

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### First Quarter 2016: *Rebellion and Redemption*

#### Lesson 13 “Redemption”

#### Read for this week’s study

Revelation 20:1–3, Jeremiah 4:23–26, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Revelation 20:7–15, Philippians 2:9–11, 2 Peter 3:10.

#### Memory Text

“ ‘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 21:4, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Binding Satan
- III. The “Why” Questions
- IV. Final Judgment
- V. New Heavens and a New Earth
- VI. No More Tears
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “Let’s look at the final steps in the long-playing drama of the great controversy. After the Second Coming, the redeemed will live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. And, even more incredible, they will have an active role in judgment. Indeed, we will be given a thousand years to get answers, at least answers regarding the fate of the lost (we’ll have an eternity for the rest).” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. So what is the primary purpose of this phase of judgment? What does the Bible say about the last judgment? What is the purpose and meaning of the various phases?
3. If there is a conflict regarding God’s character, His use of power, in which He was wrongly accused, one of the most crucial questions to be dealt with is: How do you kill a lie? Because if God does not manage to kill the lie(s), His victory is Pyrrhic. Then eliminating His enemy (whatever model you use for that!), is not going to solve the problem, as sin may come back again.
4. However, if God manages to kill the lie, His eternal victory is assured and sin will not be repeated again, in spite of preserving the freedom of choice of all redeemed people and unfallen angels.

5. What kind of binding is implied in Revelation 20:1-3? What is its purpose? (Sunday's lesson)
6. Classical Christianity preached for centuries a "replacement story" (grace replaces the law; Sunday replaces the Sabbath, the Church replaces Israel; heaven replaces the earth, etc.) Thus the hope was to "go to heaven when you die". For well over a century, Adventists insisted that you do not go to heaven when you die (see the previous lesson on the Adventist position of "Church triumphant"). However, it seems that we have not done much thinking about the purpose of the millennium in the context of the cosmic conflict [beyond the fact "that the portion which the wicked must suffer is meted out"]. (Monday's lesson) Why is it so important that "all wicked suffer the right amount"?
7. If the beast and the false prophet have been thrown into the lake of fire (in chap. 19), why isn't Satan thrown there too? Why the temporary respite in which he is "let out of jail" one last time to do his worst before being finally overthrown? Why the delay and why must he again be released?
8. Would anyone grumble if Satan had been part of the defeated host in chapter 19, then thrown into the lake of fire together with the beast and the false prophets, and the book proceeded straight to the New Jerusalem? What would be lost? Why is the interlude there and so important?
9. Is there any significance in the fact that this "pause", just like the one in chapter 7 (the sealing) and chapters 10 & 11 (the two witnesses) concerns the suffering and martyred people of God (20:4)? What is the significance of the current charismatic emphasis on miraculous signs, answered prayers, unbelievable deliverance, that it is rather these people who are celebrated as the true witnesses of Christ, the priest-kings who share the Messiah's rule (20:6)? Is it possible that we have unconsciously shared the success mentality of contemporary society instead of embracing the biblical story of the Messiah?
10. Why is it important that Satan must be allowed to play the role of a deceiver one last time, do the worst he can, so that when he is defeated, there will be no trace of suspicion that all of his accusations were not answered? Why must he be allowed a final moment to promote his lies and accusations so that in his overthrow it will be clear beyond the slightest doubt that there is "no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)?
11. What is the significance of the fact that Satan gathers the nations for battle (20:8), yet no battle takes place? The great battle of chapter 19 in which the rider on the white horse won the victory by means of the sword of his mouth (!) was indeed the last battle! (Cf. 12:7 – the war of ideas.)
12. Babylon met its demise in chap. 18; the beast and the false prophet in chap. 19 and now Satan and Death and Hades in chap. 20. The result is not only that God has won, but also that the creation is gloriously reaffirmed, and new heaven and earth re-created.

13. Notice the concluding images that John uses: “Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children” (21:7) – new birth. The holy city is like “a bride dressed up for her husband” (21:2.9) – a wedding. “God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.” (21:3.cf. 22) – the new temple; there is no temple in the city, because the whole city is the temple where God is a permanent guest/inhabitant. And finally: “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (21:4) – a perfect recovery – the end of the cry! Perfect harmony, Paradise lost becomes Paradise restored.
14. The Bible presents a restoration story, rather than a replacement story. Heaven and earth are joined together. The heavenly and earthly family is in one perfect community, in eternal at-one-ment! Not only did Jesus come to dwell/tabernacle with us in His incarnation at His first coming, He comes to do the same at His final coming at the end of ages, “to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.” (Ephesians 1:10).
15. The closing scene of the Bible is not a vision of people going up to heaven, or God throwing away His first creation, but an utter transformation of heaven and earth by abolishing from heaven and earth whatever was horrible, tragic and disgusting because of sin. The new world is full of beauty, delight, tenderness and glory because God himself lives with and among his people—a perfect revelation of God’s eternal character of love.

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

When we watch, if we are within the city, the wicked being destroyed, will we feel, “I thank Thee, God, that I am not like these outside being destroyed.” And the Lord would say, “Some error was made, you should be out there with them if you feel that way.”

Don’t you think that God’s whole attitude toward vengeance is involved here in the book of Obadiah? Since at the end, assuming that we will be saved, and we watch as the glory of God is unveiled, and all that is out of harmony with Him is consumed, and to use the words of Scripture, “Fire comes down from God out of Heaven and the wicked are destroyed.” How do you expect to feel, at the time? Might we be saying, “Well, they surely deserved it”? I had someone say to me just a little while ago, “If Idi Amin doesn’t get what he fully deserves then God is not a just God.” And this individual really meant it. And that’s not unique. I’ve heard it said of other individuals in history.

How *will* we feel? Well, do we have any indication, from Hosea, for example, how God will feel? Are bad people His children just as much as good people? And He’s losing His own children, and will never see them again. And Hosea has God crying, “How can I give you up? How can I let you go?” And if we are within the city, we will feel as He does. So I hate any suggestion that there

will be any deep sense of satisfaction, of justice, within us as we look and say, “Well, that person is really getting what he deserves.” I don’t think there will be any room for that feeling. It will be a time of very great grief. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, recorded March, 1982, 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 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/45MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/46MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

But maybe it’s your Uncle Bill. Have you ever had people say, “If you’d just prove this to me I’d come across”? And there outside is Uncle Bill. “Well,” you say, “Uncle Bill, how much more evidence do you want? Here’s the New Jerusalem. Here’s the glory of God. Here’s Christ in His human form and here we are. And there’s Satan out there. I mean, doesn’t that make you remember the great controversy? How much more evidence do you need?” Ellen White’s comment is we’ll have a panoramic review of the whole great controversy and see how we fit in. And you say, “Uncle Bill, you said you’d come across.” And Uncle Bill did not come across. And you say, “Well, the Lord did diagnose you correctly. You said you would but it is apparent that more time, more light, more persuasion, more evidence would not win you.” Instead, Uncle Bill joins in the attempt to assault the New Jerusalem and tear God from His throne again.

And so I believe God resurrects the wicked to convince us on the basis of evidence, which is His only way of doing it, that more time would be of no use. I’ve even wondered about being outside. Have you ever imagined being outside? That’s a bit of a nightmare and I imagined it early enough when my daughters were still home and young and I pictured them on the wall. Now I picture my grandchildren on the wall looking for Grandpa. They would, you know. And they would maybe find you out there. And they would call to each other, “There he is out there!” And you would realize, wouldn’t you see them up there? How would you feel seeing your family inside? And then maybe they would wave at you? Could you wave back knowing what is involved?

And then God turns to His children and says, “You know what’s coming next. And you know why I’ve waited this long because it’s a terrible thing that’s happening. It’s a very strange thing for me to do to give up my children and let them reap the consequence. And you know what the consequence is. But I don’t want to make you afraid. Any more questions before I do it?” I mean, look at the price He’s paid to answer our questions about this. And then He unveils His life-giving glory and everything that is out of harmony is consumed. And the very elements melt with fervent heat.

Now what picture do you have of God while His own children are being consumed? He would be crying, Hosea 11. Even David the sinner cried over Absalom. And God will be crying, “How

can I give you up? How can I let you go?” And they will be dying. Now I want to know what you will be doing. Would you be there with the stopwatch? Want to be sure they get what they richly deserve, you know, and here’s God crying. I think we’ll all be crying. But would you be able to go up to God in the middle of that awful experience and say, “It’s alright God, there’s nothing else you could have done.”

But even when it’s all over I’ve pictured God turning to us and looking for any flicker of fear in our faces and saying, “Children, that was unspeakably terrible. Did I make you afraid? Because if I did, Ellen White was right, you’ll serve me from fear and that will leave the seeds of rebellion in my universe. And I’ve been willing to pay any price and wait any time to eliminate fear.” Could you say, “That was terrible but we’re not afraid of you”? He could add, “Then I didn’t do it too soon.”

And it has to end in that light. But I’ll tell you there’s a lot of Christian preaching that does not produce that relationship. And the worst doctrine is the doctrine of hell. And the worst hell is ours—that God will perform a miracle to keep you alive in the fire so you will be suitably tortured before you’re executed. So we go to the world and say, “You have a terrible view of hell, immortal hell. We want to bring you the truth. You’ll only be tortured as long as you deserve.” I think we have the most severe one of all! {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Another Look at Romans*, #3, recorded August, 1987, Honolulu, Hawaii} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MMALAR>*

You remember 2 Peter says that in the end “the very elements of our planet will melt with fervent heat.” And so when it’s all over, and God’s people are there in the New Jerusalem and God opens the gates and welcomes us back to Eden, who wants to live on a planet where the very elements have melted with fervent heat? It’s going to need to be recreated.

And I don’t know how God will do this, but skillful teacher that He is, wouldn’t it be just like Him to say, “Would you like to see how I did it the first time? You know, you’ve been debating this ever since day one, two, three, four, five, six.” Can’t you see it all over again, maybe? We don’t have a text for this. But then on Friday, all that would be left, because Eden is restored—Ellen White’s insight into this is extraordinary. She says that Adam looks out and even sees the vines that he used to train with his own hands. Now why would God do such a thing? Or, as you know God, wouldn’t He do just such a thing? Adam would enjoy it, so He would do it. And so God looks on His schedule of creation events and says, “Well now, next I must create a man and a woman. What shall we call them this time?” No, there’s no need. All He has to do now is open the gates and welcome His children home.

And then as we go out into our beautiful world, described in so many places in the Bible as beyond description, what if God were to say, “Tomorrow is the seventh day on this planet. Would you mind, would you feel it was at all arbitrary, would it be an infringement on your

freedom, would I seem legalistic if I were to suggest that we spend the next 24 hours celebrating and remembering?” Can you imagine any Sabbath in the history of the universe like that one? It would be incredible. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Mark, recorded April, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/53MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/54MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

### Further Study with Ellen White

Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people. Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion will be cut off. Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch, (Malachi 4:1),—Satan the root, and his followers the branches. . . .{DA 763.4}

This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life. He is “alienated from the life of God.” Christ says, “All they that hate Me love death.” Ephesians 4:18; Proverbs 8:36. God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them. {DA 764.1}

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. “All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee.” Psalm 145:10. The history of sin will stand to all eternity as a witness that with the existence of God’s law is bound up the happiness of all the beings 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.” {GC 670.3}

**Recommended Reading:** *The Great Controversy* Chapter 42 – “The Controversy Ended”

<https://egwwritings.org/>