

**Peace** be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and so have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our last program, we read what God's prophets wrote concerning the **angels and Satan**. We learned that God, in the beginning, created millions of spirits, calling them angels. Among the angels, one was more intelligent and more beautiful than the others. That angel's name was Lucifer. However, there came a day when Lucifer glorified himself in his heart and showed contempt for God, wanting to take God's place. Also, many other angels chose to follow Lucifer in his sin. Thus God, who cannot tolerate those who rebel against Him, expelled Lucifer and the evil angels from His holy presence. Lucifer's name was changed to *Satan*--meaning *Adversary*. After God expelled Satan and his angels, He created for them the fires of hell which are never extinguished. And one day God will throw Satan and all who follow him into that fire. However, Satan has not yet been put into hell. He is in the world, seeking to deceive whomever he can, so that they too will perish.

Today is our fourth lesson on the Writings of the Prophets. In the first book of the Torah, called *Genesis*, in the first two verses of the first chapter, the Scripture says, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep.*"

In the beginning, when God first created the heavens and the earth, nothing was living here on the earth. Everything was formless and dark. Only Satan and his angels were here. However, God planned to create humans, who would have the capacity to know God, to love Him and to obey Him forever. However, before He created man, God planned to make a beautiful world where man could live in true prosperity. Today then, we will see **how God created and prepared the world** for the people whom He planned to create.

What do the Scriptures say about how God created the world? In the book of Exodus, the

second book of the Torah, it says, *"In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them."* Now let us look in the first chapter of the Torah to see what God created in those six days.

1.) Concerning the first day, the Scriptures say,

*"The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day', and the darkness he called 'night'. And there was evening, and there was morning, the first day."*

So, on the first day, God commanded, "Let there be **light** in the darkness." God ordered the earth, which is like a great ball in the heavens, to rotate once every twenty four hours. That is why we have about twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of night. What a great thing God did on the first day in separating the light from the darkness!

2.) Concerning the second day, the first chapter of Genesis says,

*"And God said, 'Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.' So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse 'sky'."*

On the second day God created **the sky around the earth** which we call *the atmosphere*. The atmosphere is the sky which surrounds the world and contains the air we breathe. That same atmosphere protects everything and everyone from the heat of the sun and many other calamities. Without this special sky that God created on the second day, man could not live on the earth.

3.) On the third day, God created **the oceans, the dry land, and vegetation**. Listen to what the Scriptures say:

*"And God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.' And it was so. God called the dry ground 'land', and the gathered waters he called*

*'seas'. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.' And it was so...And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning-the third day."*

Thus, on the third day, God the Great Designer, created the oceans and the rivers, along with thousands of different types of trees and plants, each with its own fruit and seeds.

What a delicious variety of foods God made: mangoes, bananas, coconuts, melons, tomatoes, cabbages, carrots, rice, millet, peanuts, and thousands of other kinds of food!

And God said, concerning everything that He had created, *"It is good!"* Everything that God makes and does is good, wonderful and perfect! We have already seen that there is only one thing that God cannot do. God cannot do that which is bad, because **God is good!**

Perhaps some of you are asking, "If God is good, then why is the world full of evil and strife? Why didn't my field produce well this year? Why is my child sick? If God is good, why does evil come forth from man?" Truly, these are important questions, and the Holy Scriptures give us satisfying answers which we will hear in coming lessons. For today however, let us simply keep in mind this important truth: God is good, and as a result, **everything that God created was good.**

Let us take a moment to consider **the goodness of God**. We just heard how He created the trees on the third day. Do you know **why** God created the trees with their fruit? Did God need them? Did He create the trees full of lovely fruit to satisfy His own hunger? No! God the Creator is never hungry and is in need of nothing! Why, then, did God create the trees? The Scriptures show us that, God, in His goodness, created everything **for man**, whom He planned to create on the sixth day.

**Do you recognize the goodness of God?** Can you taste a mango with its delicious flavour, or smell a flower with its lovely scent and not recognize the goodness of God? Can

you see a tree and not thank the One who made it for you? Without trees-life would be horrible! We would not have any firewood with which to make fire, or wood with which to build things. We would not have shade in which to relax during the heat of the day, or leaves for tea and medicine. Without trees-life would be impossible. And the trees that God created are only one of thousands of good things that God made for our happiness. God wants us to recognize His goodness. That is what the prophet David wrote in the Psalms saying, "*Taste and see that the Lord is good.*" But now we must continue in today's lesson, before our time runs out.

4.) On the fourth day, God said, "*Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years.*" God simply gave the order, and **the sun, the moon and the stars** came into existence in the sky. God spoke another word, and the earth began to orbit the sun. He spoke again and the moon began to orbit the earth.

**What did God use to create everything in the world?** What does the Scripture say? It says:

*"The universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." (Heb. 11:3) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."*

We have already read that on the first day God simply **spoke** and said, "*Let there be light*" and there was light. On the second day God **said**, "*Let there be an expanse*" and there was an expanse. On the third day God **spoke** again and what He spoke came into existence, and so forth. Now therefore, what did God use to create everything that is in the world? God used nothing except **His Word!** All He did was speak, and what He spoke came to pass. God created everything by His Word. And the Scripture tells that, not only did God **create** everything by His Word, God also **sustains** everything (holds all things

together) by **His powerful Word**. It is by the power of God's word that the moon and the stars stay in the sky in their appointed places. It is by the command of God that the sun rises and sets each day at its appointed times. Just think how difficult our lives would be, if we did not know whether the sun would rise tomorrow or not! The Scriptures say, "*God is faithful!*" In Wolof a north African language: *God keeps His covenants*. He can be depended upon. He never goes back on His word. He never changes. Another scripture says: "*The word of the Lord stands forever!*"

5.) On the fifth day, God created thousands and thousands of species of **fish and birds**. The Scriptures say,

*"And God said, 'Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.' So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.' And there was evening, and there was morning, the fifth day."*

6.) Concerning the sixth day, the Scriptures tell us that God created **animals and man**. Unfortunately, we do not have time today to explain this important event. God willing, in the next program, we will carefully examine what the Scriptures say about **how** God created the first man and **why** He created him.

Today we have considered **the goodness of God**. We have read what the prophet of God, David, wrote saying, "**Taste and see that the Lord is good!**" Friends, have you really **tasted** the goodness of God? Every day we taste and eat various foods that God has provided for us, but have we really "tasted" and recognized God's goodness? If you really want to taste the goodness of God you must listen to and believe the Word of God. The Holy Scripture says: "*Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.*" In our next lesson, we will discover that man is not just a body,

but also the owner of a soul. Our souls must feed on the words of God. God's Word is so good and incomparably wonderful, but we must hunger for it. Does your soul hunger for knowledge of God and His eternal Word as much as your stomach hungers for food? If you hunger for the Word of God in this way, you will discover the Truth that can give you a perfect peace with God here on earth and an incorruptible inheritance in heaven above! We know that this is true, because God Himself promises it, when He says: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled!"* Amen.

Thank you for listening. We urge you to join us next time as we see how God created the first man and, even more importantly, why God created him....

May God bless you and may you never forget His wonderful invitation to you:

*"Taste and see that the Lord is good!"*

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