

## **Basic Bible Teaching**

Despite many attacks on the Bible, it remains recognised as the word of God (see pamphlet 1). And as it is the word of God, its teachings must carry some significant weight.

There are a couple of basic teachings which carry through the whole Bible and which any one wanting to understand the Bible should be aware of. These teachings are simple and logical, particularly when viewed from God's point of view.

The Bible teaches creation. This is basic and fundamental in understanding what the Bible is really saying to its readers. Without this platform of creation, the rest of the Bible and its teachings mean a great deal less. Creation is taught right through the Old Testament by Moses, David and the prophets. By Jesus in the New Testament and by the Apostles. Disregarding this teaching is like tearing out half the pages of the Bible and replacing them with blank sheets..

Jesus said regarding men and women:

*And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, (Matthew 19:4)*

David writes in the Psalms: Psalm 148:5

*Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.*

And the Apostle Paul says: Col. 3:10

*And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:*

It is clear from the many references that this is one of the basic teachings of the Bible. On this is based another fundamental teaching which makes the message of the Bible come alive; that is mankind's relationship with the Creator.

In the very early chapters of Genesis, we have first the account of creation itself, then God's relationship with His creation. He gave the human couple one rule to keep: they were not to eat of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" on punishment of death. (Gen 2:17) So the first couple, Adam and Eve, were in the situation of not knowing the difference between good and evil. They regularly spoke with God in the garden and while this went on, they remained in the position of not having sinned.

This all changed when in Genesis chapter 3 the serpent tempted Eve and she also persuaded Adam to share the forbidden fruit. This is critical to the whole purpose of the Bible, for until this time the creation as a whole was described as "Very Good". This means that the creation was neither dying (mortal) or undying (immortal). They were placed in the garden as God's creatures; the human pair were created as moral creatures, as they were given a law to keep, so God expected much of them, in the keeping of this law. However they failed and in doing so, became sinners and were condemned to be "mortal" creatures ie, dying creatures. Gen 3: 16-19.

The serpent was also punished. Gen 3:14, 15. But in this punishment was a promise, which becomes a theme of the whole Bible. God devised a plan to "reconcile" or "bring together again" His creation and Himself. The first hint is in Genesis 3:15 when He speaks to the serpent.

*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Now there is a very basic thing here, as this is the first promise with hope for humans. It expanded as it was promised to others through the ages which followed. (see pamphlet 6) The promise was made to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to David and this message was finally revealed to be one person who would come and be a saviour. That was Jesus Christ.

In Biblical terms, the "seed of the serpent" represents "sin and death" and the "seed of the woman" represents "Jesus". In simple terms, the power of death would bruise the heel of Jesus, but he would bruise the head of the power of sin and death. Now this happened when Jesus was crucified and died, but because he had not broken any of God's laws he dealt sin a fatal blow; then on the third day rose to life and was made immortal (not able to die) by God. Jesus suffered a painful blow, symbolised by bruising of the heel, but he in turn destroyed death by delivering a fatal symbolic blow to the head of the serpent.

Now Jesus is the one who blazed a path to allow others also to achieve the same status. He is described as the "author", because he set up the way for this great salvation: Hebrews 5:9

*And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

This is the basic theme which runs through the Bible. It starts in Genesis, the first book and ends in the Revelation, the last book. This book describes at its end the amazing place that is reserved for those who follow Jesus faithfully.

So we have these two interrelated themes – creation and salvation- which run through the Bible from cover to cover. These are the two basic teachings of the Bible which must be accepted for the Bible to make a difference eternally in your life.