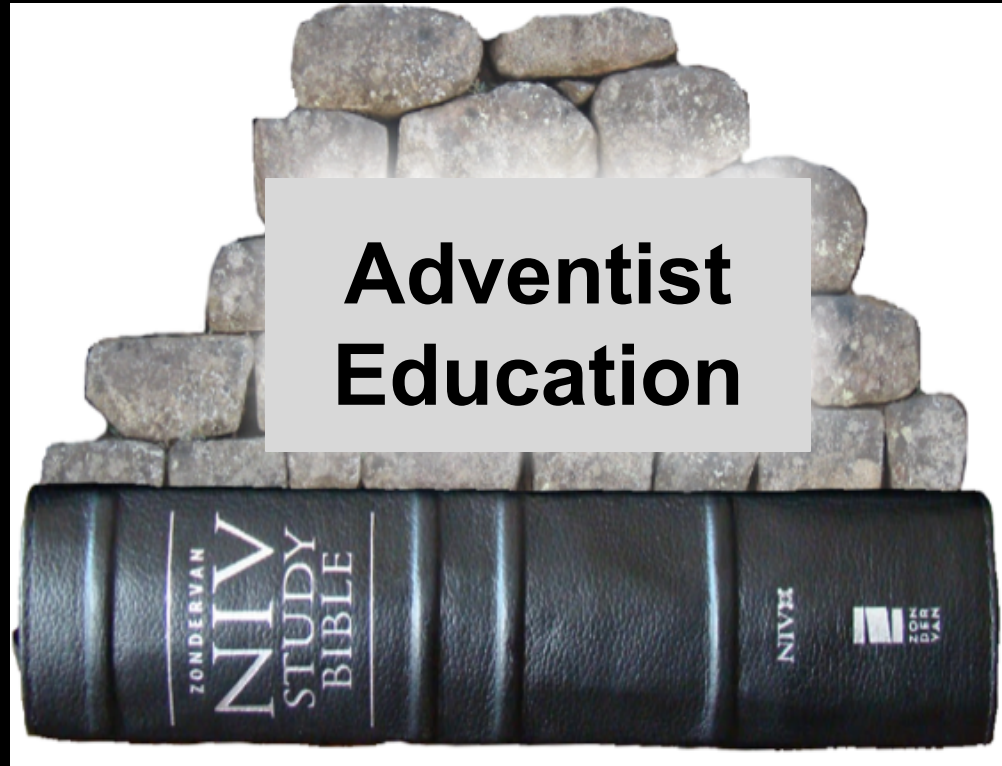


The Biblical Foundation for Adventist Education

By E. Edward Zinke
Illustrations by David Zinke
and Carol Raney
Motivation by Doug Zinke
and by Seven Grandchildren



**Adventist
Education**

***The Knowledge of God
In Nature***

By E. Edward Zinke

Romans 1-Nature

“For the **wrath** of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. For since the creation of the world His **invisible attributes** are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His **eternal power and Godhead**, so that they are without excuse.” Romans 1:18-20

Summary

What may be known of God in **Nature**:

1. The wrath of God
1. His eternal power
1. Godhead - deity



Romans 1-Gospel

“For I am not ashamed of the **gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power of God to salvation** for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, *‘The just shall live **by faith.**’*” *Romans 1:16, 18*

What may be known of God in the **Gospel**:

1. Power of God unto salvation

2. The righteousness of God

Comparison: Nature and the Gospel

Nature

Gospel

Wrath

Power to Salvation

Deity

Righteousness

Eternal Power

Psalms 19

- Psalm 19:1-6 Speaks of God's God's glory as seen in His created work.

EI – **generic** God

- Psalm 19:7-10 speaks of God's glory as seen in the Word of God – His law, testimony, and statues.

Law of the Lord is Perfect

Yahweh – **Personal** God

Ellen White on Knowledge of God in Nature

“The ancient philosophers prided themselves on their superior knowledge. Let us read the inspired apostle’s understanding of the matter. ‘Professing themselves to be wise,’ . . . Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator...”

“...In its **human wisdom** the world cannot know God. Its wise men gather an imperfect knowledge of God from His created works, and then in their foolishness they exalt nature and the laws of nature above nature’s God.”
6BC 1068.4

“Those who have not a knowledge of God through an acceptance of the revelation He has made of Himself in Christ, will obtain only an **imperfect** knowledge of Him in nature; and this knowledge, so far from bringing the whole being into conformity to His will, **will make men idolaters**. Professing themselves to be wise, they will become fools.” 6BC 1068.4

“It is impossible to gain a perfect knowledge of God from nature alone; for nature itself is imperfect. In its imperfection it cannot represent God, it cannot reveal the character of God in its moral perfection. But Christ came as a personal Savior to the world. He represented a **personal** God.” 6 BC 1068

“The deepest students of science are constrained to recognize in nature the working of infinite power. But to man’s **unaided reason**, nature’s teaching cannot but be contradictory and disappointing. **Only** in the light of revelation can it be read aright. ‘Through faith we understand.’” (Heb11:3) Ed 134

Knowledge of God in Eden

- Even in Eden, we were dependent upon God's self revelation to understand ourselves and the world we inhabited.
- Imagine Adam and Eve waking up from their creation without anyone to explain their existence and the world in which they lived.

Knowledge of God Since Sin

Sin brought changes in nature which obscure and distort its revelation of God.

“Transgression brought a blight upon nature, and intervened between nature and nature’s God. . . the posterity of Adam could no longer trace the character of God in His created works.” 1SM 290

“Nature cannot teach the lesson of the
great and marvelous love of God.” 1 SM
291cf UL 198

In addition, the effects of sin blurs our understanding of the revelation of God in the natural world.

“There are wonderful truths in nature. The earth, the sea, and the sky are full of truth. They are our teachers. . . . But fallen man will not understand. Sin has obscured his vision, and he cannot of himself interpret nature without **placing it above God**. Correct lessons cannot impress the minds of those who reject the word of God. The teaching of nature is by them so perverted that it turns the mind away from the Creator.” COL 107

“The most difficult and humiliating lesson that man has to learn is his own inefficiency in depending upon human wisdom, and the sure failure of his own efforts to read nature correctly. **Sin has obscured his vision**, and of himself he cannot interpret nature without placing it above God. He cannot discern in it God, or Jesus Christ, whom He has sent.” 6
BC 1068

Knowledge of God

From a human standpoint the task of obtaining knowledge of God is hopeless, for man does not have available within himself the necessary tools by which to ascertain the nature of God.

Job

“Can you discover the depths of God?
Can you discover the limits of the
Almighty? It is high as the heavens,
what can you do? Deeper than Sheol,
what can you know? Its measure is
longer than the earth, and broader than
the sea.” Job 11:7-9 NASB.

Knowledge of God

God presents Himself as one who is unsearchable. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8, 9.

“To whom then will you liken Me or *to whom* shall I be equal?” says the Holy One.” Isaiah **40:25**

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!

*“For who has known the mind of the LORD?
Or who has become His counselor?”*

*“Or who has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?”*

For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.”

Romans 11:33-36

“Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *as* His counselor has taught Him? With whom did He take **counsel**, and *who* **instructed** Him and taught Him in the path of **justice**? Who taught Him **knowledge**, and showed Him the way of **understanding**?” Isaiah 40:13, 14

“Neither by searching the recesses of the earth nor in vain endeavors to penetrate the mysteries of God’s being is wisdom found. It is found, rather, in **humbly receiving** the revelation that He has been pleased to give, and in conforming the life to His will.” 8T p. 280

God Reveals Himself

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things **revealed** belong to us and to our sons forever that we may observe all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 29:29, NASB

God Reveals Himself

“For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind and **declares to man what are His thoughts**, He who makes dawn into darkness and treads on the high places of the earth, the Lord God of hosts is His name.” Amos 4:13 NASB

“God’s handiwork in nature is not God Himself in nature. . . The artistic skill of human beings produces very beautiful workmanship, things that delight the eye, and these things reveal to us something of the thought of the designer; but the thing made is not the maker. It is not the work, but the workman, that is counted worthy of honor. So while nature is an expression of God’s thought, it is not nature, but the God of nature, that is to be exalted.”

MH 413.5

Nature is an incredible witness to God's power, glory and creativity when it is studied from the world view of scripture.

Let us teach our students to come to nature through the lens of the Bible so they may understand this world and nature's witness to our wonderful God!