

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**Second Quarter 2016: *The Book of Matthew***  
**Lesson 11 “Last Day Events”**

**Read for this week’s study**

Exodus 19:5, 6; Matthew 23; John 12:20–26; Matthew 24; John 14:1–4; 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

**Memory Text**

“And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted”  
(Matthew 23:12, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Blind Guides
- III. Signs of the End
- IV. The Demise of Jerusalem
- V. The Second Coming of Jesus
- VI. Keeping Watch
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. If the character of God is fully vindicated on the cross, why is there a delay in the return of Jesus? What is God waiting for? What are the respective purposes of the two advents of Christ? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. The lesson compares God’s relationship with Israel to marriage and the making of the covenant to a wedding (Exodus 19:5-6; 24:9-11). What does that analogy tell us about God? With this background in mind, what is Jesus saying to the leaders of Israel in Matthew 23? Read Matthew 23:38. Does it matter that Jesus is only recorded making a statement like this in Matthew? What is the unique role of this statement in Matthew’s gospel? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Matthew 24:1-14. What kind of picture does Jesus paint here of the future from the perspective of His disciples? What implications does it have for today? How does He, or does He not, distinguish the destruction of Jerusalem from the end of the world in Matthew? What are the implications of this somber picture for our view of God? How can we best “endure till the end” (24:13)? (Monday’s lesson)

4. Read Matthew 24:15-22. How is Jesus responding to the disciples' questions at the beginning of the chapter? What do you think He means by the "abomination of desolation." In the First Century those who took Jesus' warning seriously survived the horrible destruction of Jerusalem. How do we know which warnings in today's world to take seriously? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. What other warning does Jesus give in the context of events before His return (Matthew 24:23-26)? Are there other texts in the New Testament that address this same topic? How shall we behave today in light of the deceptions that are coming? Read Matthew 24:27-31. How is the Second Coming itself described? What does the Second Coming and the events leading up to it tell us about God? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Matthew 24:36 and 42. What does it mean to "keep watch?" What are the implications of these verses for any attempt to calculate when the End will come? Read Matthew 24:42-51. What does this parable tell us about the meaning of watchfulness? What does the parable suggest is the problem when believers mistreat each other? (Thursday's lesson)
7. Read Matthew 23:34 and 24:34. What does Jesus mean by "this generation?" If He uses it in the normal sense, which generation is He talking about? How does it affect our interpretation to discover that Jesus normally uses "generation" in Matthew in a spiritual sense rather than the normal usage (Matthew 12:39-45; 16:4: 17:17)? (Friday's lesson)
8. Most Seventh-day Adventists are well aware of the dangers and deceptions that come with "date-setting" and avoid it as much as possible. But recently there have been attempts at what some call "soft date-setting." For example, those who believed that the earth was approaching its 6000<sup>th</sup> year in the year 2000 felt that since we don't know the exact year of the 6000, we know that Jesus' coming is imminent but aren't setting "the day or the hour." Does soft date-setting avoid the issues of the more specific kind? (Friday's lesson)
9. How can we learn to live with the problem of the delay of the Advent? What can we learn from the delays experienced by Bible characters such as Joseph, Abraham and Sarah, Caleb and Joshua? What does Revelation 6:9-11 tell us about the delay? What does the delay of the Advent tell us about God? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: But was it still love, when he pronounced woes on the Pharisees and the lawyers?

Graham: Ah, I wish we had a recording or even a video recording of the look on his face and the sound of his voice. I am sure there were tears in his voice when he said that, because he was addressing his own children. And it's very clear in Scripture that God does not want anyone to

be lost. But it was because their behavior was so gross and so unacceptable, that he was honest with them, like a good physician. You would like the doctor to tell you the truth and to do whatever needs to be done. And so he gave them the unvarnished truth for their own sakes. This is the one who gave his life for them a little while later. So there's a time for denunciation, but it had better be done with tears in the voice. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #9 with Lou Venden, "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>*

In the book of Revelation, when the camera focuses on Heaven, does there seem to be any question up there as to the character and government of God? It's settled. It's done. They're ready to close everything up. The reason for the waiting is, there's only one place in the universe where people haven't made up their minds on these matters; and where the revelation that was provided at such cost by the life and death of Christ has not been understood; and people have not made up their minds about it. It's only here. And God waits, and waits, and waits, and waits. And if only the gospel could go to all the world, then the end would come. Or as Revelation says, if only God's people could be so settled into the truth that they could not be moved; any time that would occur, the end could come. So we have lived on the verge of that condition being fulfilled ever since; though now in retrospect we look back at Daniel, and God said, "I knew all along it was going to take a long time, but I didn't tell you in detail."

How about when they asked him when the end would be, and he mixed the signs of the destruction of Jerusalem with the signs of the destruction of the world, in mercy? Because he said, "There are many things I'd like to tell you, but you couldn't bear it now." So I believe that God has known, but we're not able to bear that, if we knew exactly how long it is. But all along the conditions have never changed. And in John's day it looked as if all the conditions were right; at least many of them were. Antichrist had appeared. There was terrible opposition and persecution. And he thought, "Well, maybe this is it." And I think that this emphasis, if it's put in the whole setting of the great controversy, is very good for us. The conditions have never changed. If the conditions could be met in our time, the Lord wouldn't wait five minutes!

So we've always lived on the verge of this thing. . . At least we could say this, for this evening, to get up and say to the world, "It is the last hour" is utterly biblical. That's true, isn't it? For John did it, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And it might be a fine introduction to the whole subject of what it would mean to live through the last hour, and what conditions will be met, and who only can survive the last hour.

Now that's very significantly presented in the Book of Revelation. Who only could pass through a period when many antichrists and false spirits and false prophets are loose, and the devil is bringing fire down from Heaven and appearing as an angel of light. What would it be like to live when the whole world is *worshipping*—not irreligious—when the whole world is worshipping the adversary? But there are a few who endure and remain loyal to Jesus Christ. What will that be like? That's what this provokes us to think about. It seems to me that's much more important than knowing the date. Because as far as the date, we don't know, as you said in the beginning, whether we'll make it home safely tonight or not. We may wake up and it's not in bed in our homes in the morning, it's at the resurrection. And hopefully the right one, at that time. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – 1, 2, and 3 John and Jude, recorded August, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/77MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/78MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

### **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**

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}

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. {1SM 235.2}

For three years the Lord of light and glory had gone in and out among His people. He “went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil,” binding up the brokenhearted, setting at liberty them that were bound, restoring sight to the blind, causing the lame to walk and the deaf to hear, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead, and preaching the gospel to the poor. Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18; Matthew 11:5. To all classes alike was addressed the gracious call: “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. {GC 20.1}

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}

When a man chooses his own way in the face of light and evidence, and refuses to be admonished, and to turn to the Lord with contrition of soul, the next message the Lord shall send will have less effect, for he allows his independent, self-willed spirit to control his judgment. He continues to cast the seed of resistance into his heart, and every time he repeats his act of resistance, refusing to turn from his own way to God’s way, he bends his inclination in the way of disobedience, loves rebellion, and at last becomes callous, and the seed of unbelief ripens for the harvest. The Holy Spirit strives with every man; resist the Holy Spirit, which is the divine voice to man, and the more you resist, the less inclination will you have to repent and reform. Satan will take you under his care, and will give you plenty to do in his line, and you will become more and more in harmony with your leader, and the company that stands under his banner. The warning of God may come to you, saying, “Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?” {YI, November 30, 1893 par. 7}