

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**First Quarter 2019: *The Book of Revelation***  
**Lesson 10 God's Everlasting Gospel**

**Read for this week's study**

Revelation 14:6–12; Matthew 24:14; Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Exodus 20:2–11; Isaiah 21:9; 34:8–10.

**Memory Text**

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. The Three Angels' Messages
- III. The First Angel's Message, Part 1
- IV. The First Angel's Message, Part 2
- V. The Second Angels' Message
- VI. The Third Angel's Message
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. Revelation 12:17 refers to the “remnant,” Revelation 14:1 talks about the 144,000. Are these two groups the same or are they different? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Revelation 14:6-12 is the famous “three angels” passage. Some scholars have seen a parallel to the three angels in Revelation 16:13-14. What can learn from this parallel (see Revelation 16:13-14)? Read Revelation 14:6 along with Matthew 24:14. What do we learn from this parallel? When the first angel's message is called the “everlasting gospel” (Revelation 14:6), what does it imply about the final message to the world? What are you personally doing to reach the world with the gospel? (Sunday's lesson)
3. Read Revelation 14:7 along with Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. What does it mean to “fear God”? How does that concept relate the gospel? What is the connection between fearing God and glorifying Him? What is the relation between the gospel and the commandments of God? How is “judgment” related to the gospel? (Monday's lesson)

4. Read Exodus 20:2-11 then go through Revelation 13, looking for parallel ideas. Scholars believe the beasts of Revelation counterfeit the first four commandments. Can you find those connections? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. Read Revelation 14:8 along with 18:2 and Isaiah 21:9. Why is Babylon described as already fallen when its ultimate fall will only take place in the future? What is the wine of Babylon and does that wine exist today? How can we avoid spiritual "drunkenness"? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. How does Revelation 14:12 depict God's faithful people? Read Revelation 14:10-11 along with 20:11-15. What does the text mean by the wrath of God? When it says that the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, what does it mean? What light do Isaiah 34:8-10 and Jude 7 shed on that statement? (Thursday's lesson)
7. Why do you think judgment is an unpopular concept among many Christians? What relevance does the concept of the pre-advent judgment have for Christians today? (Friday's lesson)
8. What sense does it make that the Sabbath would play such a central role in the final events as described in Revelation? Why would worship be the crucial issue that divides the followers of the true God from the followers of the dragon the sea beast and the false prophet? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Naturally those who remain loyal to God are the special target of Satan's final effort to deceive. Revelation 12, the chapter that first mentions the war in heaven, describes these people—the loyal ones, as being the special objects of Satan's wrath. He goes to make war on these that are called the remnant . . . the ones left over, the few. Notice Revelation 12:17, next on the sheet. These people who are the object of his special wrath are: "All those who obey God's commandments and are faithful to the truth revealed by Jesus" (GNB).

They do not accept Satan's lies. If we count ourselves among God's loyal people, knowing that we will be the special object of his effort to deceive, we would do well to notice Satan's successes through the centuries in deceiving—especially saints. He doesn't tempt saints into the more usual gross indulgences, the things that saints would never think of doing. Rather we need to notice the insidious methods he has used to turn even saints and angels against our heavenly Father, even while they professed to be God's chosen people. You recall his success among the brilliant angels in heaven. How could he possibly deceive them right in the very presence of the Father?

There is more recorded about Satan's deception of God's chosen people on this earth in the Promised Land. You remember that after the discipline of Babylon and the great revival and reformation that took place under Ezra and Nehemiah, God's people in the Promised Land never worshipped idols again. Oh, how they read their Bibles, and paid their tithe, and watched

their diet, and were so very careful not to be contaminated by association with unbelievers. Oh, how they waited for the coming of their Messiah, the Christ. You see they all were eager Adventists. More than that, they were Seventh-day Adventists, weren't they?

Yet, when Christ came to live among them, they denounced his picture of the Father as heretical and unbiblical. How could that be possible? They even said the Son of God had a devil to be so describing his Father. Look at the words in John 8:48. By the way, when we refer to the Jews, remember that Jesus was a Jew. Paul was a Jew. The apostles were Jews. The wonderful prophets were Jews. Where would we be but for the Jews? I hope we don't sound disrespectful when we look at how their failings were so similar to ours. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #17, "Satan's Final Effort to Deceive" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/17MMCAG>*

Then comes chapter 14, God's last pleading with his children, the three final messages of warning and invitation that are the subject of our conversation this evening. Knowing what has gone before, one is not so surprised to find the fearsome words of warning in the second and third angel's messages. But we should always note when we read these three, that the first angel comes with good news. He comes with the everlasting gospel. And as you know, gospel means good news. Notice that he doesn't come with new information. God's last appeal is not something new. It is not something additional. It is the everlasting good news. For this good news has always been the truth. It will always remain the truth. It will always remain the basis of our faith and trust, and freedom for eternity. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #16, "God's Last Pleading with His Children" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/16MMCAG>*

Well, what is this good news of which Paul was so sure, and which through the centuries has provoked such opposition and has been so misunderstood? What did Paul consider so serious a contradiction and perversion that he could be moved to speak so strongly to the Galatian believers? Through the years I've asked many Christians what they consider to be the essence of the good news. I wish there was time to go around our group tonight and have everyone say, "I believe the good news is this:" Through the years, I think the replies have included almost every part of the Christian faith. But most particularly subjects like the atonement, the second coming, or eternal life. Although, if God is as his enemies have made him out to be, eternal life would be misery, would it not? So whether these doctrines, even the second coming, are good news depends on the kind of person we believe our God to be.

So I regard as the most fitting, appropriate and truest answer to that question to be this one, that a good friend gave me years ago: “The good news is that God is not the kind of person Satan has made him out to be.”

That the good news should be related to the issues in the great controversy is perhaps suggested by Paul’s reference to the angel from heaven. He said, “If even an angel from heaven should come with a different version of the good news, don’t believe him. He is wrong. Let him be outcast! Let him be accursed!”

Now it would at first seem incredibly dogmatic, almost arrogant for Paul to speak like that. What if the pastor, at the end of his sermon this weekend should say: “If anyone of you in the audience should disagree with my sermon, let him be held outcast. Let him be condemned to hell!”

We would think that perhaps the pastor was in need of a rest; but what about Paul talking like this? Well, was it not an angel from heaven, right from heaven, who began the circulation of misinformation about our God? And is it not an angel from heaven who masquerades as an angel of light as he seeks to deceive you and me and turn us against our God? Remember we discussed that in 2 Corinthians 11.

Throughout this series we have spoken of Satan’s charges: that God is arbitrary, exacting, vengeful, unforgiving, severe, and has even lied to us that sin results in death, a selfish God who is not worthy of our love and trust. He is certainly not respectful of our freedom. At some length we have considered God’s reply, not in claims, but in demonstration. Remember how humbly God took his case into court, the court being the family of the universe. You remember the good news is that God has won his case. The whole universe agrees that Satan has lied about our God. “It is finished,” Jesus said.

By the life that he lived and the unique and awful way in which he died, Jesus demonstrated the righteousness of our God and answered any questions, and met any accusations leveled against him. Paul said he was proud to be a bearer of this good news. More than that, he knew what it was all about. Look, for example, at 1 Corinthians 1:17, 18 for the substance of his good news:

Christ did not send me to baptize. He sent me to tell the Good News [what is the good news?], For the message about Christ’s death on the cross [that is the good news] is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God’s power. (GNB)

Note how he combines the good news with Christ’s death, with power. Now put with that the famous Romans 1:16, 17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel [the good news]: it is the power of God for salvation. . . . For in it [something is revealed] the righteousness of our God” (RSV).

Now notice how the good news, power, God's righteousness, and the cross are all tied together. And there's nothing new about this. This is the everlasting good news. Or, to pick just one place in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 9:24: "Let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the Lord (NIV).

Now combine them all together. The good news is about God. It's about his righteousness. It cost the death of Christ to prove it. This good news about God's righteousness has great power to move people, if they're willing to listen, to win them back to repentance and faith. It has great power because it is the truth. It has great power because it is such good news. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #16, "God's Last Pleading with His Children" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/16MMCAG>*

So the first angel comes with the everlasting gospel, the everlasting good news. What is it? Well, everyone ought, perhaps, to state his own version. I had the privilege of putting it on the back of the invitation to these conversations about God. Right on the back, I wrote:

The Good News is God is not the kind of person His enemies have made Him out to be; arbitrary, unforgiving, and severe. Jesus said, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." God is just as loving and trustworthy as His Son; just as willing to forgive and heal. Though infinite in majesty and power, our Creator is an equally gracious person who values nothing higher than the freedom, the dignity, and the individuality of his intelligent creatures, that their love, their faith, their willingness to listen and obey may be freely given.

This is the truth revealed through all the books of Scripture. This is the everlasting good news that wins the trust and admiration of God's loyal children throughout the universe.

Could you be dogmatic about that? That's the only truth that is safe to be dogmatic about. To be like Paul and say, "Even if an angel came with a different picture of God, it is wrong, and I will not believe it." To me, this is not a negotiable position. You see one can be adamant, immovable, and dogmatic about freedom, because you never hurt anybody with that view. You are immovably committed to freedom, and to the picture of God as valuing nothing higher than the freedom of his children. To me, that is the essence of the message of the first angel. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #16, "God's Last Pleading with His Children" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/16MMCAG>*

Is it the Father who is the fearsome one who would issue such a threat? And if the Father is the fearsome member of the Trinity, is that why the Son came to die? Was it to assuage, and appease, and propitiate the wrath of the offended member of the Trinity? I hope no one is believing what I am saying! Is this why Jesus had to go up quickly on resurrection Sunday—to begin to intercede with the fearsome member of the Trinity, who could never find it in his own heart to forgive his unbelieving children, unless he were begged to by the most sympathetic member of the three? How one's understanding of the death of the wicked affects one's picture of God, and one's understanding of the plan of salvation! And hence our conversation this evening; there is no need to be afraid of God.

Yet, as you look down that Bible Reference Sheet, doesn't the Bible emphasize, make it very plain, that we are supposed to fear God and be his God-fearing people? Look at that first one on the list. You recognize it is the message of the first of the three angels, in Revelation 14:7: "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come." (RSV)

It even gives a good reason why we should fear him. But one needs to understand the word fear. If you will forgive the Greek, it's pronounced *phobos*, from which we do get phobia. But it doesn't always mean terror. Sometimes it means respect. It means reverence. Look for example at the next verse, Psalm 128:1, 2: "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord [you mean, blessed is everyone who is terrified of God? Well, read on]. You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you." (KJV)

Surely the Psalmist isn't saying, "Happy is everyone who is scared of God." This is the other meaning that the word may have. Blessed is everyone who reveres and respects the Lord. You shall be happy and it will be well with you. Note, for example, Proverbs 9:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (KJV) You mean to be terrified of God is the beginning of wisdom and learning? No, there again the context determines the meaning of the word. So the translation in the *Good News Bible*, right beside it, is to be preferred: "To be wise you must first have reverence for the Lord."

Where there is no respect, there is no reverence, and very little learning can take place. Think of all the lengths to which our God has gone through the centuries to gain the respect of his people and hold it long enough to tell them some more of the truth about himself. Perhaps the most famous example is the one provided at Mt. Sinai. God came down to speak to his people. Did they all line up quietly to listen? They were noisy. They were complaining. They were fussing about the food and the water. There was no respect for God. So God could not speak to them softly that day. Instead there was thunder and lightning, and fire and smoke and earthquake. And God said to Moses, "You put a fence around that mountain. Don't let the people come too close to me." Now we sing "Nearer, Still Nearer," but not that day. The people were so terrified that they spoke to Moses, here in Exodus 20:18-20:

The people were afraid and they trembled [in fact, God had said if anyone comes near the fence, he's to be stoned or shot. If anyone breaks through the fence, I'll burst forth and consume him. No wonder the people were afraid and trembled.] And they stood afar off, and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die." But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear [there is no need to be afraid]; for God has come to prove you [or to test you] and that the fear of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin." (RSV)

Notice the use of the word *fear* in both meanings. You see, "do not fear" means do not be afraid, but "that the fear of him may be before you" is the word reverence. So the very same word carries both meanings in the very same passage, as you notice. But don't you love it that Moses could stand in the middle of the earthquake and the fire, and say that there is no need to be afraid? Because he knew God, and he knew why God was raising his voice on that occasion.

We might ask "why didn't God speak more softly?" We know he prefers to—and he has, many times when talking to his friends, as in the still, small voice with Elijah at the mouth of the cave. But when people are hard of hearing, God will raise his voice. How grateful we should be that he is willing to raise his voice. Now did he speak too loudly? Did he terrify them too much? What were they doing forty days later when the fire, and the earthquake, and the lightning and the thunder died away? They were dancing drunk around a golden calf in a fertility cult ritual. {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>*

Lou: A question came in last week that really touched my heart. This person wrote, "How are we who have been raised as Seventh-day Adventist Christians, and have been taught to fear God and his judgments, to change to a love relationship? When you asked last Friday night, 'Would you be comfortable if the Father walked in?' I hesitated to answer, and then I said, 'I hope so.' I am afraid! How do I dispel this fear?"

Graham: Oh, I know the one who would love to hear that question, would be God himself. If you would look at God and say, "God, I hesitate to tell you this, but I'm scared."

And I wonder what he would do. Would he say, "I appreciate that"?

Or would he say, "I think maybe I'd better not talk to you any longer, you're so scared. I'll send for my Son."

Well, in practicality I think the solution is to become convinced in Scripture that the one who came is fully God. We're not afraid of Jesus. But to realize the one who was with us is no less

than God! And that's what the Sabbath reminds us of, that gentle Jesus—who was afraid of him? He is the Almighty Creator. And then if we could just come to the place where we would truly accept what we call the "testimony of Jesus." The ultimate testimony of Jesus is, "Do you want to know what my Father is like? If you've seen me, you've seen the Father." We find it hard to believe that. So I think we need to read it over and over and come to the place where we really are convinced. You want to know what God is like? Look at Christ, for Christ is God. And as we think of it, number one, it seems incredible, for it takes a little time. And number two, the enemy is opposed to our knowing this, so he will throw up every roadblock he can to keep us from believing this incredible truth. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #10 with Lou Venden, "The Reminder of the Evidence" 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/10MMCAG>*

So the second angel comes and simply says, "The opposition has collapsed in corruption and defeat." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #16, "God's Last Pleading with His Children" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/16MMCAG>*

"But the other side is fallen; Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of her impure passion."

What's *Today's English* on that?

COMMENT: A second angel followed, saying, "She has fallen! Great Babylon has fallen! She made all people drink her wine; the strong wine of her immoral lust!"

Aha. How's *Phillips* on that?

COMMENT: "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She who made all nations drink the wine of her passionate unfaithfulness."

Unfaithfulness is introduced in there. Anything different from that? Well, we know Babylon is symbolic of the devil's side in the whole conflict—the side of confusion, and deception, and misrepresentation and opposition. And the announcement is that the other side has collapsed in corruption and defeat. You read the rest of Revelation and the whole universe has agreed that God has won his case, and the devil has been cast out. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Revelation, recorded August, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links: <http://pkp.cc/79MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/80MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)*

According to the first chapter of Romans, this indicates the meaning of God's "wrath." Paul describes how God pours out His "wrath" on those who reject and suppress the truth. Three times he explains that God "gives up" such people and "turns them over" to the results of their rebelliousness. See Romans 1: 24, 26, 28.

How consistent this is with what we know about God! Since faith and love cannot be forced, what else can God do but sadly give up those who reject Him?

God's wrath, as Paul seems to describe it, is simply His turning away in loving disappointment from those who do not want Him anyway, thus leaving them to the inevitable consequences of their own rebellious choice.

Surely no more awful sentence could be pronounced upon a sinner than for God to say, "Leave him alone."

These were the terrible words pronounced over Israel in the days of the prophet Hosea. Long had God sought to persuade His rebellious people to return. But they mocked His love and spurned His every advance. What now is left for Him to do but give them up? Without His protection, the results would be terrible. {Maxwell, A. Graham. *I Want to be Free*, 11-12. Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1970}

So in imagination let's go to the cross, and watch Jesus die. Did he really die? The soldiers were surprised to find he was already dead. Crucifixion was a slow way of dying. Evidently something else had happened. Is it true that Jesus was dying the death of a sinner, to show us how the sinner really dies? Look at the next verse on our sheet, 2 Corinthians 5:21: "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin." (RSV)

He did die the death of a sinner. And what caused Jesus to die? As you watch him dying on the cross, is God killing his Son? Is he torturing his Son to death? Is God pouring out his wrath on his Son; something the Bible so often pictures God doing toward sinners for whom there is no further hope?

Well, it all depends on the meaning of wrath. What is God's wrath? One of the clearest explanations in the whole Bible is in Romans 1, the next passage. And I wish we could read at least the whole first chapter. But look at these few verses; Romans 1:18, 24, 26, 28:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth [and it is the truth about God in that whole section]. . . . Therefore, God gave them up . . . For this reason God gave them up . . . And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up. (RSV)

Three times it states in Romans 1 that 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. Was Jesus given up? Look at Romans 4:25: “. . . Jesus our Lord, who was put to death [given up] for our trespasses.” (RSV)

There is nothing in the Greek that says he was put to death. It says what is in the brackets there. “Jesus our Lord, who was given up for our trespasses . . .” and it is exactly the same word as in Romans 1:24, 26, 28. And versions ought to leave them the same to show the point that Jesus died under the wrath of his Father. But look at the real meaning of God’s wrath. And this was not new with Paul. It’s all through the Old Testament; most dramatically in Hosea 11. Again, I wish we could read the whole chapter. Hosea 11 just verses 7 and 8: “My people are bent on turning away from me . . . but how, oh how can I give you up, Ephraim! How, oh how, can I hand you over Israel!” (Phillips)

Did Jesus understand that this is the experience he was passing through? Did Jesus know he was being given up as Hosea describes it? And Paul, later in Romans 1 and 4? What did Jesus cry just before he died? “My God, my God, why are you beating me up? Why are you torturing me? Why are you killing me?”

No! “Why have you given me up?” He knew.

We should have come earlier, though—to Gethsemane. For he began this awesome experience of demonstrating the truth about God’s gracious but awful warning, that the wages of sin is death. We should have come to Gethsemane. And there Jesus fell to the ground dying. The angels were watching. Was God killing his Son in the Garden of Gethsemane, or did Jesus feel his unity with his Father breaking up? He began to feel the awesome loneliness of being given up. Had Jesus been left in the Garden of Gethsemane, and had died there, could you say that the Father had killed the Son? Now had he been a mere creature you wouldn’t know; but the angels knew who Jesus was. They knew that he was God. And they knew the meaning of his words. I should have included the verse in John 10:18. Jesus said, “No one takes my life from me. No one can. I lay it down of myself. I have the power to lay it down and I have the power to take it up.” The angels knew that was the truth. And if Jesus died it was not because his Father had killed him. The Father was giving him up and both of them suffered and the Father was crying, “How can I give you up?” The Son who had assumed humanity was the one who died. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #8, “The Most Costly and Convincing Evidence” 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/8MMCAG>*

And then the words “for ever”—how long is forever? You notice in Jude 7: “Sodom and Gomorrah . . . serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of for ever 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>*

Lou: But that raises another question that comes up. Here we had this third angel’s message, the bottom paragraph on our Bible Reference Sheet on the front page, and I’m tempted to ask why not just take this message as it reads? You are talking about having to take all sixty-six and interpret it in the light of all sixty-six, but if the Bible can, *should* be taken just as it reads, why not read it and just believe it the way it says, that people are going to be burned forever, the smoke goes up forever and ever and so on?

Graham: Well, I would just have read in Jude, the name of the book right before, that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed with eternal fire—and that fire went out a long time ago. So the book of Jude has helped prepare me for these words in Revelation. Moreover, as I go through the Bible, I find the servant who doesn’t want to be set free, having a hole punched through the lobe of his ear, and he serves his master forever. So I’ve already been prepared by the rest of the Bible to understand this fire and its smoke that goes up forever and ever. {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>*

Can you imagine a scene of several of us admitted into Heaven over the Father’s protest? And we’re declaring, “But he just doesn’t understand!” Well, we’re destroying the whole structure of our happiness and security for eternity, if this is true. Jesus said I will not intercede with the Father for you. Why? He gives the reason: for the Father himself loves you, just as much as I do. That is, there’s no need. And Goodspeed, in 1923, way back then, has a very venturesome rendering, which doesn’t go beyond the Greek. “There is no need for me to intercede with the Father for you, for the Father loves you himself.” Stunning. But think of the implications here. In the Bible we have intercession, priestly intercession, all the way along, don’t we? Just as we have judgment pictures all the way along, and then Jesus says, “You know, I won’t be your judge. The Father won’t be your judge. The word will be your judge.” Then why did you give us these other pictures? “It’s what you needed, until I could tell you. There’s nothing arbitrary in this. You’ll be judged by whether or not you’ve responded to the truth, and have been won back to faith.” That’s the judgment! {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The

Picture of God in all 66 – John, recorded April, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/57MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/58MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Someone came between because of the emergency. It's not ideal. God would like to deal directly with us, face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. But because we don't know God, and we've been afraid, God has given us these pictures. He's given us a picture even of Jesus being our Judge. Doesn't Jesus deal with this? He says, "You're all comforted that I'm going to be your Judge. Because you were scared my Father was going to judge you, isn't that right?" They said, "Oh, we're so relieved you're going to be our Judge." Is that because the Father is not as gracious and forgiving as the Son, that we say we're glad the Son's going to be our Judge? So before he went back to heaven, he said, "I've got to clear that up, too. Actually, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father. You'd receive just as gracious judgment from my Father as from me. But I'd like to take you a step further. I'm not going to judge you anyway." "Oh, there'll be something that will judge you. The truth will judge you. The truth about my Father in the great controversy. The truth about the kind of person he is and what he wants of his children, and the way he governs the universe. That's the truth. If you have loved that truth and it has led you to repentance and faith and trust, you will have stood humbly in our presence and said, 'What must I do to be saved and healed?' and we will have been able to save and heal you, and all will be well. But if you have turned down this truth about my Father and about me, you will not know us; you will not be our friends; you will not trust us enough to listen; we will not be able to heal you; and you will perish and we will cry." And that's the judgment. {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)

Is Jeremiah pleased that finally God's justice and wrath are being demonstrated? Do you remember Jonah? When God did not destroy Nineveh on time, was Jonah pleased? No, he wished they would be, because that would have proved that he was a good prophet. Was Jeremiah pleased that now they were getting what they so richly deserved? No, he was a much better friend of God than Jonah was. Jeremiah weeps because finally all that he had been predicting had come. How do you think Adventists should feel if finally in the end all the terrible things we have predicted will come? Will we say, "Well, that's good; God is keeping his promise, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,'" and I, in a sense of justice, will be deeply satisfied? Or would you weep?

When the wicked die at the end of the millennium, how do you think God will behave? Hosea 11, he'll cry? God is not willing that any should perish. Think of all the verses like that in the Bible. I think Jeremiah knew God very well. Think how they had treated him. Think how he had been abused, and no one would listen. And yet when the trouble came, he wept over them. I think it speaks very well of him. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Jeremiah and Lamentations, recorded February, 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/35MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/36MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

I have heard servants sometimes charge that friends lack a keen sense of justice. They do not leave room in their understanding of God for just and essential punishment. Their God is simply too weak and kind. "You have a marshmallow God," I heard one servant say.

The truth is precisely the opposite. Friend-believers have great concern about righteousness, which is the literal meaning of the Greek word often translated "justice." The English word "justice" comes from the Latin translation of the Greek. (Latin, "*justitia*")

Friends admire God's righteousness and would love to be like him. And to do what is right is, of course, to do what is just. But servants tend to think of justice in terms of retribution and punishment.

"I find comfort in the thought that some day God will bring retribution on those who have hurt me so much," I heard a believer say. "Now, I'm not asking for vengeance, you understand. I'm just asking for justice." {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends*, 109-110. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.} <http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter8.html>

Graham: The sealing is mentioned first in Revelation, then the mark of the beast. I think the mark of the beast, really a symbol of loyalty to the opposition, should be compared with the symbol of loyalty to God. **I believe that to receive the seal of God is to be so settled into the truth both intellectually and spiritually that one cannot be moved. I believe that to receive the "mark of the beast" is to be so settled into the lie, and there are Scriptures that talk about the Lie, preferring Satan's lies to the truth—you've substituted his lies for the truth; I believe to receive the mark of the beast is to be so settled into Satan's false picture of God that not even the Spirit of God could move us. We cannot be moved. So in essence, the seal or the mark represents an inner decision and commitment for eternity with respect to God.**

Lou: For those of us who have roots in Seventh-day Adventism, for example, the seal of God has been tied very closely to the Sabbath. In fact, I thought we had referred to the Sabbath as the seal of God in itself. But I hear you making a distinction there.

Graham: Well, one has to stop and realize that the people who crucified Christ kept the Seventh-day Sabbath scrupulously; very, very carefully. Did they have the seal of God? They certainly were not settled into the truth about God. When Jesus brought the truth about God, they said he had a devil, and they killed him to silence his witness. On the other hand though, you remember the evening we talked about how the Sabbath sums up the good news about our God? I believe that the knowing, meaningful, intelligent, thoughtful observance of the seventh day—as a reminder of all these great demonstrations of the truth about our God, could be an outward expression of an inward conviction and a “settling into” this truth about our God. The seventh-day Sabbath beautifully fits this mark of identification of those who are committed to the truth about God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #10 with Lou Venden, “The Reminder of the Evidence” 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/10MMCAG>*

But then did he have some questions! Don’t you say that Sunday is the mark of the beast? I said “well, some may, but I don’t.” And I very carefully phrased something like this, that not until the issues in the great controversy are clearly seen, would the keeping of a substitute Sabbath represent a preference for the substitute Christ, and the observance of the true Sabbath represent a preference for the true Christ. And he said could I restate that? Are you saying that finally in the end when the gospel has gone to all the world and the issues in the great conflict between Christ and Satan, good and evil are clearly seen, then the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath will represent faith in and preference for Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, and the keeping of Sunday would represent faith in and preference for the Satan, the adversary, the substitute Son of God? And I said, “That’s really what I wanted to say. You said it beautifully.” {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Revelation, recorded August, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/79MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/80MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

## Further Study with Ellen White

We have one Lord, one faith, one baptism. The gospel of Christ is to reach all classes, all nations, all tongues and people. The influence of the gospel is to unite in one great brotherhood. We have only one Model that we are to imitate in character building, and then we all shall have Christ's mold; we shall be in perfect harmony; nationalities will blend in Jesus Christ, having the same mind, and the same judgment, speaking the same things, and with one mouth glorifying God. This is the work the world's Redeemer is to do for us. If we accept the truth as it is in Jesus, national prejudices and jealousies will be broken down, and the Spirit of truth will blend hearts in one. We will love as brethren; we will esteem others better than ourselves; we will be kind and courteous, meek and lowly, easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits. . . . {OHC 171.2}

God knows just how to meet the peculiarities of different nationalities. . . . The third angel's message . . . is to unite the people to do a special work, preparing them with perfection of character to unite in one great family in the mansions Christ has gone to prepare for those who love Him. . . . {OHC 171.3}

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. {DA 22.2}

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 law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it. After the fall, the principles of righteousness were unchanged. Nothing was taken from the law; not one of its holy precepts could be improved. And as it has existed from the beginning, so will it continue to exist throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. "Concerning thy testimonies," says the psalmist, "I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever (ST April 15, 1886). {1BC 1104.2}

Holiness is wholeness to God. The soul is surrendered to God. The will, and even the thoughts, are brought into subjection to the will of Christ. The love of Jesus fills the soul, and is constantly going out in a clear, refreshing stream, to make glad the hearts of others (MS 33, 1911). {6BC 1076.2}

The religion of Jesus Christ is not merely to prepare us for the future immortal life; it is to enable us to live the Christ life here on earth. Jesus is not only our pattern, He is also our friend and our guide, and by taking hold of His strong arm and partaking of His Spirit, we may walk “even as he walked.” {TMK 298.6}

Satan is constantly urging men to accept his principles. Thus he seeks to counterwork the work of God. He is constantly representing the chosen people of God as a deluded people. He is an accuser of the brethren, and his accusing power he is constantly using against those who work righteousness. The Lord desires through His people to answer Satan’s charges by showing the result of obedience to right principles. {6T 11.2}

Those who believe on Christ and obey His commandments are not under bondage to God’s law; for to those who believe and obey, His law is not a law of bondage, but of liberty. {HP 146.5}

Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity. Sweeping away the exactions which had encumbered the law of God, He showed that the law is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the happiness of mankind, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society. {Ed 76.3}

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. {MB 109.2}

God designs that the Sabbath shall direct the minds of men to the contemplation of His created works. Nature speaks to their senses, declaring that there is a living God, the Creator, the Supreme Ruler of all. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” Psalm 19:1, 2. The beauty that clothes the earth is token of God’s love. We may behold it in the everlasting hills, in the lofty trees, in the opening buds and the delicate flowers. All speak to us of God. The Sabbath, ever pointing to Him who made them all, bids men open the great book of nature and trace therein the wisdom, the power, and the love of the Creator. {PP 48.3}

The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God’s purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden. . . . {Ed 250.2}

The Sabbath is not introduced as a new institution but as having been founded at creation. It is to be remembered and observed as the memorial of the Creator’s work. Pointing to God as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day signify by this act that they are worshipers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath

is the sign of man's allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him. The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force. {PP 307.2}

In the very fact that men are free moral agents, God teaches us not to be forced or compelled into any course of action, also that as responsible beings in copartnership with God we are to represent God in character. We are to have an interest in our brother, in our neighbor, in all around (Letter 65, 1895). {5BC 1098.1}

While the earth was wrapped in the fire of destruction, the righteous abode safely in the Holy City. Upon those that had part in the first resurrection, the second death has no power. While God is to the wicked a consuming fire, He is to His people both a sun and a shield. Revelation 20:6; Psalm 84:11. {GC 673.3}

God destroys no one. The sinner destroys himself by his own impenitence. When a person once neglects to heed the invitations, reproofs, and warnings of the Spirit of God, his conscience becomes seared, and the next time he is admonished, it will be more difficult to yield obedience than before. And thus with every repetition. Conscience is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions; when it is resisted, the Spirit of God is grieved. {5T 120.1}

God destroys no man; but when a man stifles conviction, when he turns from evidence, he is sowing unbelief, and will reap as he has sown. As it was with Pharaoh, so it will be with him; when clearer light shines upon the truth, he will meet it with increased resistance, and the work of hardening the heart will go on with each rejection of the increasing light of heaven. In simplicity and truth we would speak to the impenitent in regard to the way in which men destroy their own souls. You are not to say that God is to blame, that he has made a decree against you. No, he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and to the haven of eternal bliss. No soul is ever finally deserted of God, given up to his own ways, so long as there is any hope of his salvation. God follows men with appeals and warnings and assurances of compassion, until further opportunities and privileges would be wholly in vain. The responsibility rests upon 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; and thus he will pass from one stage of indifference to another, until, at last, the light will fail to impress him, and he will cease to respond in any measure to the Spirit of God. {RH, February 17, 1891 par. 2}