

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Second Quarter 2024: *The Great Controversy*

### Lesson 13 “The Triumph of God’s Love”

#### Read for this week’s study

Revelation 22:11, 12; Jeremiah 30:5-7; Psalm 91:1-11; Jeremiah 25:33; Revelation 21:2; Revelation 20:11-15.

#### Memory Text

“And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away’” (Revelation 21:3, 4, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Hope in the Time of Trouble
- III. Hope in Jesus’ Soon Return
- IV. The Millennium on Earth
- V. Judgment in the Millennium
- VI. Two Eternities
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “In this quarter’s final lesson, we will see Christ’s steadfast love during the most exciting time in the history of the universe and His complete and total triumph in the great controversy between good and evil. The Bible’s last book, Revelation, gives us hope for today, tomorrow, and forever.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. What makes our memory text such a hopeful Scripture? Why is the unification of the heavenly and earthly family a fitting climax of the whole story of redemption?
3. Sunday’s lesson shows that there is hope in the “time of trouble”. Why did it become such a scary topic with an unfortunate impact on many people? How do you understand the concept of living through the time of trouble without a mediator? How can the texts like Luke 11:13; Hebrews 13:5-6 help us come up with a balanced approach?

4. What is the “blessed hope” that has inspired the faithful people of God in every generation? How is that different from classical Christianity proclaiming that “this world is not our home”? (Monday’s lesson) Why should not “our hearts be troubled” (John 14:1-3)?
5. Tuesday’s lesson focuses on what happens during the millennium on earth: “The “bottomless pit” is not some subterranean cavern or some yawning chasm somewhere out there in the universe. Satan’s work of sin and destruction, along with the tremendous chaos preceding the Second Coming, has brought the earth back to a dark, disorganized mass like its condition at the beginning of creation.” What might be the purpose that Satan and his angels are forced to ponder the results of their work?
6. What happens during the millennium in heaven? Why is this reflection important? How does that contribute to the resolution of the sin problem and safety of the universe for all eternity? (Wednesday’s lesson) What kind of judgment is this? As emotional matters cannot be sped up, what is the significance of the fact that the tears are wiped away at the end of millennium?
7. Thursday’s lesson focuses on judgment and events after the millennium. Why is it necessary that the two groups are both present at this? What is the role of evidence in all this (20:12, 13)? Why is it important?
8. The story of our world started in a garden but ends in a city. What does it tell us about the fact that even God cannot go back and rewrite history? Why does going back often look like an appealing option to us? How can the story of the Day of the Lord and the new creation help inspire hope in people?
9. How can we get beyond narrow fights about matters that cannot be proved or resolved? Instead, we can lift our eyes and hearts to the times when heavenly and earthly family will finally be reunited again, and we will all enjoy the eternal community with God, angels and those who have been redeemed!
10. What is the most significant contribution for you after 13 weeks of studying the “great controversy” motif of the Bible? How is your life going to be different because of these studies?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: Speaking of the millennium now, this thousand-year period, what are the saints, the redeemed, those who are saved, what are they doing? That’s a long period of time.

Graham: Yes, I like to remember what Peter said: “With the Lord a thousand years is like a day.” You could have translated that “a millennium is like a day, and a day is like a millennium.” I don’t think we need to worry about the time. I think that a thousand years with the Lord will seem like a day. But I think there are important things that have to happen during that time. The

angels have had a chance during what we call the Investigative Judgment, though that's not a biblical term—this time when the family meets to consider candidates for the Kingdom, so that our future neighbors and friends may be satisfied that it's safe to admit rebels like us. What about us? We've not seen that. I think during the Millennium those who have been adjudged safe to save will have their opportunity to ask questions, see the evidence, to find out why Mother isn't there. I would find that very sad. Well, I know He would be fair about it, that He would show me the evidence so I would be satisfied.

More than that, there's another very gripping thing that may need to happen during the Millennium. We will be preparing ourselves to face that awful scene when the wicked are resurrected and die in a fiery moment of destruction. We have to see that someday. Are we ready to see it and not become afraid of God? I think those of us who "grow up," who may be alive to see Christ come, we will have been so settled into the truth that we can see the seven last plagues and not become afraid of God. We might be ready to see this. But think of all the babes in the truth who have been saved from the foot of Mt. Sinai. Think of the thief on the cross. Think of all the others who have not had time and evidence to become confirmed in this.

Everyone must be ready for that awesome day when God may call to us, to everybody who will be inside the New Jerusalem that day, when God says, "Children, you know what's coming next. Do you want to come out to the wall and watch? Or do you want to hide in the basement somewhere? You know I'm about to give My rebellious children up, and untold numbers of them are going to die. And you know why I've waited so long." And so we stand, perhaps, and watch our God, as fire comes down from heaven and the glory of Him who is love will consume all that is out of harmony. And we know, because we are convinced about this, that as the wicked die, God will be crying: "Why will you die? How can I give you up? How can I let you go?" He's no more angry with them than He was with His Son as He gave Him up in Gethsemane and on Calvary.

And then when it's all over, God would turn to us and say, "How awful that was. But children, I have one last question to ask you all. Have I made you afraid? Because if I have, I've let it happen too soon, and I would have waited longer." But hopefully we will be so settled into the truth that we will be able to say to God, and maybe get a little closer and say, "It's all right, God. There was no other way." And then there is peace forever, in spite of that awful end. Are we ready to see that and not be made afraid? Because if it makes us afraid, then we'll serve Him from fear, and the obedience of fear produces the character of a rebel, and God still has the seeds of sin in His universe, and He has not won the war.

Lou: We are back where it began.

Graham: We are back at the very beginning. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #20 with Lou Venden, "At Peace with our Heavenly Father" recorded

June 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/20MMCAG>*

In those awesome words of Revelation 22:11, as He looks at His people in the end, some who have rejoiced in the truth and some who have turned it down. He says, “Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy.” (NIV) Just go on doing what you are doing. Go on being what you are. You see, there is nothing arbitrary. There is no need to fear God in this. We have made our choice and we are reaping the results both good and bad.

But doesn't the Bible warn also that the sinner will experience God's wrath and be burned forever? How about Revelation 14:10? “Yes, he also shall drink of the wine of God's wrath . . . and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone . . . for ever and ever.” (RSV) We are back to Nebuchadnezzar, it would seem. No, the preceding sixty-five books of Scripture have prepared us to understand these awesome terms. God's wrath, remember in Romans and Hosea last time, God's wrath is simply His turning away in loving disappointment from those who do not want Him anyway, thus leaving them to the inevitable and awful consequence of their own rebellious choice. And as He lets them go, He cries, “How can I give you up? How can I let you go?”

And then the word “forever”. How long is forever? You notice in Jude 7: “Sodom and Gomorrah . . . serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of forever fire or eternal fire.” (RSV) That fire went out millennia ago. We understand that term. Also in Exodus 21:6, in reference to the servant who would serve his master forever, that might mean only a very brief period, until the next jubilee. Until, at most, as long as life shall last. So we understand the meaning of that term. No support for the eternally burning fires of hell. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #9, “There Is No Need to Be Afraid of God” recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/9MMCAG>*

### **Recommended Listening:**

Conversations About God #18 “God Waits for His Children to Grow Up” is available at: <http://pkp.cc/18MMCAG>

Conversations About God #19 “How Soon Will the Conflict Be over?” is available at: <http://pkp.cc/19MMCAG>

## Further Study with Ellen White

Before the Son of man appears in the clouds of heaven, everything in nature will be convulsed. Lightning from heaven uniting with the fire in the earth, will cause the mountains to burn like a furnace, and pour out their floods of lava over villages and cities. Molten masses of rock, thrown into the water by the upheaval of things hidden in the earth, will cause the water to boil and send forth rocks and earth. There will be mighty earthquakes and great destruction of human life. But as in the days of the great Deluge Noah was preserved in the ark that God had prepared for him, so in these days of destruction and calamity, God will be the refuge of His believing ones . . . [Psalm 91:9, 10; 27:5 quoted] (Letter 258, 1907). {7BC 946.7}

Precious treasure will be secured by those who study God's Word with earnestness, for heavenly angels will direct the search.—*Undated Manuscript* 111. {Ev 214.4}

The precious graces of the Holy Spirit are not developed in a moment. Courage, fortitude, meekness, faith, unwavering trust in God's power to save, are acquired by the experience of years. By a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right the children of God are to seal their destiny. {MH 454.1}

In the time of trouble, just previous to the coming of Christ, the lives of the righteous will be preserved through the ministrations of holy angels. {3SG 196.1}

He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble—trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him. {CC 252.5}

In the midst of the time of trouble—trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—His [God's] chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. {Mar 275.4}

Could our eyes be opened, as were those of the servant of Elisha at Dothan, we should see evil angels all around us, urging their presence upon us, and watching for an opportunity to tempt and overthrow us; we should also see holy angels guarding us, and with their light and power pressing back the evil angels (*Historical Sketches*, pp. 155, 156). {LHU 347.6}

The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. It is the knowledge that works transformation of character. This knowledge, received, will recreate the soul in the image of God. It will impart to the whole being a spiritual power that is divine. {MH 425.2}

The plan of redemption is not merely a way of escape from the penalty of transgression, but through it the sinner is forgiven his sins, and will be finally received into heaven—not as a forgiven culprit pardoned and released from captivity, yet looked upon with suspicion and not admitted to friendship and trust; but welcomed as a child, and taken back into fullest confidence. {7BC 950.6}

God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them and admire His handiwork. As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from Satan’s deceptions. {CT 457.1}

A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one. This Satan himself recognized when he said, “Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?” The agency by which God protects His people is presented in the words of the psalmist, “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” {ML 302.2}

His angels are appointed to watch over us, and if we put ourselves under their guardianship, then in every time of danger they will be at our right hand. {ML 302.4}

All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will “grow up” (Malachi 4:2) to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ’s faithful ones will appear in “the beauty of the Lord our God,” in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood. {GC 644.3}

The wheellike complications that appeared to the prophet to be involved in such confusion were under the guidance of an infinite hand. The Spirit of God, revealed to him as moving and directing these wheels, brought harmony out of confusion; so the whole world was under His control. Myriads of glorified beings were ready at His word to overrule the power and policy of evil men, and bring good to His faithful ones. {5T 752.2}

From the opening of the great controversy it has been Satan's purpose to misrepresent God's character and to excite rebellion against His law, and this work appears to be crowned with success. The multitudes give ear to Satan's deceptions and set themselves against God. But amid the working of evil, God's purposes move steadily forward to their accomplishment; to all created intelligences He is making manifest His justice and benevolence. . . Thus in every age, from the midst of apostasy and rebellion, God gathers out a people that are true to Him—a people "in whose heart is His law." Isaiah 51:7. {PP 338.2}

Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan's rule in contrast with the government of God has been presented to the whole universe. Satan's own works have condemned him. God's wisdom, His justice, and His goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all His dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of His people and the good of all the worlds that He has created. . . . With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare: "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints" (Revelation 15:3). {AG 373.4}

Satan has ascribed to God all the evils to which the flesh is heir. He has represented him as a God who delights in the sufferings of his creatures, who is revengeful and implacable. It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin, because in this way he could lead men into infidelity and rebellion, distract souls, and dethrone the human reason. {RH, November 17, 1891 par. 5}

Men have the power to quench the Spirit of God; the power of choosing is left with them. They are allowed freedom of action. They may be obedient through the name and grace of our Redeemer, or they may be disobedient, and realize the consequences. {FLB 58.3}

No one need look upon the sin against the Holy Ghost as something mysterious and indefinable. The sin against the Holy Ghost is the sin of persistent refusal to respond to the invitation to repent. {FLB 58.8}

All should be intelligent in regard to the agency by which the soul is destroyed. It is not because of any decree that God has sent out against men or women. He does not make them spiritually blind. God gives sufficient light and evidence to enable them to distinguish truth from error. But He does not force them to receive truth. He leaves them free to choose the good or to choose the evil. If people resist evidence that is sufficient to guide their judgment in the right direction and choose evil once, they will do this more readily the second time. The third time they will still more eagerly withdraw from God and choose to stand on the side of Satan. And in this course they will continue until they are confirmed in evil and believe the lie they have cherished as truth.—*Manuscript 126, 1901 (Sermons and Talks, vol. 2, pp. 183, 184).* {CTr 103.4}



It is no arbitrary decree on the part of God that excludes the wicked from heaven; they are shut out by their own unfitness for its companionship. The glory of God would be to them a consuming fire. They would welcome destruction, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. {SC 17.2}

God destroys no man. Everyone who is destroyed will have destroyed himself. Everyone who stifles the admonitions of conscience is sowing the seeds of unbelief, and these will produce a sure harvest. By rejecting the first warning from God, Pharaoh of old sowed the seeds of obstinacy, and he reaped obstinacy. {FLB 155.4}

God destroys no man; but after a time the wicked are given up to the destruction they have wrought for themselves. {YI, November 30, 1893 par. 6}

No soul is ever finally deserted of God, given up to his own ways, so long as there is any hope of his salvation. “Man turns from God, not God from him.” Our heavenly Father follows us with appeals and warnings and assurances of compassion, until further opportunities and privileges would be wholly in vain. The responsibility rests with the sinner. By resisting the Spirit of God today, he prepares the way for a second resistance of light when it comes with mightier power. Thus he passes on from one stage of resistance to another, until at last the light will fail to impress, and he will cease to respond in any measure to the Spirit of God. Then even “the light that is in thee” has become darkness. The very truth we do know has become so perverted as to increase the blindness of the soul. {MB 93.1}

Satan’s rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages—a perpetual testimony to the nature of sin and its terrible results. The working out of Satan’s rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God’s government is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy beings, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its penalty. {FLB 70.4}

For what was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? Why was it that Satan’s existence was not cut short at the outset of his rebellion? It was that the universe might be convinced of God’s justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption—nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings? {Ed 308.3}



God, the One infinite and all-wise, sees the end from the beginning, and in dealing with evil His plans were far-reaching and comprehensive. It was His purpose, not merely to put down the rebellion, but to demonstrate to all the universe the nature of the rebellion. God's plan was unfolding, showing both His justice and His mercy, and fully vindicating His wisdom and righteousness in His dealings with evil. {PP 78.3}

The whole universe had been witness to the scenes at Sinai. In the working out of the two administrations was seen the contrast between the government of God and that of Satan. Again the sinless inhabitants of other worlds beheld the results of Satan's apostasy, and the kind of government he would have established in heaven had he been permitted to bear sway. {PP 335.3}

In the councils of heaven it was decided that principles must be acted upon that would not at once destroy Satan's power; for it was God's purpose to place things upon an eternal basis of security. Time must be given for Satan to develop the principles which were the foundation of his government. The heavenly universe must see worked out the principles which Satan declared to be superior to God's principles. God's order must be contrasted with Satan's order. The corrupting principles of Satan's rule must be revealed. The principles of righteousness expressed in God's law must be demonstrated as unchangeable, perfect, eternal.—RH Sept. 7, 1897. {TA 41.1}

God could employ only such means as were consistent with truth and righteousness. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. . . . God permitted him to demonstrate the nature of his claims, to show the working out of his proposed changes in the divine law. His own work must condemn him. Satan had claimed from the first that he was not in rebellion. The whole universe must see the deceiver unmasked. {CTr 12.6}

Even when he was cast out of heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since only the service of love can be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 40-42. {CTr 12.7}