

# L LORD

## OF HEAVEN & EARTH:

*LESSONS ON THE NATURE AND CHARACTER  
OF THE GOD OF SCRIPTURE*

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## LORD OF HEAVEN & EARTH: Lesson Notes

**\*\*Class participants can prepare for each session by reading through the lesson notes and being prepared to discuss the Thought Questions in class\*\***

# LESSONS

## 1. TOTHEPRAISEOFHISGLORY

A lesson on Christian theology as a basis for praise to God

## 2. ETERNAL POWER & DIVINE NATURE

A lesson on the results and limitations of recognizing God in nature

## 3. MAKER OF HEAVEN & EARTH

A lesson on the identity of God revealed in the act of creation

## 4. HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

A lesson on the transcendent nature of God

## 5. THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

A lesson on the immanent character of God

## 6. HOW LONG, O LORD?

A lesson on God and the problem of evil

## 7. THE GOD OF ISRAEL

A lesson on the story of Yahweh, Israel, and the blessing of the world

## 8. GOD WITH US

A lesson on the incarnation of God in Jesus of Nazareth

## 9. FATHER, SON & SPIRIT

A lesson on the Trinity revealed in salvation

## 10. ALPHA & OMEGA

A lesson on the God who makes all things new

# LORD OF HEAVEN & EARTH: Lesson Notes

## LESSON 3: MAKER OF HEAVEN & EARTH – The identity of God revealed in the act of creation

- ❖ God must be known through what scripture reveals about the activity of creation.
- ❖ Options for the Divine Being ('What kind of god is God?')
  - Other world religions and/or philosophies have multiple ways of conceiving of whether god(s) exists, how god(s) relate to other potential gods, and how god(s) relate to our world:
  - THEISM – God(s) exist(s)
  - ATHEISM – God does not exist; the natural universe is all that is
  - MONOTHEISM – belief in one, supreme God (either absolute, or superior)
  - POLYTHEISM – belief in multiple gods, with different supernatural roles/abilities
  - DUALISM – belief in equal gods which compete against each other (good v. evil)
  - PANTHEISM – belief that the universe is created out of God, so that God exists in all things and thus everything in the world is equally divine with God
  - DEISM – belief that the universe is created by God to run on its own power, so that God exists completely separated from all things, and thus has no interaction with the world
- ❖ In the Beginning
  - Genesis 1 provides its own answers to the above issues:
  - The account of creation assumes God's existence. (against Atheism)
  - The universe is not divine. It is not equal to God and does not compete with God for authority. (Against Dualism / Pantheism)
    - Creation as 'ordering the chaos'
    - Creation by The Word of God
  - The universe is in fellowship with God. (against Deism)
    - The Heavens and the Earth created for God and man to dwell together.
    - Humans are made to be God's 'image' within the creation, and to reflect God out into the world as its steward, by having dominion over it.
- ❖ The Divine Council
  - Genesis 1 & 2 record God speaking internally in the plural 'us.'
  - Biblical precedent for the Host of Heaven or Divine Council. (Job 1,2; 1 Kings 19:22f, Psalm 82, Isaiah 6, Revelation 4)
    - Made up of beings like angels, Cherubim, Seraphim
    - These other beings are always under God's authority, worshiping God (affirming monotheism)
  - Hebrew word for the Divine Council, and specifically the God who is the head of it is *ELOHIM* (a category title like 'mom' or 'boss', not a definite name)
- ❖ Implications of Creation
  - God's power and authority – the Scriptural mandate to honor and fear God alone is the appropriate response to the might and wisdom of his creative power.
  - God's sharing of his authority – the creation of humans as God's image suggests God intends to rule his creation by means of his creation. God wants to share authority rather than retaining it for himself.

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- The goodness of creation – God’s declaration of the creation as ‘good’ indicates that the Heavens and Earth were originally made as the proper place for Humans and God to dwell in fellowship.
- Meeting of Heaven and Earth – Heaven is God’s realm; Earth is humanity’s realm. God’s desire for fellowship means that these two ‘spaces’ overlap where God acts in the world to bring about his purposes.
- ❖ In Praise of God
  - Psalm 33:6-9 / Isaiah 40:28-31 / Psalm 8:1, 3-9
- ❖ Thought Questions
  - Review the list of ‘divine options’ above. What are some examples of how other world religions, or even modern secular philosophies, reflect false ideas about God?
  - Some have read Genesis 1 & 2, and conceived of God as a builder who constructs the world. Others have conceived of God as an artist who shapes and sculpts the world. Which of these do you picture God as? Any other images?
  - What does being made in God’s image mean for your life? Does it affect how you think of yourself as a person? And/or what you do?