

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 NIV Songs 5, Tracks 3,4

Unit 5 Bible Verse: Genesis 1:1,31, NIV 1984

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...God saw all that He had made, and it was very good."
PFI NIV 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

Mt. 21:1-11; Mk. 11:1-11; Lk. 19:28-44; Jn. 12:1-17;
Eph. 1;; 1 Pet. 1:19-20; Rev. 5:11-13

Our story is:

The Case of the Great Day of Praise.

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

1. Who was waiting for the Great Day of Praise? What would happen on that day?
2. When did they think it had come? When will the Great Day of Praise really come?

From the very beginning, the LORD planned for His whole creation to praise and glorify Him, each in their own, special way. The first ocean waves clapped their praise against the fresh, white sands. The first roar of the mighty lion thundered of His might. The first wonderful smell of the honeysuckle whispered the fragrant beauty of His love as it drifted along the wind. The first glittering stars in the endless Milky Way spoke of His unending greatness. The first wisp of the magnificent angel's wings as they moved to cover his bowed head before the LORD spoke of perfect holiness. Yes, from the moment these creatures came into being, they began to testify to the great Creator who made them.

Yet there was one kind of creature God had planned for more than just praising and glorifying Him as their Creator. This creature was created to praise and glorify Him as something even more amazing. They would get to praise and glorify Him as their Savior. Who was this creature? They were God's very own people. He would love them and save them from their sins. He would bring them to live with Him forever.

Sins? But why would God's people need to be saved from sins? Wasn't the world God making without sin? Yes, but soon that would change. People would rebel against their good Creator, plunging the world and themselves into sin and death. Then they would need a Savior to save them from the just, eternal punishment they deserved from God.

So right then--from even before the beginning--God wove His magnificent plan of salvation into His creation. He chose people from every tribe, language and nation to be His very own, adopted people. And He chose His one and only Son, Jesus, to come to earth as a man, and save them, at just the right time.

Through Jesus, God would show even more of Himself

to the world. He would show how great is His holiness as Jesus would live a perfect life. He would show how great is His love, as He would offer it up in exchange for His peoples' sinful lives. As each of His people would come to believe in Him, He planned that their lives would be changed and their voices would rise in praise to Him for being their Savior. Then at last, on one wonderful day, their voices would all join together and swell into a beautiful song of praise to their great God and Savior. And once it started, it would never end. What a Great Day of Praise that would be; and it was the great end of the wonderful plan God had for all creation from before the beginning.

God carried out His plan. He created the heavens and the earth in all their perfectness. He made a man and a woman and put them on the earth to know and love Him. But the man and woman rebelled against Him, as He knew they would. Sin and death came flooding in. And right then, God gave promises of hope to them: of a Savior—the Messiah—who would come at just the right time.

Thousands of years later, that right time came. Jesus came to earth. He taught people about God. He did many amazing miracles. He promised wonderful, everlasting life to those who believed in Him. And He lived a perfect life, so He could be the Savior of God's people. Jesus was like no one else! Surely the people could see! Surely it was time for that Great Day of Praise, when God's people everywhere would raise their voices in praise to God as He created them to.

There certainly was one day, near the end of Jesus' earthly life, when it seemed as if it had come. A great crowd pushed in around Jesus as the donkey He was seated upon came to the top of the Mount of Olives, a hill just outside of Jerusalem. What a sight burst upon their eyes as they looked west. There was Jerusalem in all its beauty! The towering walls of the King's palace rose high above the city. The dazzling, white marble of the Temple shone gloriously.

It was as if in that moment God's plan made sense to these people: Here was the Messiah, Jesus, come to take His throne in Jerusalem, the City of the LORD. At last the LORD had come to save His people!

In one great voice they shouted their praise to God for all the miracles they had seen: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD! Hosanna to the Son of David! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" they sang.

Some waved palm branches in a royal salute to the King, while others lay a royal carpet of their robes upon the stony path for Jesus' donkey to walk over. Was this the Great Day of Praise planned for God's people from before the beginning of time? The Day when the song of His people would become an everlasting symphony? Was this day that the King would take up His throne and rule forever and ever as Savior and Lord?

Perhaps the crowd thought so; but they didn't understand. God's plan was even bigger than they imagined. They had seen Jesus' miracles and heard His powerful preaching and they thought these were signs that Jesus had come to Jerusalem as their earthly Messiah to get rid of their earthly enemies: the Romans. They did not understand Jesus had come as the Savior to save them from their biggest enemies: sin and death. This was far better, not but at all what the crowd wanted. Jesus knew that all too soon the cheering crowds would turn against Him when He didn't give them what they wanted.

There were Pharisees--teachers of the Bible-- in the crowd that day. They should have known better about Jesus and why He had come. They knew the many promises in the Bible about the coming Savior. They should have seen how they all pointed to Jesus. But they didn't want to see. They didn't want to believe. They watched the crowds honor Jesus and they were jealous and angry!

"See, this is getting us nowhere! Look how the whole world has gone after him! We must do something to stop him" they said to each other.

"Teacher, rebuke your disciples! They shouldn't be praising you like this! You are not the Messiah!"

"I tell you," Jesus rebuked them, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out!"

Looking down over Jerusalem, Jesus wept. "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes," He said. How sad Jesus was that the people of Jerusalem were blind to who He really was and what He had come to do.

But it was not to be! In just five days, the crowds' happy praise changed to angry cries of "Crucify Him!". Jesus was nailed to a cross to die, then buried in a grave. "Now there would be no more praise for this fake Messiah. There will be no more believing in this fake Savior," the Pharisees thought.

But, of course, we know how wrong they were. It was on

that terrible cross that Jesus actually did what He came to do.

The earth might have been still and silent that Friday as Jesus' body lay in the grave, but heaven was already rejoicing with the good news: Jesus had saved His people by taking all of God's punishment they deserved for their sins as He died on the cross. By His death, they would have eternal life with God!

On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to His disciples! Now they joined heaven in rejoicing! Jesus really had beaten sin and death for God's people, once and for all!

Since that wonderful Easter Sunday, Jesus' followers have been spreading the good news of salvation through Jesus. More and more have heard and believe!

With each new believer, the song of praise for Jesus from God's people in heaven and on earth is getting louder and louder.

On it will grow until the end of time when God's people will finally be gathered together for the Great Day of Praise. On that day, they will join together with thousands and thousands of angels and shout: "Jesus died to save His people! He deserves the highest praise! All power, riches, wisdom strength, honor, glory and praise belong to Him!" And together with every creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, they will sing the most beautiful song to God: "To Him who sits on the throne and to [Jesus] be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" (Revelation 5:12-13, NIV 1984)

Our Bible Truth is:

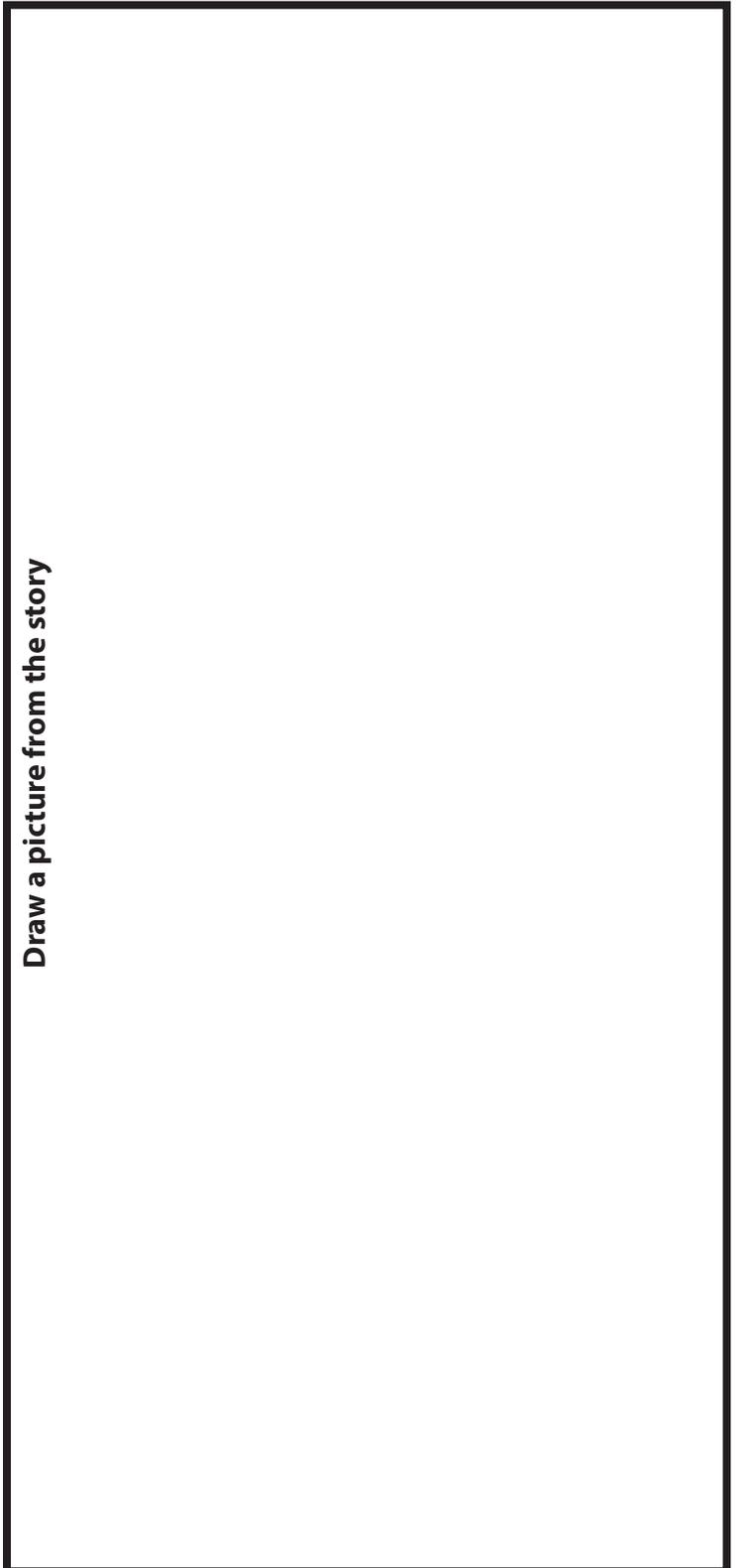
God Created the World to Praise and Glorify Him

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."

What a day will be that Day of Praise! It will be the most glorious Day the world has ever known, when at last all the creatures of earth raise their voices in praise to the LORD.

You and I can be there? How? By confessing our sins to God and trusting in Jesus as our very own Savior. Let's praise God for planning such a wonderful Day for His People to be a part of. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts, that we might confess our sins and trust Jesus as our very own Savior. Let's ask Him to change us and turn our voices to sing the song of His praises this very day.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:

God placed us in this wonderful world of His creations to praise Him, but not to enjoy it.

Answer: False. God placed us in this world to praise Him AND to enjoy it.

2. Crack the Case Questions:

a. Who was waiting for the Great Day of Praise? What would happen on that day?

Answer: The people of Israel were waiting for the Great Day of Praise. God's Messiah would save them from their enemies and bring God's kingdom where they would live happily forever.

b. When did they think it had come? When will the Great Day of Praise really come?

Answer: When Jesus entered Jerusalem on the donkey. They thought He was coming to get rid of their enemies and become their Messiah-king. It will come at the end of time when Jesus comes back. Then, He will put an end to sin and death and bring God's kingdom forever.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Genesis 1:26-27

"Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, ___ 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 ___ on earth, young men and maidens, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his ___ alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens."

Answers: snow; rulers; name.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication

A God, we praise You for being our good Creator and King.

C God, we confess that many times we choose to forget You and forget to praise You. We choose to praise other things and people, even ourselves. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for promising to one day bringing an end to all sin and sadness. Thank You that You will bring the Great Day of Praise when all Your people are gathered together to praise You. Thank You for sending Jesus to save us that we might be able to take part in that Great Day of Praise.

S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to bring all of our troubles to You. Make us praisers of Your name even now!

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

The Doxology

PFI NIV Songs 5, Track 13

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.

Words Thomas Ken

Music Genevan Psalter, 1551 Edition, attr. Louis Bourgeois

"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.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Praise the Lord, from the Earth

PFI NIV Songs 5, Track 14

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.

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.

Words: Psalm 148:7-12, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

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.