life much more enjoyable. Ponder that.

Genesis 6:9-22; Psalms 20, 21; John 2:13-22

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