

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Second Quarter 2025: Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy

Lesson 7 “Foundations for Prophecy”

Read for this week’s study

Isaiah 6:6–8; Genesis 3:21–24; Ezekiel 1:4–14; Revelation 4:1–11; Numbers 2:3–25; Isaiah 14:12–14.

Memory Text

“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me’ ” (Isaiah 6:8, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Here I Am, Send Me
- III. The Two Cherubim
- IV. Like Burning Coals of Fire
- V. God Among His People
- VI. The Fall of Lucifer
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. The lesson for this week continues the author’s focus on the vision of the throne in Revelation 4-5 and its predecessors in other parts of Scripture. As noted in last week’s lesson, the centerpiece of Revelation 4 is the throne, which represents God’s right to rule. How would you describe the basis of God’s right to rule the universe? The author argues that God never intended for humanity to fail, but that His character will shine even brighter as a result. Do you agree with that assessment? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Read Isaiah 6:1-5. Why do you think Isaiah reacted the way he did? Would you have reacted the same way? Read Isaiah 6:6-8. What was the outcome of Isaiah’s encounter with God and why is it important? How critical is such an encounter with God to the way we represent God in the world? Read Revelation 4:6-8. What does Isaiah have to do with John’s vision? (Sunday’s Lesson)

3. Adam and Eve experienced the painful kind of authenticity in the Garden. Read Genesis 3:21-24. Some people read these verses as arbitrary and punitive actions of God. How should we read this passage from the larger view of God's character and government? Note that these actions are in the immediate context of Genesis 3:15. What are the implications of that? (Monday's Lesson)
4. Read Ezekiel 1:4-16. What similarities do you see between this passage and the scenes depicted in Isaiah 6:1-6 and Revelation 4:1-11? What do these texts tell us about God? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. During the Exodus, the twelve tribes of Israel camped around the tabernacle with three tribes on each side; east, south, west and north. There was one dominant tribe on each of the four sides. According to Numbers 2 who were these dominant tribes? How does this arrangement anticipate the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21? What does this tell us about God's ultimate purpose for the human race? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Read Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:11-17. What led to Lucifer's downfall? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. Read Revelation 14:1-12. How does the contrast between Lucifer's fall and humanity's high position in Christ inform your understanding of what takes place in Revelation 14? (Thursday's Lesson)
8. Imagine standing before God with every flaw, every character defect, every wrong act, every wrong thought, every wrong motive fully exposed before Him! What would your reaction be? How would it get fixed? (Friday's Lesson)
9. John the Baptist, as we have seen, played the role of a seraph, a burning and shining lamp (John 5:35). He was, of course, the forerunner to Christ, heralding Messiah's first appearance. How do God's last-day people hold a similar prophetic role? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: This takes us to a question I think we discussed a bit last week, but perhaps we ought to touch on it again. "If God knew that Lucifer would be such an instigator of trouble upon the human race, why did He create him?" This question baffles many, and a good, understandable answer would settle many people's questioning.

Graham: As I mentioned last week, I never like to limit God. I don't like to limit His foreknowledge. So I like to believe that when God created Lucifer, He knew he would cause the trouble. But God also knew what He would do, and He said, "I'm willing, as I create this magnificent person, it's going to cost me, and I'm willing to pay." And I think that's even more wonderful, that He would go ahead, knowing that he would cause the trouble.

What was the second part of that? Is God then responsible? God has never created anybody imperfect. His creations are perfect. Lucifer had no bent to evil, whatever. He brought that up himself, which does suggest a wonderful thing. God creates us perfect, but part of that is giving us the ability even to rebel. So when we say we love God, it isn't because we're programmed that way, because we can also say, "We hate you." Adam and Eve showed that. When they sinned in the garden they were free to sin.

Lou: So then, Satan didn't go wrong because of some malfunction in the way he was made, like an automobile that has to be recalled. He was perfect.

Graham: He was perfect.

Lou: But with that freedom to make choices, it could lead to all kinds of consequences.

Graham: Yes. But God is in no way responsible. But another wonderful thing about God is that He has paid the price as if it were His fault. You know, He's assumed the responsibility, as if it were His fault. I think it's because freedom means so much to God, He would rather go this costly way, than take some shortcut and program us so we would all behave. Then, when we would line up and say how much we loved Him, He's just listening to a record, or a tape recorder. And that wouldn't please our intelligent God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #2 with Lou Venden, "What Went Wrong In God's Universe" 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/2MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

And he who seeks to give light to others will himself be blessed. "There shall be showers of blessing." "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Proverbs 11:25. God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid; but in order for us to develop a character like Christ's, we must share in His work. In order to enter into His joy,—the joy of seeing souls redeemed by His sacrifice,—we must participate in His labors for their redemption. {DA 142.2}

God gives to every man his work, and with the imparted commission He gives to His messengers a measure of power proportionate to their faith. He is constantly unfolding to the heart the riches of His grace. Light will shine forth in clear rays from those who receive light from the Word of God. . . . {RC 112.2}

God does not expect that with their different temperaments His people will each be prepared for any and every place. Let all remember that there are varied trusts. It is not the work of any man to prescribe the work of any other man contrary to his own convictions of duty. It is right

to give counsel and suggest plans; but every man should be left free to seek direction from God, whose he is and whom he serves. {6T 334.1}

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}

Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be; but the worse you are, the more you need Jesus. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration. {DA 568.3}

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10. {FLB 129.2}

It is God's glory to encircle sinful, repentant human beings in the arms of His love, to bind up their wounds, to cleanse them from sin, and to clothe them with the garments of salvation. {PK 668.3}

God is acquainted with every man. Could our eyes be opened we would see that eternal justice is at work in our world. A powerful influence, not under man's control, is working. Man may fancy that he is directing matters, but there are higher than human influences at work. The servants of God know that He is working to counteract Satan's plans. Those who know not God cannot comprehend His movements. There is at work a wheel within a wheel. Apparently the complication of machinery is so intricate that man can see only a complete entanglement. But the divine hand, as seen by the prophet Ezekiel, is placed upon the wheels, and every part moves in complete harmony, each doing its specified work, yet with individual freedom of action (MS 13, 1898). {4BC 1161.3}

In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with, but let us not forget that the three great powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His purposes to pass.—Manuscript 118, 1902. {Ev 65.2}

Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best. {MH 417.3}

All earthly powers are under the control of the Infinite One. To the mightiest ruler, to the most cruel oppressor, He says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." Job 38:11. God's power is

constantly exercised to counteract the agencies of evil; He is ever at work among men, not for their destruction, but for their correction and preservation. {PP 694.1}

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people. He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amidst the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands. {PK 176.1}

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. {8T 19.1}

The words of God are the wellsprings of life. As you seek unto those living springs you will, through the Holy Spirit, be brought into communion with Christ. Familiar truths will present themselves to your mind in a new aspect, texts of Scripture will burst upon you with a new meaning as a flash of light, you will see the relation of other truths to the work of redemption, and you will know that Christ is leading you, a divine Teacher is at your side. {MB 20.1}

In teaching us to ask every day for what we need—both temporal and spiritual blessings—God has a purpose to accomplish for our good. He would have us realize our dependence upon His constant care, for He is seeking to draw us into communion with Himself. In this communion with Christ, through prayer and the study of the great and precious truths of His word, we shall as hungry souls be fed; as those that thirst, we shall be refreshed at the fountain of life. {MB 113.1}

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him. {SC 93.2}

By prayer, by the study of His word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go. {MH 182.1}

If you ask the help of God, you will not ask in vain. The Lord is at work in many ways to win your hearty confidence. In nothing does He take more delight than to have you unburden, come to Him for light and strength, and He has promised that you shall find rest to your soul. If you will find heart and voice to pray, He will be sure to hear, and an arm will be reached down to save you. There is a God that hears prayer, and when all other resources fail, He is your refuge, a very present help in time of trouble. . . . {TDG 184.4}

Lucifer was enshrouded with glory as the covering cherub. Yet this angel whom God had created, and entrusted with power, became desirous of being as God. He gained the sympathy of some of his associates by suggesting thoughts of criticism regarding the government of God. This evil seed was scattered in a most seducing manner; and after it had sprung up and taken root in the minds of many, he gathered the ideas that he himself had first implanted in the minds of others, and brought them before the highest order of angels as the thoughts of other minds against the government of God. Thus, by ingenious methods of his own devising, Lucifer introduced rebellion in heaven. {4BC 1143.1}

God desired that a change take place, and that the work of Satan be brought out in its genuine aspect. But the exalted angel standing next to Christ was opposed to the Son of God. The underworking was so subtle that it could not be made to appear before the heavenly host as the thing that it really was; and so there was war in heaven, and Satan was expelled with all who would not stand on the side of loyalty to God's government. The Lord God stood forth as Supreme Ruler. {4BC 1143.2}

This condition of things had existed a long period of time before Satan was unmasked and the evil ones expelled (Letter 162, 1906). {4BC 1143.3}

God in His wisdom permitted Satan to carry forward his work, until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed, that their true nature and tendency might be seen by all. Lucifer, as the anointed cherub, had been highly exalted; he was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and his influence over them was strong. God's government included not only the inhabitants of heaven, but of all the worlds that He had created; and Satan thought that if he could carry the angels of heaven with him in rebellion, he could carry also the other worlds. He had artfully presented his side of the question, employing sophistry and fraud to secure his objects. His power to deceive was very great, and by disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood he had gained an advantage. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see to what his work was leading. {GC 497.1}

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin, to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin. . . . Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it, is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is "the transgression of the law;" (1 John 3:4) it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government. {TMK 15.2}

The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9. The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom. {GC 504.1}

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}

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}