

# Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

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

### Lesson 8 “In the Psalms: Part 1”

#### Read for this week’s study

Hebrews 9:11–15; Psalm 122; Psalm 15; Psalm 24; Exodus 33:18–23; Psalm 5; Psalm 51:7–15.

#### Memory Text

“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads” (Revelation 14:1, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Our High Priest
- III. On Mount Zion
- IV. Law in Our Hearts
- V. Psalm 5
- VI. Teach Transgressors Your Way
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “One particularly rich source of information for the symbols of Revelation is the book of Psalms, a collection of sacred poetry that explores many human experiences and possible interactions with God—ranging from despondency over sin and suffering to unbridled joy in His presence and His repeated promises for forgiveness and salvation. [...] Some details provided in God’s songbook can give us new ways to understand and appreciate our role in the final moments of earth’s history.” (sabbath afternoon)
2. Sunday’s lesson connects two very different passages: Hebrews 9:11-15 and Psalm 122. How does the arrival of the Messiah introduce a better world? In this reality, Jesus is both the priest who offered the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself. The Messiah’s death took the place of ancient Israelite sacrifice as a better, and indeed final, once-for-all sacrifice. How did the living God, through his sacrifice, reveal once

for all the way into his presence? How can this lead his people to serve God gladly and joyfully without the slightest shadow or stain on their consciences? How is this calling us to an exuberant and joyful service? If this is true, why is motivation so often caused by guilt and fear?

3. “In Revelation 14, we find God’s people standing on Mount Zion.” (Monday’s lesson) Mount Zion is the place of origin for good news (Isaiah 40:9-11). It is a place that demands a holiness from Israel that will match God’s own holiness (15:1-2; 24:3-5). Compare David’s reply to an all-important question: “Who shall dwell in your holy hill?” in Psalms 15 and 24 with the description of the people standing on Zion in Revelation 14:1–5.
4. Discuss the statement: “Now that the Lamb of God is established on Mount Zion, in the sanctuary, we can also be present there because of His perfect righteousness credited to us by faith. [...] Without His blood, what hope would we have? None, actually.” (Monday’s lesson)
5. “When the Bible describes a remnant with God’s name inscribed in their foreheads, it is not a matter of having literal letters written there; it is a matter of having God’s character inscribed in your mind, your heart, and so now in our lives we reflect the love and character of God.” (Tuesday’s lesson)
6. The remnant gathered on Zion have the name of the Father and the Lamb engraved on their foreheads. How is that related to God’s promise, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” and, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (Hebrews 10:16, 17)? Is there any connection with the stages of faith?
7. Wednesday’s lesson invites us to compare Psalm 5 with the language of Revelation 14:1–12. The psalm draws sharp contrasts between those who are lost and those who have been redeemed. The redeemed in Revelation (144,000) are characterized by what they are *not* twice and by what they *are* three times. What are they? Why is that important in the context of mudslinging and misrepresentation that “no lie is found” in the mouth of this group (Revelation 14:5)?
8. Thursday’s lesson concentrates on the fact that in Psalm 51:7–15, after he has been pardoned and purged from his sin, David promises to “teach transgressors your way” and this is then connected with the proclamation of the three angels’ messages from Revelation 14.

How can the message that humans have sinned, but God still works through them bring courage to you and our world? Israel has sinned, but God still uses his people to bless others; monarchs have sinned grievously, but God still promises to bring into the world his anointed king. One day this Davidic king will be exalted over the nations and bring God’s justice and peace to the world. And he will also bring an end to the long history of failure – human failure, Israel’s failure, the failure of (Davidic) royal history. We find ourselves at the intersection of the past, present and future of God’s time and our time, a place of intense pain and intense joy. We are called to

live, joyfully and painfully, in the story which is both his and ours, and be a blessing to all.

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

And he was chided—even by some Christians who hadn't worked it out too well yet, and they would say to Paul, "Aren't you doing away with the law by your emphasis on trust?"

"No," he said, Romans 3:31. "Faith does not abolish law. Faith establishes law, by putting it in its proper perspective."

Next question: "What is the proper perspective? What is the over-all view, the larger view of all this?"

The answer is in Galatians 3, the text that was the basis of the Minneapolis General Conference discussion. Look at that, Galatians 3:19: "Why then the law?", he was asked. "It was added." What law was added? Remember the debate at Minneapolis? Was it the Ten Commandments? Was it the ceremonial law? They had quite a disagreement. When we get to Galatians, I'll bring the documents (some of which are not published at the present time).

Did you know that the President of the General Conference and a young physician—they wrote two books holding two opposite views on this matter? Elder Butler and Dr. Waggoner. I mean, how could a young physician talk to the General Conference President like that? It was very respectful! The introductions are very polite. But then they mince no words about their disagreement. So they went to Ellen White and said, "What law was added to be our guardian to bring us to Christ?" "Why," she says, "it was the Ten Commandments and the ceremonial law; all of it." All law was added because of the emergency of sin.

But what is sin? Romans 14, "Sin is a lack of trust. A breach of trust."

What is sin? 1 John 3:4, "Sin is rebelliousness." Sin is a stubborn unwillingness to listen. Or in the book of James, sin is knowing to do what is right and not doing it. Doesn't that perfectly describe the children of Israel when God brought them out of the land of Egypt? Was there trust?

Now, He gave them a chance, first. He said, "Let me be your God, and you be My people. Let's trust each other. I can get you into Canaan. You won't even have to fight." And Ellen White observes, it was never God's design that they fight their way into Canaan, any more than they fought their way out of Egypt. He would have fed them and clothed them. Did they get ill in the wilderness? Did they lack anything? Nothing. He said, "I'll take you there, and the angel will clear the way before you. Yes, I'll have to lay many of My sinful children to sleep until the resurrection but let Me put the Canaanites to sleep and all those other people. Let Me do it.

They are My children.” It’s hard for us to kill each other without getting angry while we do it. Let the eternal God put His own children to sleep. It would be much better, wouldn’t it?

But they didn’t trust Him—didn’t trust Him on anything. And when they got to the river Jordan, they begged Moses to take them back to Egypt. What do you do with people who aren’t willing to listen and don’t trust you? Rebellious people, 1 John 3:4. Untrusting people, Romans 14. Don’t you have to do everything that is described in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy?

Well, there was one other thing God could have done. He could have said, “I think that surely none of My loyal angels would misunderstand Me if I let those noisy, troublesome, ungrateful, untrustworthy people go.” But instead of doing that, He went to work. All through these books, first He raised His voice. Then He even had to tell them how to be modest in worship, how to be reverent, how to do this, that and the other, in great detail. How He could be misunderstood as a fussy, arbitrary, even fuddy-duddy God, hardly one to be revered and respected, surely not one to be loved; but a God who desires the service of fear.

But the prophets came along, and they didn’t misunderstand it that way, did they? How could Hosea, and Amos, and Micah, and David even, and Isaiah and Jeremiah understand as clearly as they did? Apparently, though, it takes a little time. It took Saul (later Paul), quite some time to put it all together. And when he put it all together, he wrote in Galatians 3, “Let me tell you why God gave us all these things in Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It was all added because we were such sinners, and so stubborn, and so noisy, and so ungrateful.”

The amazing thing is that instead of giving us up, God stooped to meet us where we are. He spoke a language we could understand. He led us no faster than we were able to follow. And He ran a grave risk of being misunderstood, in using such methods to get our attention and hold it long enough to tell us more of the truth about Himself. In that light, all this material in the Old Testament is magnificent evidence of the truth about God. What a condescending, skillful, versatile teacher He is! If that’s where the people were, that’s where He met them. That’s why He didn’t give the Sermon on the Mount on Sinai. They wouldn’t have respected it. They wouldn’t even have heard it. It took thunder and lightning. What a terrible thing though, that He had to say, “Stop the killing, and the stealing, and the lying, and the cheating.” But then in the tenth commandment, He indicated how lofty His ideals were. He said, “When I’ve really fulfilled My purposes for you, My children, you not only won’t do any of those things prohibited here; you won’t even want to. You’ll love and trust in the highest sense of freedom. That’s what I want.” But only occasionally did He have a friend who really saw the truth.

And I maintain that’s where we are right now. And there’s a call to go back to the symbols and to the legal picture, to the limited, legal model of things which God indeed most graciously gave us.

But that was an emergency measure. It's time for us to climb up the mountain to the mouth of the cave with Elijah, and to stand with Hosea, and Micah, and Amos, and David, and Paul, and realize that behind any and all methods, emergency methods, that God has used for our sakes, there remains the one and only thing He has ever asked of His children, and that is trust. But His enemies have said He cannot be trusted. God has demonstrated the truth. Look what it cost Him! Look what He's done to demonstrate that He can be trusted. Anybody who would go to those lengths can be trusted. But sometimes we get so involved in all the emergency measures, we forget what it is He really wants.

So the question today is, "Why, then, the whole legal model?" It was added because of lack of trust, because of rebelliousness. But let's not be so caught up in the emergency measures that we forget that God's intent is that ultimately we trust Him enough, even trust each other enough, and be trustworthy ourselves enough, to be safe for life to continue as it was in the beginning: perfect freedom, perfect security, perfect happiness; everybody trusting everybody else. Even God able to trust in us. If the whole plan of salvation and the blood of Christ do not lead us back to trust, they are of absolutely no avail. That's my absolute conviction from reading all sixty-six. And I see it in every one of the books. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Leviticus, recorded October 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/5MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/6MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

The Messiah was to be hid in God, and God was to be revealed in the character of His Son. Without a knowledge of God, humanity would be eternally lost. Without divine help, men and women would sink lower and lower. Life and power must be imparted by Him who made the world. Man's necessities could be met in no other way. {PK 693.1}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ. {MH 419.1}

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to manifest, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. {MH 419.4}

Christ is your Advocate. In this powerful, hearty recognition of God's love, take the hand of Christ, and hold it fast. His hand holds you much firmer than you can hold His hand. {SD 22.6}

Through Christ's redeeming work the government of God stands justified. The Omnipotent One is made known as the God of love. Satan's charges are refuted, and his character unveiled. Rebellion can never again arise. Sin can never again enter the universe. Through eternal ages all are secure from apostasy. By love's self-sacrifice, the inhabitants of earth and heaven are bound to their Creator in bonds of indissoluble union. {DA 26.2}

With intense interest the unfallen worlds had watched to see Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth. And if God should do this, Satan was ready to carry out his plan for securing to himself the allegiance of heavenly beings. He had declared that the principles of God's government make forgiveness impossible. Had the world been destroyed, he would have claimed that his accusations were proved true. He was ready to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the worlds above. But instead of destroying the world, God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the alien province, a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace. Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race. Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled. {DA 37.2}

Up to the time of Christ's first advent, men worshiped cruel, despotic gods. Even the Jewish mind was reached through fear, and not love. Christ's mission on the earth was to reveal to men that God was not a despot, but a heavenly Father, full of love and mercy for His children. {18MR 112.4}

God has given us these precious things as an expression of His love. The Lord is a lover of the beautiful, and to please and gratify us He has spread before us the beauties of nature, even as an earthly parent seeks to place beautiful things before the children that He loves. The Lord is always pleased to see us happy. Sinful as it is with all its imperfections, the Lord has lavished upon this earth the useful and the beautiful. The beautiful, tinted flowers tell of His tenderness and love. They have a language of their own, reminding us of the Giver. {UL 327.3}

Never are we absent from the mind of God. God is our joy and our salvation. {CTr 357.2}

The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He

has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice,—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men. {SC 10.3}

To human beings striving for conformity to the divine image there is imparted an outlay of heaven's treasure, an excellency of power, that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen. {COL 162.4}

Accustomed as they had been in Egypt to material representations of the Deity, and these of the most degrading nature, it was difficult for them to conceive of the existence or the character of the Unseen One. In pity for their weakness, God gave them a symbol of His presence. "Let them make Me a sanctuary," He said; "that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8. {Ed 35.1}

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship Him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love not only those who loved them, but those who hated them, who treated them despitefully. In this He was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted His teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul. {FE 177.1}

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is

renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 5:3; 2:4. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. {SC 60.2}

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 His [God’s] purpose to place things upon an eternal basis of security. . . . God’s order must be contrasted with the new order after Satan’s devising. The corrupting principles of Satan’s rule must be revealed. The principles of righteousness expressed in God’s law must be demonstrated as unchangeable, eternal, perfect.—*Manuscript 57*, 1896 (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, pp. 360, 361). {CTr 13.6}

The kingdom of God comes not with outward show. It comes through the gentleness of the inspiration of His word, through the inward working of His Spirit, the fellowship of the soul with Him who is its life. The greatest manifestation of its power is seen in human nature brought to the perfection of the character of Christ. {7T 143.2}

The truth is all powerful and far reaching. It will unite nationalities in one great brotherhood. . . . Christ in men unites them on one grand platform, preparing for the uniting in one family in heaven. It is the truth that makes men one and removes national prejudice. . . . {OHC 171.4}

The truth will have the same molding influence upon hearts whatever the nationalities. Every human heart that accepts the truth will bow to the majesty of its sway, and when Christ is abiding in the heart by faith they will be of one mind, for Christ is not divided. They will be strong in His strength, happy and united in His peace. The truth is the same in its subduing power upon all hearts. It will refine and ennoble the heart of the receiver. {OHC 171.5}

To give glory to God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God (MS 16, 1890). {7BC 979.4}

The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. A lost sheep never finds its way back to the fold of itself. If it is not sought for and saved by the watchful shepherd, it wanders until it perishes. What a representation of the Saviour is this! Unless Jesus, the Good Shepherd, had come to seek and to save the wandering, we should have perished. The Pharisees had taught that none but the Jewish nation would be saved, and they treated all other nationalities with contempt. But Jesus attracted the attention of those that the Pharisees despised, and He treated them with consideration and courtesy. . . . {LHU 212.3}



God does not employ compulsory measures; love is the agent which He uses to expel sin from the heart. By it He changes pride into humility, and enmity and unbelief into love and faith. {MB 76.3}

The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour's life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man's redemption. {SC 21.2}

But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He "will abundantly pardon," He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith 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 55:7-9. 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. And again he says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12. {MB 114.1}

We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked by our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christ-like life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls. {DA 347.3}

The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit. It means divine illumination, rejoicing in God. It means a heart emptied of self, and blessed with the abiding presence of Christ. When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin. The glory, the fullness, the completeness of the gospel plan is fulfilled in the life. The acceptance of the Saviour brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance. The beauty and fragrance of the character of Christ revealed in the life testifies that God has indeed sent His Son into the world to be its Saviour. {COL 419.6}