

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 5: God, the Good Creator

Unit 5 Big Question and Answer:

Can You Tell What God Made?

God Made All Things Good!

PFI ESV Songs 5, Tracks 3,4

Unit 5 Bible Verse: Genesis 1:1,31, ESV

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good."
PFI ESV Songs 5, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 3:

God Created the World to Praise and Glorify Him

God did not create the world because He was lonely or bored. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have always been perfectly happy, enjoying each other in perfect fellowship. He had no need for anyone or anything else to be happy. God created the world because He wanted to. He created it all as a display of His glory (who He is).

Everything God created praises and glorifies Him by being little pictures of what He is like. Because God made people in His image, we have the greatest ability to praise and glorify Him. To people alone, of all the earthly creatures, did God give a spirit to know and love Him. Only we can understand how His creations tell us about Him as we look at them.

God placed us in this wonderful world of His creation to enjoy it, and for the pleasure of praising, glorifying and enjoying God, as we see what it shows us about Him.

BIBLE VERSE

How do I know this is true? The Bible tells me so!

Bible Truth 3 Bible Verse: Psalm 148:7-10, NIV 1984

"Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth, young men and maidens, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens."

CASE STORY

2 Kings 20-21, 2 Chronicles 32-33

Our story is:

The Case of the King Who Would Not Praise.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who was the king? Who would he not praise?
2. How did he change? Why?

Our story takes place in Old Testament times, about 700 years before Jesus lived on earth. And it starts out in a graveyard...the Royal Cemetery of King David.

Great, King Hezekiah was dead and the people mourned his passing. Hezekiah had been a good king. He tried to do away with the terrible things his father, wicked King Ahaz, had brought to Judah. He got rid of the worship places to the false gods, Baal and Ashtoreth, Ahaz had set up. He stopped the terrible sacrifices by fire to the idol Molech Ahaz had allowed. Then he restored worship of the LORD in His Temple. With cymbals, trumpets and loud singing, Hezekiah had led the people in praising and glorifying the LORD again.

"We praise You, LORD, as the Creator of this world and Giver of all good things! Thank You for your good gifts! Thank You for being our God!" they sang in their celebrations. This was what Judah was meant to be: a land that praised the LORD. A little picture of how the whole world was meant to live.

And oh, how the LORD was worthy of that praise! He protected Judah and blessed King Hezekiah and the people. He even crushed the fierce armies of mighty King Sennacherib of Assyria who tried to capture Judah. Who had ever seen anything like this! A God who Himself comes to the rescue of His people! Should He not be praised? Should He not be glorified? Yes, He should! So many brought rich gifts to the LORD, and gave presents to King Hezekiah, too, for the LORD's great victory. For the rest of Hezekiah's life, kings and peoples honored him.

But now King Hezekiah was gone and it was the turn of this twelve-year-old boy, who stood by his father's tomb, to rule Judah. He was not too much older than some of you, yet now it was time for him to put away his boyish ways and to put on the manly crown of a king.

Everyone watched and waited to see what young Prince Manasseh would do. Would he be a good king like his father, or not?

Such a young boy as little King Manasseh would need

others to help him. He couldn't possibly rule a nation like Judah on his own yet. But who would he turn to? Would it be the good prophet Isaiah and others who encouraged King Hezekiah to follow the LORD? If so, Judah would enjoy many more years of blessings under the LORD's protection. Or, would it be those others who had remained at court quietly, in the shadows, waiting for Hezekiah to die and for a chance to restore the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth, and to re-light the fires of Molech in the garden of the kings, as it had been in wicked King Ahaz's day.

We do not know how or why it happened, but Manasseh chose the advice of wicked men over the good men who had helped his father. Hezekiah had brought back the praise and glory of the LORD to Judah. He had made it a little picture of how the whole world was meant to live. But now, Manasseh tried to choke out the God's praise again and cover up His glory.

Away went the the good and holy laws of God's Word, stashed away in some dusty corner to be forgotten. In Manasseh brought magicians and witches. Away went the beautiful worship things of the Temple! And in Manasseh brought idols to worship the starry host--the sun, moon and stars-- as well as Baal and Ashtoreth. And in the gardens of the kings, Manasseh re-lit the fires of Molech. He, himself, sacrificed in them! Manasseh ordered the people of Judah to follow him in worshiping these gods. Those who refused were killed.

What would happen now? Would the LORD allow His praise to be cut off by King Manasseh forever? Would He allow His glory not to be seen by the world? No, He would not! The LORD sent prophets to warn Manasseh and those who followed him. "Turn away from doing these terrible things! Turn back to worshipping Me," the LORD told them through His messengers, the prophets. "If you do not, then I will allow your enemies to come in and destroy your cities."

Did Manasseh or the people listen? Did they repent? No, they did not! They just kept right on praising and glorifying other gods, and killing those who wouldn't. So just as He had promised, the LORD allowed the same mighty army He had protected them from during King Hezekiah's time. It marched the Assyrian soldiers. They smashed Jerusalem and carried away its riches. And in typical, cruel, Assyrian style, they pierced King Manasseh's nose, and put a hook through it like a pig. They bound him with heavy, bronze

shackles and dragged him off to prison in Babylon.

King Manasseh had plenty of time in that miserable prison cell in Babylon. Plenty of time to think about all of the evil he had done: the people he had killed, the idols he had worshiped, The people he had sacrificed in the fires of Molech! Now all of it paraded before him in his mind's eye.

He remembered the LORD his God and in his distress, he cried out to God. "Forgive me, LORD! Rescue me! No longer will I worship those other gods. You alone deserve the glory and praise," Manasseh prayed.

The LORD was moved by Manasseh's prayer and forgave him. He caused the Assyrians to free him and let him return to Jerusalem. When did cruel Assyrians ever give up a captured king like that! Manasseh knew only the LORD could have done this. He knew and believed that He is God. He was a changed man.

The new King Manasseh must have been a big surprise to the people. The very man who had forced them to worship other gods, now worked hard to make Judah a land full of the praise and glory of the LORD again.

"Rebuild the outer wall of Jerusalem and make it much higher," he commanded his builders. "Station military commanders in every walled city in Judah," he told his generals. "We must strengthen our country against the powerful Assyrians.

"Get rid of the Baals and the Ashtoreth poles!" he ordered. "Take down the carved image I put in the

Temple and the altars to the starry hosts in the courtyards. Go around Jerusalem and find every altar and throw them outside the city in the dump. Put out the fires of Molech!" Manasseh commanded.

Then Manasseh restored the altar of the LORD and sacrificed fellowship offerings and thank offerings on it. Once more, with cymbals, trumpets and loud singing, the king of Judah led the people in praising and glorifying the LORD. "We praise You, LORD, as the Creator of this world and Giver of all good things! Thank You for your good gifts! Thank You for being our God!" they sang in their celebrations.

Manasseh could never un-do the terrible things he had done, that was true. Sadly, some of the people still refused to turn away from the idols he had told them to worship. But at least now he had begun to bring Judah to be the little picture of how the whole world was meant to live. A land for the praise and glory of God, as God created it--

and all things--to be.

Our Bible Truth is:

God Created All Things to Praise and Glorify Him

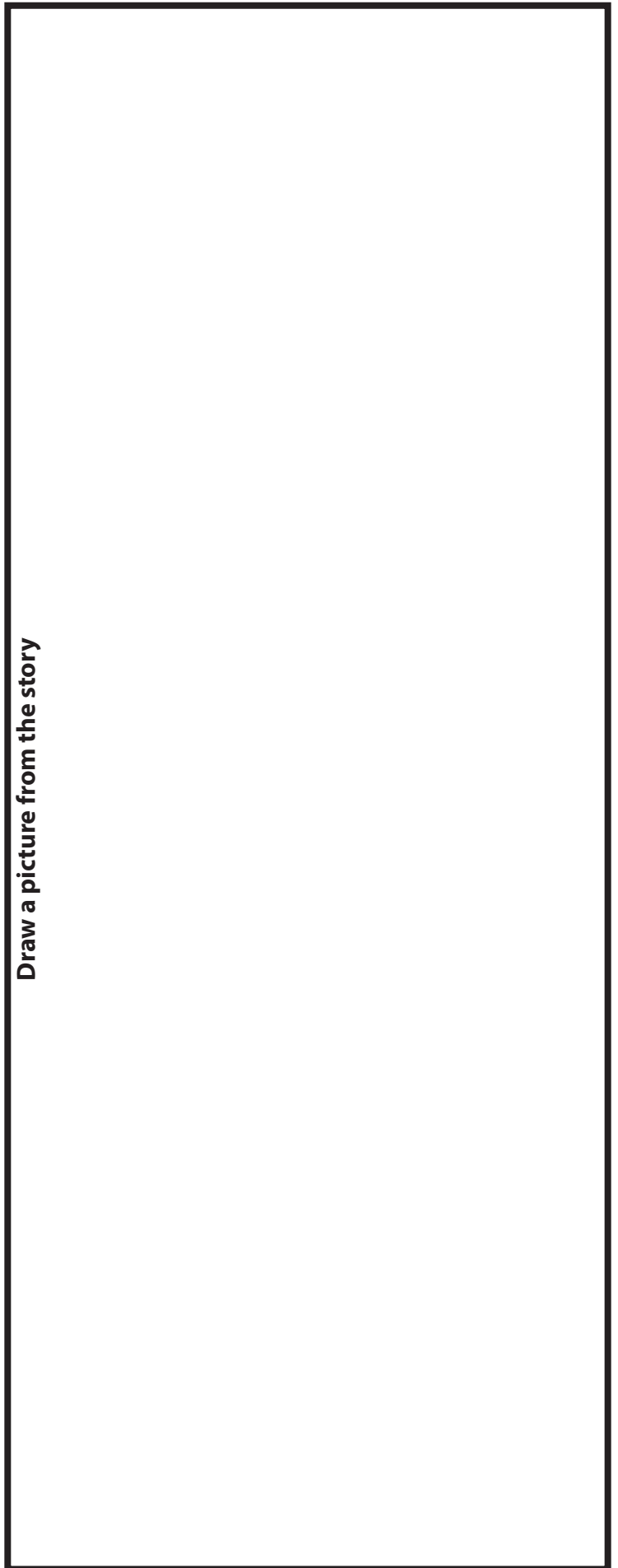
Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 148:7-13

"Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth, young men and maidens, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens."

Prince Manasseh is not that different from you, in some ways. He learned about the LORD as a child and so are you. And, like Manasseh, you have a choice before you: to serve the LORD or to do things your own way. Let's ask God to help us to learn from Manasseh's story. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts and help us to turn TO Him, not from Him. Let's ask Him to help us to trust in Jesus as our Savior. God was powerful to save Manasseh and He is powerful to save us, if we ask Him to!

Let's pray right now and ask God to work in our hearts, that we might turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior. Let's praise Him for being the great Creator who gave us hearts to know and love Him and who sent Jesus that we might know and love Him, even today.

Draw a picture from the story



<p align="center">SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU</p>	<p align="center">BIBLE TRUTH HYMN</p>
<p>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False: God created people in His likeness. He made them all powerful and all wise like Himself. Answer: False. God did create people in His likeness, but not in those ways. He gave them a mind that was a bit like His great mind. He gave them a spirit a bit like His Spirit.</p> <p>2. Crack the Case Questions: a. Who was the king? Who did he praise and who would he not praise? Answer: King Manasseh. He would praise terrible idols instead of the LORD.</p> <p>b. How did he change? Why? Answer: He repented of his sins and turned to worship the LORD after he was put in prison in Assyria. The LORD forgave him, had him released and Manasseh went home and got rid of the idols.</p> <p>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Psalm 148:7-10 "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness..." So God ___ man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God ___ them and said to them, "Be fruitful and ___ in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Answers: created; blessed; increase.</p>	<p>The Doxology <i>PFI ESV Songs 5, Track 14</i> Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures, here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.</p> <p>Words Thomas Ken Music Genevan Psalter, 1551 Edition, attr. Louis Bourgeois</p> <p>"This hymn reminds us that all creatures here below on the earth and all the heavenly host above in heaven should praise God. He is their Creator and He made them to praise and glorify Him. All the good blessings they enjoy come from Him.</p>
<p align="center">AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY</p>	<p align="center">BIBLE VERSE SONG</p>
<p align="center"><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p>A God, we praise You for being merciful to sinners, even terrible sinners like Manasseh.</p> <p>C God, we confess that, like Manasseh, many times we choose to turn away from God and His good ways and live life our own way. We need a Savior!</p> <p>T God, we thank You that you provide forgiveness through Jesus. There is no sinner too great that You cannot forgive them through Him.</p> <p>S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to be full of Your praise and glory!</p>	<p>Praise the Lord, from the Earth <i>PFI ESV Songs 5, Track 15</i> Praise the Lord, from the earth, All you creatures of the sea, and all ocean depths, lightning, hail, snow and clouds, Stormy winds that do his bidding. Praise the Lord, from the earth, Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, from the earth, Praise the Lord.</p> <p>Praise the Lord, from the earth, you mountains and all hills, you fruit trees and cedars, animals, flying birds, kings and rulers, men and maidens, Praise the Lord, from the earth, Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, from the earth, Praise the Lord. Psalm One-forty-eight, verses seven through twelve.</p> <p>Words: Psalm 148:7-12, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012</p> <p>The Bible tells us God made people in the beginning. He made them in His image, that means, they reflect Him in a very special way. Of all the earthly creatures, they alone were created with a spirit, like God's Spirit, that can know and love God. God created people to be able to see God's glory in everything He made. And, He created them to care for the world He created as caretakers under Him.</p>